

tor ever be distracted by the research going on in the lab.

Richard S. Jope

Department of Psychiatry, Sparks Center 1057, University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL 35294-0017, USA. E-mail jope@uab.edu

Clarification of AstraZeneca's R&D Strategies

In the table accompanying the News Focus article "Drug research endures the pains of globalization" by Joanna Rose and Annika Nilsson (10 Dec., p. 2063), inaccuracies regarding AstraZeneca's research and development (R&D) strategy in Sweden give a wrong view of our intentions. Sweden is one of our three key bases within R&D, and we will continue to invest in our Swedish R&D operations, which are located in Södertälje, Lund, and Mölndal.

To clarify and expand on the information in the article's table, AstraZeneca's R&D headquarters will remain at Södertälje, which is also the main site for the therapy area of pain control, as the table indicates. Discovery and development R&D will remain at Södertälje for both central nervous system and pain control research. Only some central nervous system R&D is moving to Wilmington, Delaware, a decision that was made before Astra and Zeneca's merger. In addition, the safety assessment division will remain in Södertälje, and, in a few months, a new investment in biotechnology belonging to the global Enabling Science and Technology organization will be in operation.

Reference to cancer research being located at Alderley Park in the United Kingdom is correct; however, it was never located in Sweden, as suggested by the title of the table.

AstraZeneca's asthma research will be conducted at both Charnwood in the United Kingdom and at Lund, as indicated in the table, but Lund will be the main site for R&D in respiratory diseases and inhalation, not just a site for "some asthma research."

And finally, Mölndal, which is not mentioned in the article or table, is our largest R&D site in Sweden with 1500 employees, and it is the main site for therapy areas for gastrointestinal and cardiovascular R&D, not Södertälje, as the table suggests. Mölndal will also be the site for a new research center for Global Enabling Science Technology Biology, Informatics and Chemistry.

Claes Wilhelmsson*

AstraZeneca, S-151 85 Södertälje, Sweden

*Executive director of Research and Development

Editors' note

The inaccuracies referred to in the above letter were restricted to the table that accompanied the article. They were inadvertently

introduced during editing and not the responsibility of the authors.

Cooperating on Childhood Cancer

The content and tone of the News Focus article "No meeting of minds on childhood cancer" by Jocelyn Kaiser (3 Dec., p. 1832) seem focused on rekindling tensions between two government agencies when such tensions have been in large measure resolved. Indeed, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) are working closely together in many areas related to environmental determinants of cancer, including cancer in children, and are in agreement on important issues related specifically to childhood cancer, including (i) that rates of childhood cancer have remained relatively stable since 1985; (ii) that the increases occurring before 1985 are not well understood, although better diagnosis and reporting likely contribute to some portion of the increase; (iii) that ongoing monitoring of trends in incidence is essential; and (iv) that well-designed studies are needed to make progress in understanding the causes of childhood cancers.

NCI and EPA co-chair the Childhood Cancer Working Group, one of four working groups established as a part of President Bill Clinton's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children. Through this and other partnerships, the EPA and NCI are working to develop and implement joint initiatives in cancer and the environment, and lines of communication have widened to facilitate these interactions. The Task Force has established a database of children's environmental health research projects, as noted in Kaiser's article. Major initiatives of the Childhood Cancer Working Group that are focused on childhood leukemias and brain tumors, on pre-clinical models, and on environmental exposure measures are in the planning stages. These initiatives indicate that NCI and EPA, in collaboration with other federal agencies, are committed to working together to better understand the etiology of childhood cancer.

Susan M. Sieber*

National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, 31 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892, USA

Steven K. Galson†

Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460, USA

*Co-chair, Childhood Cancer Work Group, and associate director for Special Projects

†Former co-chair, Childhood Cancer Work Group, and director, Office of Science Coordination and Policy

Custom Shotgun Libraries

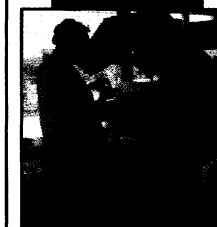


- Custom Libraries from Cosmids, BACs and Genomes
- M13 or pUC Vectors
- Ready in 1-2 Weeks
- Clones Shipped in 96 or 384-Well Plates



Custom Gridding & Arraying

- Arraying of Libraries to Nylon Filters
- Up to 29,000 Double Spotted Clones/Filter



Shotgun Sequencing

- Clones Picked & Prepped
- High Throughput Sequencing & Assembly
- Full-Length Sequencing

Call For Pricing on Your Project Today

SEQWRIGHT

DNA SEQUENCING

Circle No. 21 on Readers' Service Card

THE FASTEST SERVICE IN THE INDUSTRY, WITH GUARANTEED RESULTS.

