



in education: animals, alternatives and attitude; the biotechnical view on the future of the 3Rs; societal aspects of “responsible” use of laboratory animals; better animal models: better therapeutics; fish: issues related to using fish-species for research; translational research: claim and reality; welfare assessment: where do we need to go?; the impact of law and regulations on the implementation of the 3Rs. The most impressive workshop in the eyes of the author was 3Rs and regulatory testing, chaired by **Coenraad Hendriksen**. The speakers **Jean-Marie Schiffelers** (USBO, Utrecht University), **Bas Blaauboer** (Doerenkamp-Zbinden Chair of toxicology, IRAS, Utrecht University), **Herman Koëter** (The Orange House, Belgium), **Ruurd Stolp** (Schering Plough Intervet, The Netherlands) and **Thomas Hartung** (Doerenkamp-Zbinden Chair of evidence based toxicology, Johns Hopkins University and CAAT, Baltimore, USA) gave an excellent overview of the use of laboratory animals in the fields of regulatory safety and quality testing. Many national and international parties, often with divergent interests, are involved in setting the test requirements aimed at efficacy, consumer safety and environmental protection. In addition to the discussion of existing regulatory testing policies, an inventory was made of progress towards and obstacles to the acceptance and implementation of the 3Rs. Surprisingly, nearly 20% of the

workshop participants voted at the end that lack of communication between scientists and regulators is the most hampering obstacle to the implementation of 3R methods. The complicated validation process, “lack of reward” for the 3R scientists and political reasons came next.

The last day was dedicated to a public discussion “Science goes public - listening to society” in the Conference venue “Jaarbeurs” in the historic town center of Utrecht. This part of the meeting was held in Dutch language to optimally involve the local population.

All in all this “looking into the crystal ball” was a very well organised and fruitful event to define the status quo and further developments of the 3Rs. We thank the organisers and the University of Utrecht for the organisation of this event and the high importance it was given. It did not remain unnoticed that the University provided the most noble medieval hall, usually only used for receptions of high ranking guests and University celebrations, for the lectures, and that the dean of the prestigious Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, **Albert Cornelissen**, not only welcomed the guests at the begin of the event but was present during the whole symposium and actively participated in all discussions.

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## Comments

*Franz P. Gruber*

### Opinion of the Scientific Committee on the need for non-human primates

What else could we expect? As already predicted in ALTEX 3/08, the Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) stressed the need for the continued use of non-human primates. With Mark Matfield as the speaker, the “Executive Director of the Research Defence Society”, the result was clear from the start – he had already fought fiercely

against a ban on primate experiments in England in 2004. The EU obviously no longer even strives to maintain the presence of impartiality.

At least the statement contains the open admission that the opinion “does not consider the ethical, economic, cultural and social aspects of NHPs use”. This declaration disqualifies the state-

ment from merit serious consideration. He who openly dismisses ethical aspects should have no chance of succeeding before the European Parliament. Even paying lip service to the 3R Principle will not help here.

Franz P. Gruber  
Editor in chief, ALTEX