



PRESS RELEASE

Unprecedented collaboration accelerates work to reduce, refine and replace animal testing for safety assessment

Significant progress made.

Twenty-seven companies join forces with the European Commission services. We anticipate that even more companies will engage in the Partnership, says European Commission and European industry

Brussels, 18 December 2006

The European Partnership on Alternative Approaches to Animal Testing (EPAA) today presented its progress report one year on from its launch. On the occasion of this second “Europe Goes Alternative” conference in Brussels, representatives from the European Commission and European industry welcomed the significant achievements that have been made during the last 12 months, but stressed the importance of even more partners joining the collaboration.

“In the past 12 months, 19 companies have joined the European Commission and the eight founding industry members of the EPAA, and this increase in expertise and resource has allowed us to accelerate progress” said EPAA Steering Group co-chairs Georgette Lalis (for the European Commission) and Charles Laroche (for European industry). “Nevertheless, if we are to achieve our ambitious aims of rapidly developing new safety assessment models that reduce, refine and replace animal testing, we need the broadest group of partners possible. We strongly encourage other companies to join the EPAA” they added.

The unprecedented character of the partnership, bringing together seven industry sectors and numerous Commission services, was able in its first year to identify common grounds for collaboration, to put in place a five-year action programme based on a preliminary and realistic assessment of needs, and to establish a structure for implementation of the programme drawing on the expertise of all member companies and Commission services.

Although the majority of actions have a medium to long-term perspective, a number of short-term objectives have been achieved this year. The first attempt to document all activities relating to the refinement, reduction and replacement of animal tests has, for example, as well as process leading to facilitating validation have been progressed rapidly. In future years this will be key to focussing research and avoiding possible duplication of effort. Similarly, a project to map all legislation governing animal testing for safety assessment has identified a number of areas where collaboration between industry and regulators can enhance application of replacement, reduction and refinement methods in safety testing.

Ms Lalis and Mr Laroche commented, “Although much has been achieved in the EPAA’s first year, we still have a long journey ahead of us. However, we are absolutely certain that the only really effective way to tackle the challenges ahead is through a genuinely collaborative approach, and we look forward to this partnership developing further in 2007 and beyond”.

For more information on EPAA or a copy of the 2006 progress review, please contact

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