Working Party on Nanotechnology

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE WORKING PARTY ON NANOTECHNOLOGY

23-24 April 2008, Paris

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ITEM 1  ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA  
The Working Party adopted the agenda.

ITEM 2  APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND MEETING  
The Working Party approved the summary record.

ITEM 3  ELECTION OF THE BUREAU  
The Working Party elected its Bureau, consisting of 9 members, namely:  
Marc Van Rossum (Belgium), Marsha Permut (Canada), Françoise Roure (France), Seamus Bannon (Ireland), Jungil Lee (Korea), Leo Le Duc (Netherlands), Rachel Grange (Switzerland), Robert Rudnitsky (United States) and Pilar Aguar (European Commission). It elected Robert Rudnitsky as Chair and Françoise Roure as Vice-chair of the Working Party. Bureau elections will be held again in December 2008.

ITEM 4  STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR AND THE SECRETARIAT  
The Chair presented an overview of the activities of the Working Party and outlined the programme for the meeting. The Secretariat provided an update on OECD and CSTP activities; the OECD Innovation Strategy; the future of the WPN and the development of its work programme for 2009-2010.

ITEM 5  UPDATE ON THE WORKING PARTY ON MANUFACTURED NANOMATERIALS (WPMN)  
The Secretariat of the WPMN provided an oral update on the 8 projects underway. The WPN noted the importance of co-ordination between the WPN and WPMN.

ITEM 6  PRESENTATION: WHERE IS NANOTECH GOING?  
The WPN noted the presentation “Where is nanotech going “by Louis Laurent (National Research Agency of France, CEA - ANR).
ITEM 7  INDICATORS & STATISTICS : PROJECT A

Following a presentation by the Secretariat, the WPN commented on the draft of Nanotech at a Glance. It was noted that the ISO definition of nanotechnology is being used. It was considered important that the work expands into areas outside of patents e.g. publications, research roadmaps, companies and innovation and policy development. The final draft of Nanotech at a Glance will be circulated before the next meeting.

Delegates also discussed the work of the Task Force set up to develop a framework for nanotech indicators and statistics and indicated their priorities for this work. It was noted that additional countries are being encouraged to join the Task Force. It was agreed that the draft framework is to be presented to NESTI in June; and that a revised draft will be circulated for comment by the next WPN meeting.
ITEM 8 IMPACTS ON COMPANIES AND BUSINESS ENVIRONMENTS: PROJECT B

Delegates from the lead countries (Canada, Switzerland) presented progress on the project, key points of the workshop (held on April 22nd 2008) and next steps. The key question for this project was summarized as follows:

Do the conditions best suited to supporting the responsible development, application, and commercialization of nanotechnology by business differ from those for other areas of endeavour and require new policy approaches? If so, how and what type of new approaches?

The Secretariat presented key insights from the literature review as a background for the analysis of the case studies. In the discussion the following points were made: the need for comparable data; the importance of using patent data with care; the potential value of including information about human resource issues; the availability of additional materials in the innovation and science and technology literature; the value of knowledge translators, as well as star performers; the importance of intellectual property for the growth and sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises, particularly those emerging from universities or university-industry collaborations; the work already undertaken by the OECD Working Party on Technology and Innovation Policy (TIP) and other OECD groups; the wide range of capital formation and investment issues for different sizes of companies at different stages in their life cycles. Science/innovation interface (university/industry); the range of regulatory challenges and standards; policies around entrepreneurship; international mobility; policies for the promotion of organisational change; and the complexity of operating globally but within state boundaries. It was agreed that a final draft of the report would be available by the next meeting.

It was noted that the Interim workshop for this project (6-7 October 2008, Helsinki) should be designed to support the synthesis of the case studies. Invited experts will help to structure the discussion and inform the analysis. The workshop is being sponsored by the Finnish delegation.
ITEM 9  INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATION : PROJECT C

The lead country (the Netherlands) reported on recent related initiatives in that country and on progress in the project and presented options for the next stages of the work. Delegates discussed the project and agreed:

- that the next step would be to document web sites in WPN participating countries;
- that the process would be facilitated by the Secretariat working with the Netherlands; and
- that the project would be reviewed at the next WPN meeting.

It was noted that the topic of international S&T agreements was covered in the Project E Policy Questionnaire.

ITEM 10  EXPERIENCES WITH OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A presentation on Public engagement on nanotechnology: Reflections on the UK experience was made by Robert Doubleday (University of Cambridge, UK).

