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NanoEurope 2008: Connecting Science and Economy

Voluntary Measures in Nano Risk Governance

St.Gallen. Besides offering many opportunities, nanotechnology is also associated with potential risks. They have provoked calls for adequate risk governance. As part of the NanoEurope to be held in St.Gallen (Switzerland) on September 16 and 17, 2008, the 4th International NanoRegulation Conference will focus on this subject. Participants will discuss the question, to what extent voluntary measures (Codes of Conduct, Risk Management Systems, Disclosure Agreements, etc.) can be considered to be a sensible and feasible instrument in the regulation of nanotechnology.

One of the most important preconditions for a sustainable development of nanotechnology is its acceptance by the broad public as well as a reliable regulatory environment. Authorities and legislators in the area of health, environment and occupational risks are struggling to keep pace with the rapid developments in the nanotechnology sector. Therefore, voluntary measures by manufacturers and marketers of nanomaterials are increasingly being discussed as an important approach for ensuring a good Nano Risk Governance in the sense of monitoring, assessment and communication of risks.

Many approaches and projects

In the development of a general regulatory framework, authorities increasingly resort to manufacturers and marketers of nanoproducts in order to jointly build up the necessary basis. With the "Action Plan Nanotechnologies" recently adopted by the Federal Council, Switzerland is taking a pioneering position in this area. Further examples of similar approaches can be found in the UK, the U.S., at the EU level, in Germany and in many other countries. Industry is starting to count on this approach as well and introduces so-called Codes of Conduct or risk management systems committing companies to monitor, analyze and communicate nanotechnology risks on their own accord.

Challenges in the international context

Most countries have only few experiences with the effectiveness and implementation of voluntary measures and the associated difficulties. Additionally, the legitimacy and suitability of this instrument is judged disparately in the context of different legal traditions. In order to settle the many open questions, to learn from already existing approaches and to better coordinate future projects, a transnational dialogue among representatives from industry, authorities and the public is necessary.

NanoRegulation: Meeting point for authorities, industry and the public

Over the last four years the NanoRegulation Conference has been established as a leading international platform in the area of nanotechnology safety and regulation. In the context of this year's NanoEurope, the fourth edition of the conference will again bring together decision makers from all areas (authorities, industry, public, media) and advance the transnational dialogue. Participants will be offered a good overview of the current state of nanotechnology regulation as well as voluntary measures and will be able to gain first-hand insight.

Conference brochure and registration online

The program of the NanoEurope including the specialist conferences is available at www.nanoeurope.com. Registration via OnlineTicketing at www.nanoeurope.com.

At a glance: NanoEurope 2008

Date: September 16th-17th, 2008
Location: Olma Messen St.Gallen, St.Gallen (Switzerland)
Exhibition: hall 9.1
Congress: halls 9.1.2, 9.2 and 2.1
Registration: via online ticketing under www.nanoeurope.com

After last year's successful event with 3'500 visitors from over 40 countries NanoEurope this year again will offer a meeting platform for the interested public and experts. The 2008 edition will provide a forum for commercialization strategies and investment know-how aimed at companies, industrial managers and research institutions. Additionally, participants can look into the following focus topics: multifunctional textiles, nano-based electronics and sensor systems and systems with functionalized surfaces and structures. Already for the fourth time, the internationally renowned "**NanoRegulation Conference**" focusing on voluntary measures in nano risk governance will be hold together with a transnational nano stakeholder dialogue.

Further information:

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