

Because of the highly sensitive issue of stem cell research using human embryonic stem cells, the SCR&Tox partners are especially aware of the need for a very careful treatment of ethical issues of life sciences, as well as they take the best care of the legal environment of their work expressed by the presence of an independent Ethics Advisor within the network. SCR&Tox participants are aware and will conform to the International, European and National legislations in all the various aspects of the research.

The SCR&Tox project is based directly on the EC policy for research funding of ES cell research and on the laws that apply to such research in European countries of consortium partners: France, Sweden, Great Britain, Italy and Germany. SCR&Tox partners will take all necessary steps to carefully comply with the existing national legislation in the countries where the actual research will be performed and to strictly adhere to the procedural guidelines of the European Commission. All partners who will experiment with cell lines derived from human embryos work in countries which permit, under precise conditions, the use of embryos for research and, in particular, the use of hES cell lines.

SCR&Tox participants affirm that all human embryonic cell lines which will be used within the framework of the current project meet the following criteria:

- The stem cell lines are derived from an embryo(s) originally created for reproduction using IVF treatment but not transferred to the uterus because it was in excess and donated specifically for research programs.
- Free informed consent must have been obtained for the donation of the embryo;

- The sources remain anonymous to the researchers
- No financial inducements were provided for donation of the embryo.

The SCR&Tox consortium is fully aware and agrees on the opinion 22 given to the European Commission by the “European Group on Ethics in Science and New technologies” stating that that “...*respect for human dignity may not be maintained when hESCs are used in toxicity testing of industrial or other commercially produced chemicals not related to drugs, such as cosmetics, or for replacement of animal testing...*”. It should be stressed that SCR&tox does not aim to screen cosmetic ingredients for the purpose of hazard identification.