



## Elaborating EEB's position on nanotechnologies

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**Nanotechnology Workshop**  
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## NanoCap

### NanoCap project:

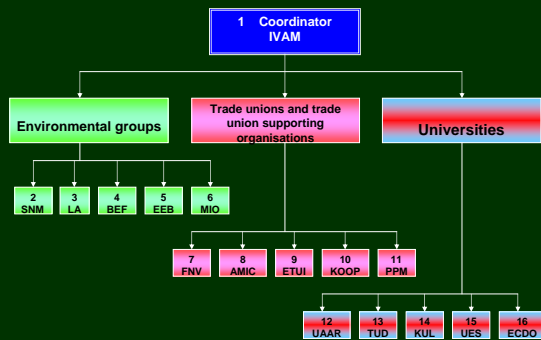
Discuss and deepen the knowledge of NGOs and trade unions on nanotechnologies regarding:

- Environmental impacts
- Occupational health and safety risks
- Ethical issues
- Critical assessment of the benefits of the new technology

### Period:

Sept 2006 – August 2009

## NanoCap consortium



## NanoCap aims for

- Developing a knowledge-based balanced view on NT and related regulatory regimes in the EU, including a final position from the partners
- Discussing the uncertainties of nanomaterials applications
- Improving the understanding of NT used in products concerning public health and environmental risks
- Identifying the benefits of the various nano-applications
- Discuss a safe approach to NT development with industry
- Creating a portfolio on ethical issues
- Developing preliminary recommendations for public authorities regarding nano governance

## NanoCap activities

- **Five internal Working Conferences**
  - Problem definition
  - Technical nanotechnological issues
  - Environmental and Occupational Health issues
  - Ethical issues
  - Critical assessment of benefits
- **Meetings/discussions with industry, authorities, other stakeholders**
- **Website** [www.nanocap.eu](http://www.nanocap.eu)
- **Electronic newsletters**
- **Public final conference in the European Parliament**
  - Presentation and public debate on position statements
  - Brussels, 23 April 2009

## Knowledge gaps

- *We know there are "essential" knowledge gaps in the current understanding of the impacts of nanotechnologies on human health and the environment (the social and ecological systems) and on their availability to the public*
- Need for "fast track" narrowing (closing?) of the knowledge gaps
  - task taken up by OECD / EC / National governments
- Need for **systematic inventory of high priority items** (cosmetics, food, food supplements, packaging, textiles/)
- **Precautionary approach** to be put in practice
  - Review of existing EU legislation to provide for the regulation of nanotechnologies finalised by EC, but not publicised
  - Industry and EC developing Codes of Conduct, but this is not enough

## Developing EEB's position

- 'Nanolist' created (EEB members and other contacts internationally)
- December 07 the 1<sup>st</sup> 'working group' meeting
- Currently finalising EEB position paper
- Structure:
  - Background of nano
  - EEB's vision on sustainable nanotech
  - Vision principles
  - Demands

## Developing EEB's position

### Vision principles:

- Precautionary principle / approach
- Strict regulatory regime
- Responsible development of nanotechnologies (Codes of Conduct, Responsibility Codes, Ethical Codes, etc.)

## Developing EEB's position

### Demands:

- Moratorium on further products put on market (potentially controversial) ?
- Regulatory initiatives developed as a priority before further market penetration
- Rebalance research funding on EHS aspects rather than market-driven technological development
- Nanoscience AP)
- Public involvement in prioritising research and applications (How to do this?)
- Labelling / identification of products currently on the market ?
- Strategy for the evaluation of new technologies (beyond nanotech and beyond 2005-2009 European Strategy for Nanotechnology and Nanoscience AP)

## Developing EEB's position

### Further issues needing to be addressed:

Labelling : differing views on relationship between labelling and legislation – some think labelling demands are in place of legislation while others definitely want labelling

Our demands specifically for the Commission:

- Prioritising areas of application/ use – which products to be looked at first? Call on regulators to start prioritising.
- Prioritising function – do we need nano solutions at all?
- Size discussion – is 100nm in the definition of nano-sized particles enough/ safe
- Assessment from lifecycle perspective (esp. production and EoL – End of Life)
- Inventory of where is nanotech being used, to be able to focus on specific legislation

## References

"Towards EEB's position on nanotechnologies",  
Dragomira Raeva, Policy Officer EEB