Tel: 1-800-720-4363

Web: www.seqwright.com

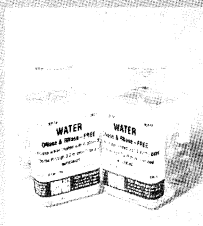
ICN

DNA-Erase™



- Completely Removes DNA Contamination
 - Eliminates PCR Artifacts
- For all laboratory surfaces and apparatus.

DNase, RNase-free Water



- DEPC Treated
- Sterile Filtered

Perfect for use with ICN's DNA-Erase™ decontamination solutions

RNAse Erase™

- Completely removes RNase contamination from glass and plastic surfaces.

- Ideal for cleaning work surfaces, pipettes, and equipment that must be RNase-free.

- No more baking glassware or use of DEPC.



Circle No. 51 on Readers' Service Card

ICN Biomedicals

Ph: 800-854-0530 • Fax: 800-334-6999

www.icnbiomed.com

Check our web site for your local ICN office

© 2000 ICN Biomedicals, Inc.

SCIENCE'S COMPASS

Response

During preparation of the News Focus article, Galson told me in an interview and in written correspondence—in unambiguous language—that despite discussions with NCI since EPA's 1997 childhood cancer conference, he continued to disagree with NCI about trends in childhood cancer. Several outside scientists who have been involved in EPA's childhood cancer activities explained in interviews that they shared Galson's view. Even if EPA and NCI now publicly see eye to eye, disagreement appears to remain in the scientific community.

Jocelyn Kaiser

Decay Rate of Beryllium-7 in Different Environments

The News of the Week article "Tweaking the clock of radioactive decay" (29 Oct., p. 882) by Richard A. Kerr focuses on the finding by Chih-An Huh (1), published in *Earth and Planetary Science Letters*, that beryllium-7 decays at a different rate depending on what form it is in (hydrated ion, hydroxide, or oxide). However, relatively large variations in the decay rate of beryllium-7 in different environments had already been reported before Huh published his results.

About 4 months before Huh's publication, we published an article (2) reporting that the decay rate of beryllium-7 implanted in gold is slower than when it is implanted in Al_2O_3 by a relatively large amount (0.72%). This result and many others have been understood using the linear muffin-tin orbital (LMTO) method and Hartree's calculations, and the implications of these results in different fields have been discussed (2). Before our work, W. K. Hensley *et al.* (3) applied a high pressure of up to 270 kilobars to ^7BeO and found that the decay rate increased by 0.59%. In his article, Chih-An Huh reports that the decay rate of beryllium-7 is about 1.0% faster when the beryllium is in the chemical form $\text{Be}^{2+}(\text{OH}_2)_4$, as compared with BeO . Earlier, however, H. W. Johlige *et al.* (4) also measured the difference between the decay rates of beryllium-7 in the same matrices and found it to be $(0.0374 \pm 0.0077)\%$ faster as compared with BeO . They also measured the differences of beryllium-7 decay rates in many other chemical forms and detected only tiny variations of the order of 0.1% (4). Such differing results have yet to be discussed.

A. Ray

P. Das

Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre, 1/AF, Bidhannagar, Calcutta 700064, India

S. K. Saha

S. K. Das

Radiochemistry Division, Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre

References

1. Chih-An Huh, *Earth Planet. Sci. Lett.* **171**, 325 (1999).
2. A. Ray *et al.*, *Phys. Lett. B* **455**, 69 (1999).
3. W. K. Hensley, W. A. Basset, J. R. Huizenga, *Science* **181**, 1164 (1973).
4. H. W. Johlige, D. C. Aumann, H. J. Born, *Phys. Rev. C* **2**, 1616 (1970).

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

In the image accompanying the News of the Week article "Windfall breeds fresh but vulnerable crop of grants" by Jocelyn Kaiser (21 Jan., p. 402), the oat-corn hybrid is on the left, not the right as mentioned in the legend.

In Peter E. Black's letter under the title "Biosphere Management: Some tools of the trade" (14 Jan., p. 234), note 1 was not included. It should have read "P. E. Black, *Water Res. Bull.* **31**, 589 (1995)." Also, regarding Black's affiliation, there is no Department of Water and Related Land Resources. He is with the Faculty of Forestry at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

In the report "Constraints on slow earthquake dynamics from a swarm in central Italy" by L. Crescentini, A. Amoroso, and R. Scarpa (10 Dec., p. 2132), the word "Fision" in the second footnote of the affiliations should have read "Fisica."

NanoBioTec.

Congress & Exhibition

Nanotechnology meets Life Sciences

Münster Germany

28 - 29 September 2000

www.nanobiotec.de

Circle No. 42 on Readers' Service Card

18 FEBRUARY 2000 VOL 287

SCIENCE www.sciencemag.org