

International Council Partners with Computational Toxicology Experts to Train EPA Regulators in New Tools

WASHINGTON (April 7, 2015) -- The International Council for Animal Protection in OECD Programmes (ICAPO) is proud to partner with the Laboratory for Mathematical Chemistry at the University of Bourgas, Bulgaria to offer training in the latest computational toxicology methods contained in the OECD QSAR Toolbox, a set of tools that allows the prediction of toxicological properties without animal testing, to regulators at the US Environmental Protection Agency. The training will be offered in a two-day intensive course repeated twice this week at EPA's Washington, DC headquarters.

"ICAPO member groups recognize that the OECD QSAR Toolbox can assist the EPA as it evaluates chemicals for impacts on human health and the environment," says Kristie Sullivan, M.P.H., ICAPO secretariat and director of regulatory testing issues for the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. "The OECD QSAR Toolbox is acknowledged as one of the most advanced computational tools available today for predicting chemical toxicity without new animal testing, and by providing this training we are accomplishing the Council's aim to replace and reduce animals within OECD member countries."

The OECD QSAR Toolbox was first developed by computational scientists at the LMC and others in 2006, and has been continually updated and expanded as new chemical toxicity data become available and as understanding of the link between chemical structure and mode of action becomes more sophisticated. It is developed under the continuing peer review of OECD member countries, the chemical industry and NGOs. The system is freely available and maintained in the public domain by OECD. Because of this rigorous and transparent development and peer review, its predictions are often accepted by regulators and risk assessors. The toolbox includes data, knowledge and tools allowing the reliable grouping of chemicals and read-across. "We are excited to offer this training to EPA's top regulatory scientists," said LMC Director Prof. Ovanes Mekenyanyan. "Familiarity with these QSAR tools will increase their use by government and industry to predict chemical toxicity."

ICAPO is a coalition of 10 animal protection organizations, whose experts provide science policy advice for modernizing OECD testing guidelines and related programs. Contributions by ICAPO have helped bring about the publication of an unprecedented number of non-animal OECD test guidelines, including tests for skin and eye irritation, genetic toxicity, and hormone disruption. OECD guidelines are used by its 34 member countries, as well as a growing number of developing economies such as Brazil and India, to assess the toxicity of chemicals, pesticides and other substances, and to prevent duplicate testing when chemicals and products are marketed internationally.

To learn more about ICAPO visit icapo.org.

To learn more about the Laboratory for Mathematical Chemistry visit oasis-lmc.org.

To learn more about PCRM, visit pcrm.org/animaltesting.