



*Some more information to occupy your Mindspace and to keep you up to date on the doings of the Alliance.*

## Indigenous Knowledge Pilot Project

A Memorandum of Understanding will be concluded between the by CSIR South Africa as the lead agency on this project and the National Institute of Medical Research in Tanzania, and a Research Agreement is currently being drafted to outline the research process and roles and responsibilities. Following the ethno-botanical study, which is currently underway, a proposal will be developed for presentation to funders. This project, and the GRA featured prominently during the World Bank global video conference (see below).

## Some interesting reading

- **Looking Forward: Science and Technology for the 21st Century**

The National Research Council of Canada has issued a foresight consolidation report on how global issues will influence Science and Technology in Canada over the next 10 – 15 years. Although this is compiled from a Canadian point of view it is very relevant to all. Download the report at [www.nrc-nrc.gc.ad/main\\_e.html](http://www.nrc-nrc.gc.ad/main_e.html)

- **Science Academies Issue Statements on Infectious Diseases and Energy**

Twelve national science academies joined together in calling on world leaders, particularly those of the G8 countries meeting next month in Russia, to tackle the problems of avian influenza and other infectious diseases through cooperative, global strategies. These two statements can be accessed from the Academies website at [www.interacademycouncil.net](http://www.interacademycouncil.net)

We need your assistance in keeping up to date with news snippets and the Nerve Centre would appreciate any news, comments or ideas that you would like to send our way. Send to:  
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## GRA on the move ...

- The World Bank held a three-day **Community Innovations Distance Learning Course** in June. Eight countries were linked to Washington for this global video conferencing event. Dr Reinie Biesenbach made a keynote address and Dr Marthinus Horak from the CSIR in South Africa shared the learning from a community based project to develop a mosquito repellent.
- This was an interesting information sharing event and of particular interest was a presentation by **Dr Tony Taubman of WIPO** who reported that there is growing recognition of the diversity of knowledge and indigenous knowledge, especially in the northern hemisphere. A presentation was also made on the work of Prof Anil Gupta of India and his Honey Bee Network and **Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network (GIAN)**.
- The **S&T based water scenarios for Africa** are progressing well and a final draft will be available shortly. Once published these scenarios will be presented to key stakeholders together with proposals for where the GRA could assist. The draft scenarios have already been presented to some agencies.
- The **Danish Technological Institute is celebrating its centenary this year**. The DTI was founded by Guner Gregersen as an independent institution in 1906 and now has almost 850 employees, making it one of the world's largest private institutes to supply approved technological services such as consultancy, tests, certification and training for companies and public sector organisations. The DTI is a founder member of the Alliance
- The GRA Nerve Centre at The Innovation Hub received a **delegation from Malaysia** under the leadership of the Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation and including some of our colleagues from SIRIM Berhad
- The Materials Science and Manufacturing Unit of the CSIR in South Africa requested assistance from the GRA for senior members of the Alliance to serve on their **Research Advisory Panel**. The response was overwhelmingly positive and once again demonstrated the networking power of the Alliance.

## Interactions with Stakeholders

- A number of leading multinational corporations to explore possible shared areas of interest
- Foundations who could provide funding for some of the global projects planned by the Alliance
- National governments as key stakeholders to all our member organisations
- The World Bank, who partner us in several initiatives, and in planning for the proposed Global Forum on Building Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction which is scheduled to take place early next year.

## News Snippets from our Members

*All the members of the GRA are involved in groundbreaking world class research and development work. Presented here are just a few highlights from press releases to help us all to know a little more about each other.*

### Natural mosquito repellent

The development of a novel natural method for repelling mosquitoes, including species that carry malaria has been completed by the CSIR South Africa. The repellent is based on the active ingredients of an indigenous plant that is not found in any of the current commercial repellents on the market and extensive tests have shown this product to be more efficient than other products on the market. Cultivation sites have been set up for production of the plant material together with oil distillation plants, providing employment and skills enhancement opportunities at community level. In terms of a benefit-sharing agreement signed between the CSIR and traditional healers, royalties from the sale of the products containing the essential oils will be fed into a trust fund which can be used for projects which will benefit the whole community.

### Conformity Assessment in Jordan

During 2006 a team of experts from the Danish Technological Institute and their partner FORCE Technology are working in Jordan on a project which will strengthen the conformity assessment infrastructure in Jordan in general and in the Royal Scientific Society in particular. Transfer of know how takes place in such fields as certification, laboratory testing and business development. This project takes place under the Association Agreement between Jordan and the European Union which came into force on May 1st, 2002. The Agreement is expected to enhance Jordan's partnership with the European Union as well as the Kingdom's integration into the world economy.

### Tunable Single Electron Transport in Nanoparticle Assembly

Transistors have made tremendous impact on our day-to-day life. They are used as major components in

electronic devices, high performance automobiles, mobile phones etc. Perhaps one of the greatest impacts is on the personal computer. Researchers at CSIR India are now focusing on further miniaturization of transistors towards the molecular level, which will be based on single electron transfer (SET) features. The National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) in Pune has shown that the SET can be controlled in chemically synthesized nanoparticles by varying the organic molecules which are used to stabilise them.

### TNO participates in BioMedical Materials Consortium (BMM)

TNO recently announced its participation in a Dutch consortium on biomedical materials. The BioMedical Materials Consortium (BMM) aims to provide a leadership position to the Netherlands in biomedical materials and will facilitate novel product development for various medical applications. The BMM will use public-private partnerships to fully utilise the strong knowledge base in the Dutch industry and academia on biomedical materials.

### Sepang lab to help achieve zero defects

A new National Metrology Laboratory offering precision certification, inspection and testing services to help industries achieve zero defects will be opening in Malaysia at the end of June. The laboratory run by SIRIM Berhad will be manned by 85 technical experts and support staff. It has research and development facilities in the electrical, mechanical, thermophysical, flow (gas and liquid) and chemistry sectors aimed at achieving standards and accreditation benchmarked against international requirements. In two years the laboratory will be extended to enable analysis of new areas such as nanometrology, biotechnology and laboratory medicine.