

# South Korea to host multi-stakeholder forum, discussing challenges and visions to promote alternatives to animal testing

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (September 1, 2021) — The National Assembly and Humane Society International/Korea have organized a biomedical research multi-stakeholder forum called “Alternatives to animal testing, with scientific approaches”.

Co-hosting the event are the chair of National Assembly’s Health and Welfare Committee Minseok Kim, National Assembly members In-soon Nam and Hyun-young Shin, and the National Assembly Animal Welfare Forum. The forum is sponsored by the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety and the Osong Medical Innovation Foundation.

Prior to the forum discussion, the skin irritation test that was recently accepted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development will be showcased. This new method was developed using the model KeraSkin™, funded by the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety’s Korea Center for the Validation of Alternative Methods. Kyung-Min Lim at Ehwa Womans University and the company Biosolution led this project. Now that the method is recognized as an international standard, it can be used for regulatory testing on cosmetics, industrial chemicals or biomedical devices.

It will be followed by a multistakeholder forum and attended by representatives from Biosolution, BioToxtech, Korea Institute of Chemical Technology, Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, Nexel, Humane Society International/Korea and Bundang Seoul National University Hospital. Participants will share opinions on the current challenges, barriers in promoting alternatives to animal testing and what should change to move towards non-animal approaches.

In South Korea, while there are alternatives available, animal testing is still frequently used as the first option in research and toxicology. This is due to the lack of awareness and dissemination of new methods and has resulted in the widespread notion that alternatives are expensive or non-existent. This unfortunately discourages companies from proactively using newer, non-animal testing methods.

Committee Chair Minseok Kim said: “Animal testing replacement is relatively a new subject for health research in South Korea. However, as the technology advances and the general public is increasingly aware of animal welfare concerns, Korea is in a very good position to lead the health research and development that can mimic human responses rather than relying on animal models. I look forward to hearing from industries how we, law-makers, can support the effort.”

Assembly member Nam said: “While there are research efforts to replace animal testing, we need a system where these research results can be disseminated, and industries are encouraged to practice them. Today’s dialogue is to understand the perspectives from relevant stakeholders in support of the bill, [Act on the Promotion of Development, Dissemination and Use of Alternatives to Animal Testing Methods](#), also known as the PAAM Act. Feedback from industries is valuable to continue inclusive dialogue in advancing the current research and development based on humane approaches.”

Borami Seo, interim executive director and senior policy manager for HSI/Korea said: “HSI/Korea has been pointing out the problems surrounding the absence of strategic development and dissemination plans in

Korea. While Korea is renowned for its advanced technology, conventional animal testing approaches continue to be preferred despite growing concerns about their scientific and ethical limitations. We hope to see more stakeholders come together and join the conversation for the protection of humans and animals while embracing emerging technologies that can better predict human biology.”

**Forum details:**

Date: September 2

Location: Biosolution head office, Seoul, South Korea

Chairperson: Borami Seo, Humane Society International Korea

**Agenda:**

Welcome speech

National Assembly In-soon Nam

Presentation: OECD validated 3D reconstructed human skin model showcase, Biosolution

Panel discussion: Views on challenges and solutions to support alternative approaches to animal testing

**Moderators:**

Kyungmin Lim, College of Pharmacy, Ehwa Womans University

Choongseong Han, NEXEL

Jung seon Lee, Biosolution

Cheol-Beom Park, BioToxtech

Sejoong Kim, Bundang Seoul University Hospital, 3D Motive project

Myung Ae Bae, Korea Research Institute of Chemical Technology

Ja-young Jung, Ministry of Food and Drug Safety

Borami Seo, Humane Society International Korea

**About Humane Society International:**

With a presence in more than 50 countries, Humane Society International works around the globe to promote the human-animal bond, rescue and protect dogs and cats, improve farm animal welfare, protect wildlife, promote animal-free testing and research, respond to natural disasters and confront cruelty to animals in all of its forms.

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