

## The Interchurch Bioethics Council

### Report

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- 1 The Interchurch Bioethics Council (ICBC) responds to issues in biotechnology which are seen as important to the church membership and the community generally.
- 2 There are currently nine members from the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, with expertise in science, ethics, theology, medicine, education and cultural issues. The ICBC make considerable use of outside experts and participates actively in conferences and seminars.
- 3 Seven meetings of the ICBC and two tele-conferences were held during 2004 to 2005. A large amount of work is carried out by e-mail communication.
- 4 **Submissions on Government Legislation and Related Activities**
  - **June 2004:** Submission on Discussion Paper on Review of Regulation of Human Tissues and Tissue-based Therapies
  - **June 2004:** Submission on Nat. Ethics. Committee on Assisted Human Reproduction (NECAHR) Discussion Paper on Embryo Donation for Reproductive Purposes
  - **July 2004:** Submission to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
  - **November 2004:** Submission to NECAHR on Pre-Implantation Genetic Diagnosis
  - **May 2005:** submission on Xeno-transplantation to Bioethics Council
  - **February 2006:** Attendance at 'Making People Better' Bioethics Conference in Dunedin, with two members making presentations
  - **November–December 2005:** Participation in 'Talking Biotechnology' Conference in Wellington
  - **March 2006:** Submission to Ministry of Health re Guidelines on Using Established Human Embryonic Stem Cell Lines for Research
  - **March 2006:** Letter to Hon David Benson-Pope, Minister for the Environment regarding Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (popularly known as Terminator Technology)
  - **April 2006:** Member Chris Downs contributed as a 'scanner' to the first round of reports of the Navigator Network News, sponsored by MORST.
  - **April 2006:** Letter to Hon David Parker, Minister Responsible for Climate Change Issues in support and in addition to letter from Anglican bishops on Climate Change
  - **May 2006:** Oral submission to Ministry of Health on Guidelines on Using Cells from Established Human Stem Cell Lines for Research

## **5 Talks and Publications.**

- 5.1 Talks have been given to church annual meetings and synods, at seminars, in church services and on public radio. Articles have been published in the local and national press and in church papers. In June 2004 we published our third study book, *Euthanasia: Unethical Intervention or Death with Dignity?*

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 We are mindful that our brief is to consider biotechnology from the point of view of spiritual, ethical and cultural dimensions. Currently we are particularly devoting time and effort to research and consideration of spirituality and how it impinges on biotechnology. ICBC study guides and submissions may be downloaded free from the church's agency on social issues website, [www.casi.org.nz](http://www.casi.org.nz) or obtained from Audrey Jarvis at [jarvis.ab@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jarvis.ab@xtra.co.nz).

**Dr Audrey Jarvis**  
Chairperson

