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Introduction for session four
"2Rs - Science and animal welfare hand-in-hand
achievements and future opportunities"

Abstract

- In October I attended the EPAA's Workshop on 2Rs and spoke briefly on Reduction and Refinement in the EU Policy context.
- I said then that although replacement of animal use is the ultimate goal of the European Commission, we see reduction and refinement as equally important parts of our strategy on the promotion of alternative methods. Experts today have demonstrated that reduction and refinement are or can be successfully employed in regulatory testing and non-regulatory testing.
- Conclusions from the October Workshop have been fed into this forum, and have, I'm confident, helped to further highlight the importance of reduction and refinement to a wider audience, underline the need to continue the focus on the 2Rs, expand on the already fruitful discussions which have taken place and set the scene for concrete action in 2011. I welcome that the 2Rs will remain a key theme for the EPAA over the coming years.
- But, I cannot hand over to my colleagues on the podium alongside me without first mentioning the new Directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes - Directive 2010/63. Following the implementation of this new legislation (adopted in September) the European Union can claim to have the highest standards of experimental animal welfare in the world. Although the 3Rs principle is well known

and already taken into account in animal testing in Europe and elsewhere in practice, the principle is now also explicitly described and firmly established in this legislation.

- The new Directive introduces strict provisions on how the 3Rs are to be implemented and these are to be complied with by all sectors using animals under their specific legislation.
- Against this background, work on ALL the 3Rs, remains key in the Commission's strategy on alternative approaches. Much activity on 3Rs is expected in the coming years both at EU and at an international level.