

## **What can we make of the anticommons theory? Reviewing the evidence**

**Dianne Nicol**

Professor, Centre for Law and Genetics, Law Faculty, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 89, Hobart, Tas 7001, Australia

[Dianne.Nicol@utas.edu.au](mailto:Dianne.Nicol@utas.edu.au)

Since anticommons concerns were first raised in the field of biomedicine in 1998, various attempts have been made to collect evidence to ascertain whether or not these concerns are eventuating. The gist of the anticommons theory is that too many gene and other patents and too many restrictive licensing practice will inevitably deter downstream innovation. In this presentation I review key empirical findings against the backdrop of ongoing legal cases about the patentability of genes.

I started my academic career as a scientist. My PhD was in the area of cell biology, with particular focus on the development of simple nervous systems. I am now a Professor at the Law Faculty at the University of Tasmania and one of the Deputy Directors of the Centre for Law and Genetics (CLG). The broad theme of the CLG's research is the regulation of biotechnology, human genetics and stem cell technology. I am particularly interested in the legal issues associated with the commercialisation of genetic knowledge and patenting of genetic inventions.