ITEM 11  OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT : PROJECT D

The lead country (the UK) presented an update on the project following the steering group meeting (21st April, 2008). The Canadian delegation presented an overview of a research project mapping public discourse on nanotechnology issues. The Netherlands proposed that a workshop be held in the last quarter of 2008 on outreach and public engagement.

The Delegates discussed progress to date on the project, the next steps for the survey and the proposed workshop. It was noted that public engagement and information do not respect borders and that cross-border impacts can arise from awareness initiatives. It was agreed that any final comments on the questionnaires would be sent to the Secretariat by May 12th, in order to allow for them to be circulated by May 15th for completion. It was also agreed that delegations would send in the completed questionnaires by June 30th. After that date, work will continue on their analysis, the material being complemented where possible through other national sources. It was agreed that a draft report would be available for the next meeting.
ITEM 12  POLICY DIALOGUE : PROJECT E

A presentation of preliminary results from the policy questionnaire was made by the Secretariat.

It was noted that the project is divided into three aspects (reviewing commonality of policy approaches; dialogues with stakeholders; and outreach); that not having a strategy can be the result of a strategic decision (countries may be aligning themselves with their neighbours or other influencers); that strategies may be present but in a constantly changing form; that the local situation in a country is of critical importance and should be taken into account in the work (e.g. that the presence of a large number of players does not mean that the strategic approach is necessarily horizontal); that the development and use of technology is a challenge for developing countries; that the WPN should provide a benchmark list of new trades, specialist profiles, jobs; that much more information would be needed for a statistical analysis; that this work should take into consideration that already done (albeit more generally) by the OECD TIP group.

It was agreed that the lead countries (France, Ireland) would make preparations for a workshop in the first quarter of 2009. It was also agreed that the findings of the questionnaire would be reported in the final draft report to be circulated for the next meeting.

ITEM 13  SECURING THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF NANOTECH FOR WATER

A presentation was made by the Canadian delegation on behalf of Environment Canada.
ITEM 14  NANOTECHNOLOGY AND WATER : GLOBAL CHALLENGES : PROJECT F

Presentations were made by the European Commission (*Nano and the water: research activities in the work programme 2008*) and the OECD Horizontal Water Programme (Sustainable Financing to Ensure Affordable Access to Water and Sanitation). The Secretariat provided an update on progress to date on the project. It was noted that a WPN workshop is being held on September 25th at the Nanotech Northern Europe 2008 Conference in Copenhagen.

It was agreed that work would continue in mapping the technologies, policies and challenges related to nanotechnology and water; identifying policy aspects of the industrial use and development of nanotechnology for water; in increasing awareness of nanotechnology in the water communities and water in the nanotechnology communities; and on the policy aspects of water in the developing world. Delegations indicated their interest in continuing the work in 2009-2010. The importance of complementing work underway elsewhere, including within the OECD, was highlighted.

It was agreed that the work programme would be further developed by Summer 2008 and that there would be a draft report for the next WPN meeting.

ITEM 15  INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION ISSUES

The Secretariat presented information about the Electronic Discussion Group (www.oecd.org/sti/nano/edg) and the slides on the WPN which are available for external communication. It was agreed that a slide about the OECD would be added and that the slides would be made available in pdf form on the OECD WPN web page (www.oecd.org/sti/nano). It was agreed that a revised vision statement would be drafted by the Secretariat for discussion, initially, by the Bureau. It was agreed that the slides and vision statement should be available bilingually in English and French on the web page in due course.
ITEM 16. NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSIONS

The meeting and its action items were summarised by the chair. Preliminary plans for 2009-2010 were discussed, to be developed further for the next meeting, including:

- A statistical framework for nanotechnology (project A)
- A policy report on addressing challenges in the business environment specific to nano (project B).
- A monitoring and benchmarking report on nanotech developments (project A and E).
- Two policy reports on fostering nanotech to address global challenges (project F): Water, energy, climate change…
- Policy roundtables and reports: addressing emerging issues proactively (all present projects).

The importance of involving China and India was discussed and the working party agreed on inviting India as an ad-hoc observer to the next meeting (China is already an observer to the CSTP). The dates of the next meeting (including workshops and steering group meetings) were agreed as 15th to 18th December 2008 in Paris.

ITEM 17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.
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23 - 24/4/2008

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