

The Debate of Poverty – Maori and Biotechnology debate in New Zealand

Jessica Hutchings
Ngai Tahu Ngati Huirapa and Indian

Victoria University of Wellington

hikoi@xtra.co.nz

Abstract:

Biodiversity has been protected through the flourishing of indigenous peoples' knowledge. To compensate the dramatic loss of biodiversity over the last 100 years multi-nationals are recreating and redefining relationships with nature through biotechnology. Biotechnologists claim value can be added and the inadequacies in food chains, health, materials and nutrition can be greatly improved through the practises of biotechnology. The stated benefits of this biotechnology are nothing more than biopiracy which is recolonising life and knowledge denying the value of indigenous knowledge and rights to visibly participate in the biotechnology debate. This paper will discuss the depth of poverty in New Zealand's biotechnology debate in engaging Maori views and will present Maori concerns about biotechnology gathered from literature and applications to undertake genetic engineering in New Zealand.