

detecting Mycobacterium or Nocardia species in a sample.

This technology is related to Dr. Fischer's other technology, E-278-1999/0, "Multiplex Hybridization System for the Identification of Pathogenic Mycobacterium and Method of Use" (published in the **Federal Register** on September 7, 2002, 65 FR 54288). The distinguishing feature in the current invention that makes it a vast improvement over E-278-1999/0 is the ability to detect all 29 Mycobacterium species tested to date and potentially all Nocardia species in a clinical sample.

Cloned Genomes of Infectious Hepatitis C Virus and Uses Thereof

Masayuki Yanagi, Jens Bukh, Suzanne U. Emerson, Robert H. Purcell (NIAID)

U.S. Patent No. 6,153,421 issued on 28 Nov 2000 (DHHS Reference No. E-050-1998/0-US-01); U.S. Patent Application No. 09/662,454 filed 14 Sep 2000 (DHHS Reference No. E-050-1998/0-US-03); Canadian Application 2295552; Australian Application 84889/98; European Application 98935702.5.

Licensing Contact: Chekesha S. Clingman; 301/435-5018; clingmac@mail.nih.gov.

The current invention provides nucleic acid sequences comprising the genomes of infectious hepatitis C viruses (HCV) of genotype 1a and 1b. It covers the use of these sequences, and polypeptides encoded by all or part of the sequences, in the development of vaccines and diagnostic assays for HCV and the development of screening assays for the identification of antiviral agents for HCV.

Additional information can be found in: Yanagi *et al.*, "Transcripts from a single full-length cDNA clone of hepatitis C virus are infectious when directly transfected into the liver of a chimpanzee," *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* (1997 August) 94(16):8738-8743; and Yanagi *et al.*, "Transcripts of a chimeric cDNA clone of hepatitis C virus genotype 1b are infectious *in vivo*," *Virology* (25 April 1998) 244(1):161-172.

Dated: June 6, 2005.

Steven M. Ferguson,

Director, Division of Technology Development and Transfer, Office of Technology Transfer, National Institutes of Health.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences 2006 Strategic Plan

AGENCY: National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

ACTION: Request for comments and nominations.

SUMMARY: The NIEHS is updating its 2000 strategic plan entitled NIEHS Strategic Plan 2000—A Five-Year Program: New Opportunities in Environmental Health Research. To anticipate, meet, and set priorities for environmental health research, training, resources, and technologies, NIEHS requests input from scientists, members of the public, and all interested parties. The goal of this strategic planning process is to identify barriers to progress for future research and to define future needs and directions for environmental health. In addition, the NIEHS seeks the nomination of individuals qualified to participate in a workshop to discuss the plan in more detail. The existing NIEHS strategic plan can be viewed at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/external/plan2000/home.htm>.

DATES: Submit responses to the NIEHS Office of Science Policy and Planning, (see below), on or before August 5, 2005.

ADDRESSES: The Office of Science Policy and Planning, NIEHS/NIH, PO Box 12233, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709, telephone (919) 541-3484, FAX (919) 541-1994, e-mail niehs-plan2006@niehs.nih.gov. Comments may be submitted electronically at the NIEHS Strategic Planning Web site: <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/external/plan2006/home.htm>. They can also be submitted by e-mail, mail or fax to the above address.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The mission of the NIEHS is to reduce the burden of environmentally-associated disease and dysfunction by defining three elements: (1) How environmental exposures affect our health, (2) how individuals differ in their susceptibility to these exposures, and (3) how these susceptibilities change over time.

The NIEHS achieves its mission through multidisciplinary biomedical research programs and prevention and intervention efforts. The NIEHS also focuses on communication strategies

that encompass training, education, technology transfer, and community outreach. Research is required to disseminate evidence-based environmental health policies that prevent diseases.

Request for Comments

To ensure the continued relevance of its Strategic Plan, the NIEHS seeks input to the following questions relative to the issues described above:

(A) What are the disease processes and public health concerns that are relevant to environmental health sciences?

(B) How can environmental health sciences be used to understand how biological systems work, why some individuals are more susceptible to disease, or why individuals with the same disease may have very different clinical outcomes?

(C) What are the major opportunities and challenges in global environmental health?

(D) What are the environmental exposures that need further consideration?

(E) What are the critical needs for training the next generation of scientists in environmental health?

(F) What technology and infrastructural changes are needed to fundamentally advance environmental health science?

Individuals submitting public comments are asked to include relevant contact information [name, affiliation (if any), address, telephone, fax, e-mail, and sponsoring organization, if applicable].

Request for Nomination of Planning Group Members

The NIEHS solicits nominations for individuals to participate in a workshop to discuss the plan in more detail. Nominations should include the name, degree(s), position title, department, institution name and address, phone and fax numbers, e-mail address, and specific area of expertise. Information of nominated individuals should be sent by August 5, 2005 to the NIEHS office of Science Policy and Planning (contact information provided above).

Dated: June 8, 2005.

David A. Schwartz,

Director, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

[FR Doc. 05-12129 Filed 6-20-05; 8:45 am]

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