

Oxitec Plans To Release Millions of Gene Hacked Mosquitoes In Texas and Florida

Oxitec, a biotech company, has made plans to release millions of genetically modified mosquitoes in both Florida and Texas in an attempt to stop the spread of diseases like Zika and dengue. This has already been approved by the EPA, but a group of biologists, ecologists, bioethicists, and sustainability researchers has concerns about the effect these mosquitos could have on the surrounding ecosystems.

In theory, releasing gene-hacked mosquitoes into the wild is a valid way to kill off or reduce local populations: by engineering sterile breeds of the insect, scientists can drastically reduce the number of bugs born in the next generation. The concept has worked in a laboratory setting. But when officials in Brazil tried it for real, the plan reportedly backfired spectacularly – giving rise to super-resilient genetic hybrids.

SCIENTISTS FIGHT PLAN TO RELEASE GENE-HACKED MOSQUITOES IN TX, FL

Scientists who have raised concerns are worried the EPA has not imposed strong enough measures to monitor the experiment and prevent damage to the ecosystem. Scientists wrote “Genetic engineering offers an unprecedented opportunity for humans to reshape the fundamental structure of the biological world,” However, they pointed out than much of our ecosystems remain understudied and extremely complex.

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