so few other kinases are inhibited by the drug. "When the kinases are active, they look very similar," Kuriyan says. "But when they are turned off, they can look very different from one another." He also notes that drug developers tend to think in terms of designing enzyme inhibitors that bind to the active enzyme, but for the kinases the inactive forms may make better targets.

A good many questions remain to be answered about STI-571. Clinicians will want to know, for example, how long its effects can be maintained in patients and whether it will work against solid tumors as well as CML. There are hints that it might. For example, Griffin's team has shown that it inhibits the growth in culture of small lung cancer cells, a cancer in which the kit oncogene kinase is often activated. But researchers are already pleased that what they have learned about the gene changes leading to cancer is beginning to pay off. "It's total vindication of the need to do basic science on the mechanisms of cancer," Witte says.

–JEAN MARX

EUROPEAN SCIENCE

Call to Arms for Life Scientists

GENEVA—Seeking to create "a force for change in European research," nearly 2000 European life scientists gathered here last week at their first congress to promote solidarity, forge collaborations, and air complaints about how European managers dole out science funding.

"There is an enormous amount for [us] to do, when we compare the European situation to that in the United States," says cell biologist Kai Simons, president of the new European Life Scientist Organization (www.elso.org). Modeled in part on the American Society for Cell Biology, ELSO sprang from the brows of Simons and several other alumni of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), who saw the need for an organization to help unite Europe's molecular life scientists and to lobby Brussels to improve European Union (E.U.) research policies.

CREDIT: R. KOENIG

Leading the chorus. Kai Simons is spearheading an effort to get European life scientists speaking with one voice.

Simons—who recently became head of the Max Planck Society's new Institute for Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics in Dresden—and many others are dissatisfied with the E.U.'s flagship research effort, Framework 5. The 5-year, $17 billion program restricts much of its spending to priority areas. Innovative research tends to slip through the cracks, Simons contends. Another common complaint, he says, is that Framework mostly ignores young researchers, leaving it to the national programs to shoulder much of the support for grad students and postdocs.

Simons and other ELSO council members are bringing their guns to bear on the architects of Framework 6, a 5-year portfolio to start in early 2003. The organization's key aims are for the new Framework to offer more grants for postdocs and far more "generic" funds for research that does not fit into Framework spending categories. ELSO's leaders have already presented Brussels with a list of priorities for Framework 6, and the organization will now push to add a new grant category to allow more independence for young European researchers. "A lot of European scientists complain about the Framework Program, but we don't do anything about it. This is going to change," says the Finnish-born Simons. The group also intends to fight for better job opportunities for female scientists and to stimulate mobility and collaborative research among European life scientists.

The meeting featured presentations by four Nobel laureates and symposia on topics ranging from cell death to trends in mammalian genetics. Although most conferees hailed from Germany, France, and Switzerland, more than two dozen came from Eastern Europe, where Framework is just taking root. ELSO "can help draw good scientists in Eastern Europe into the mainstream, and to lobby Brussels on the importance of expanding research programs there," says ELSO council member Maya Simionescu, who directs Romania's Institute of Cell Biology and Pathology.

Although there are several Europe-wide life sciences organizations, ELSO organizers say their group is different because it does not restrict who can join, and it is not a federation of national societies. "It's important to have a bottom-up organization that allows life scientists from different fields to develop some priorities and to lobby," explains ELSO council member Denis Duboule, a University of Geneva biologist. All meeting attendees became enrolled in ELSO; European newcomers are also welcome. Now funded mainly by corporate grants, ELSO won't charge dues until it has "proven its worth" through lobbying, communications, and conferences, Simons says. To keep up team spirit between annual gatherings, ELSO has launched a free bimonthly magazine, *The ELSO Gazette* (www.the-elso-gazette.org). It will feature research reviews by "up and coming young European scientists," along with news articles about European research, job listings, and editorials, says editor Carol Featherstone, a former EMBL cell biologist.

Although attendance in Geneva reached only half the original goal, Simons says he is pleased. "Up until this conference, ELSO was a virtual organization," he says. "Now it is real."

–ROBERT KOENIG

X-RAY SCIENCE

French 'Sun' to Rise at Site Near Paris

PARIS—The sun is shining on French science this week with the selection of a site outside Paris as the home of the country's first "third-generation" x-ray source.

On Monday research minister Roger-Gérard Schwartzenberg announced that the machine, called SOLEIL, or "sun," would be built near Saclay, about 20 kilometers southwest of Paris. The project had been cancelled by his predecessor, Claude Allègre, who feared that its $200 million price tag for construction and 8 years of operation would pinch other research budgets. But Schwartzenberg said that the national government's share should not exceed 20%, with regional and local authorities paying 75% and the rest coming from the United Kingdom, Spain, Belgium, and Portugal. Paris regional authorities have said they hope the new machine will attract companies to the area, which already boasts several universities and research institutions. SOLEIL's construction will begin in fall 2001, and it should go online in 2005, Schwartzenberg said.

"France needs to have a third-generation synchrotron on its own soil," Schwartzenberg said, adding that several other European countries have their own state-of-the-art machines. High-powered x-rays will allow researchers to probe the atomic structures of biological molecules and industrial materials at resolutions of just a few angstroms. The accelerator will have an energy of 2.5 to 2.75 giga electron volts and 24 beamlines for experiments.

Schwartzenberg said that Saclay beat out a site near Lille as the home for SOLEIL. France has already agreed to support the planned Diamond synchrotron in Britain (*Science*, 6 August 1999, p. 819).

–MICHAEL BALTER