

PARASITE GENOME PROJECTS: STRATEGIES AND METHODS

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FOREWORD

Ever since the start of the Human Genome Project, officially in 1990, great hopes and fears have been expressed simultaneously by the scientific community and society. After dissipation of doubts about the technical and financial feasibility of the project, discussions have been centered mainly on ethical questions and economical issues, such as patents. However, it is now consensus that great benefits for mankind are within reach, and that our understanding about (molecular) biology of living organisms will reach a completely new dimension. Besides that, technical innovations, under development in order to reach more mapping, sequencing and analysis speed will undoubtedly transform profoundly the way science is done in this field.

In parallel, a great number of genome projects on other “model” organism have been initiated, some of them already completed. Several initiatives have also been started on parasite genomes, mainly through support from WHO/TDR, involving North-South and South-South collaborations, and great hopes are vested in that these initiatives will lead to new tools for disease control and prevention, as well as to the establishment of genomic research technology in developing countries. The *Trypanosoma cruzi* genome project has made considerable progress through the concerted action of more than 20 laboratories, most of them in the South.

In this volume, several papers were brought together, as a result of the International Training Course on “Parasite Genome Projects: Strategies and Methods”, and the Symposium on Genome Projects, held at INGEPI, Buenos Aires, Argentina, November 13-24 1995.

The Organizers



