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DOE Announces International Agreement on Global Science Online Gateway

WASHINGTON, DC - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced the establishment of a multilateral alliance to govern the rapidly growing online gateway to international scientific research information--WorldWideScience.org. Officials from organizations representing 38 countries formalized their commitment today in Seoul, Korea, by signing a WorldWideScience Alliance agreement to sustain and build upon joint efforts to provide a single, sophisticated point of access for diverse scientific resources and expertise from nations around the world.

“WorldWideScience.org is already a wonderful tool for communication, bringing scientific databases from many countries to the fingertips of those advancing the frontiers of knowledge across the globe. It is well on its way towards becoming a complete, comprehensive, international source for scientific inquiry,” DOE Under Secretary for Science Dr. Raymond L. Orbach said. “Unleashing global scientific discovery, through WorldWideScience.org, will accelerate scientific progress. That is why we are so excited about this alliance and the global access to science it will provide.”

WorldWideScience.org is the result of an agreement—signed in January 2007 by Dr. Orbach and Chief Executive of the British Library Dame Lynne Brindley—to partner on the development of a global science gateway to accelerate scientific discovery by giving people faster and more convenient access to online scientific databases.

When WorldWideScience.org was first made publicly available in June 2007, it was capable of searching 12 databases from 10 countries. Today, the web site enables anyone with Internet access to launch a single-query search of 32 national scientific databases and portals from 44 countries, covering six continents and nearly half of the world’s population.

The typical user query searches 200 million pages of science and technology information not typically accessible through popular search engines. The governance document laying out the structure for the WorldWideScience Alliance was ratified in February at the International Council for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI) 2008 Winter Meeting in Paris, France. DOE’s Office of Scientific and Technical Information (OSTI), within DOE’s Office of Science, serves as the WorldWideScience.org Operating Agent. OSTI conceived of the global science gateway and developed the application based on research results from DOE’s Small Business Innovation Research program.

The multilateral alliance was established to serve as the permanent governance structure of WorldWideScience.org and consists of 11 founding member organizations representing 38 countries. Founding-member organizations include: African Journals OnLine; the British

Library; Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information; Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (South Africa); German National Library of Science and Technology; Institut de l'Information Scientifique et Technique (France); Japan Science and Technology Agency; Korea Institute of Science and Technology Information; Science.gov Alliance (United States); Scientific Electronic Library Online; and the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland. In addition to member countries, ICSTI will serve as a member and primary sponsor.

The Department of Energy was represented at today's ceremony by Dr. Jeffrey Salmon, Associate Under Secretary for Science. For more information on the WorldWideScience Alliance, visit: <http://worldwidescience.org/alliance.html>.

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