

Harmonizing and Optimizing Fish Testing Methods: The OECD Framework Project

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The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) serves a key role in the international harmonization of testing of a wide variety of chemicals. An integrated fish testing framework project was initiated in mid-2009 through the OECD with the US as the lead country. The objectives of the project were to review regulatory needs and data requirements for fish testing in the context of existing OECD Test Guidelines. One goal was to support animal welfare concerns by identifying unnecessary test methods and ensure the optimal use of data derived from in vivo studies. A September 2010 workshop with participation from over 40 international experts was organized with the goal of producing a guidance document that provides a detailed discussion of technical issues, relevant endpoints, and specific recommendations for a harmonized testing framework for fish. In addition to detailed reviews of individual OECD fish test guidelines, topic areas included general testing issues, regulatory needs and data requirements for fish testing, statistical issues, animal welfare considerations and alternative approaches to testing. General guidance on possible strategies for approaching hazard testing with fish was developed by identifying broad principles to guide testing sequences which can then be adapted for specific circumstances and types of chemicals. This presentation will highlight the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop and discuss the resultant framework document.