Life sciences and biotechnology: a strategy for Europe

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PURPOSE : to propose a strategy for Europe in the area of life sciences and biotechnology. CONTENT : with the present initiative, the European Commission proposes a strategy for Europe to develop sustainable and responsible policies to address the following three broad questions: - Life sciences and biotechnology offer opportunities to address many of the global needs relating to health, ageing, food and the environment, and to sustainable development. How can Europe best attract the human, industrial and financial resources to develop and apply these technologies to meet society's needs and increase its competitiveness? - Broad public support is essential, and ethical and societal implications and concerns must be addressed. How can Europe deliver effective, credible and responsible policies which enjoy the confidence and support of its citizens? - The scientific and technological revolution is a global reality which creates new opportunities and challenges for all countries in the world, rich or poor. How can Europe best respond to the global challenges, develop its domestic policies with a clear international perspective and act internationally to pursue its interests? The Commission proposes a strategy to respond with responsible, science-based, and people-centred policies on an ethical basis. This strategy aims to allow Europe to benefit from the positive potential of life sciences and biotechnology, to ensure proper governance, and to meet Europe's global responsibilities. This is a proposal for an integrated strategy - its different elements are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Implementing this strategy requires an open, collaborative and sustained process to develop coherent and credible policies. The Commission also proposes an action plan for concrete measures by the Commission and the Community, as well as recommendations for other public and private actors, respecting the subsidiarity principle.