



OIA16-0172

27 APR 2016

Gary Stephenson
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Dear Gary Stephenson

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your official information request on 19 April 2016 asking questions about unwanted organisms.

The following information is released to you under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

1. What law allows an unwanted organism to be released into the environment and why is it allowed?

Unwanted organisms can be released if the person carrying out the release has a permission from a Chief Technical Officer under Sections 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act. A permission may be given for a number of reasons, such as research or other situations where the benefits of the release are considered to be significantly greater than the risks that caused it to be declared unwanted.

2. Why is it not illegal for a private individual to be in possession of such an unwanted organism?

Under the Biosecurity Act, it is not specifically prohibited for an individual or organisation to possess an unwanted organism. Sections 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act states that no person shall knowingly communicate, release, spread, exhibit, sell, propagate, breed or multiply (or act in a way that causes any of these things), without a permission from a Chief Technical Officer.

3. Why are councils allowed to release into the environment an unwanted organism?

Councils would be allowed to release an unwanted organism into the environment if they have been granted a permission by a Chief Technical Officer.

This would be granted if the benefits of the release are considered significantly greater than the risks for which it was declared unwanted.

Other links relating to biosecurity you may find helpful are:

- Applying for permission to breed, knowingly communicate, exhibit, multiply, propagate, release, or sell, an unwanted organism (Ministry for Primary Industries website)
<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/biosec/pol/statements/unwanted-organisms-permission>
- Biosecurity Act 1993 (New Zealand Legislation website)
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0095/latest/DLM314623.html>

I trust this information is useful to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'V. Herrera', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Veronica Herrera
Director, IDC & Response