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New Website Answers Questions About Research on Nanotechnology's Potential Health and Environmental Effects

WASHINGTON – The Wilson Center's **Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies** announces the launch of their website at www.nanotechproject.org. A unique feature of this site is a new, searchable inventory of research into nanotechnology's potential environmental, human health, and safety effects.

The inventory is the best available, detailed and scientifically-classified collection of data from nanotechnology risk-related research that exists either inside or outside the government. It largely contains U.S. government-supported research, but also includes research from different countries and regions, including the European Union, Great Britain, Canada, Germany, and Taiwan. It will be regularly updated as more information becomes available.

“There has been considerable debate over the necessary level of investment in nanotechnology health and environmental risk-related research,” said Project Director David Rejeski. “People have been batting numbers like a tennis ball back-and-forth over a net. Is the ‘right’ number to spend annually \$100 million; is it \$40 million? This inventory helps to change the game from tennis to chess. We need to see the entire research portfolio, every investment and every gap, and be able strategically to move the appropriate amount of funding into the right areas. These strategic investments need to happen at an international level, and result in partnerships between governments and between government and industry.”

Nanoscience is the study of the fundamental principles of molecules and structures with at least one dimension roughly between 1 and 100 nanometers. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter. A human hair measures approximately 100,000 nanometers across. Nanotechnology is the application of these nanostructures into useful nanoscale devices.

Some estimate that more than 700 nanotechnology products are currently being sold—everything from cosmetics to computer chips. The National Science Foundation predicts that the global marketplace for goods and services using nanotechnologies will grow to \$1 trillion by 2015.

The **Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies** was launched in 2005 by the **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars** and **The Pew Charitable Trusts**. It is dedicated to helping business, governments, and the public anticipate and manage the possible human and environmental implications of nanotechnology.

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