



**ETC Group  
News Release  
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[www.etcgroup.org](http://www.etcgroup.org)**

## **New from ETC Group – January 2006**

- *New Publications*
- *ETC at World Social Forum in Caracas*
- *Coming Soon: ETC Blog*

***New Publications:*** The Worldwatch Institute’s *State of the World 2006* includes a chapter on nanotechnology written by ETC Group. “Shrinking Science: An Introduction to Nanotechnology” provides an overview of tiny tech and its colossal societal impacts. ETC’s chapter concludes: “In the coming decades, technologies converging at the nanoscale will revolutionize the design and manufacture of new materials, blur the distinction between living and non-living matter, and change the very definition of what it means to be human. The challenge is to go beyond the tired and familiar approach of technocratic regulations related to ‘risk’ and to gain an innovative capacity for democratic control and assessment of science and technology.”

Copies of the *State of the World 2006* can be ordered here:

<http://www.worldwatch.org/pubs/sow/2006/>

*State of the World 2006* will be translated into more than 20 languages. Spanish and French copies will be available in March.

In November 2005 ETC Group prepared a report for the Geneva-based South Centre entitled, “The Potential Impacts of Nano-Scale Technologies on Commodity Markets: The Implications for Commodity Dependent Developing Countries.” The South Centre is an intergovernmental body of developing countries that promotes South solidarity and publishes and distributes information, strategic analyses and recommendations on international economic, social and political matters of concern to the South. The report by ETC Group was presented to a South Centre seminar in Hong Kong, 12 December 2005, in advance of the WTO ministerial and is available at <http://www.southcentre.org/publications/researchpapers/ResearchPapers4.pdf>.

The South Centre’s report examines the potential impacts of nanotechnology on two sectors – agriculture and mining – in commodity dependent developing countries. Cases studies on rubber, textiles, platinum and copper provide early examples of how economies and workers in the global South could be affected by nanotech’s emerging R&D and products.

The report concludes: “History shows that there will be a push to replace commodities such as rubber, cotton and strategic minerals with cheaper raw materials that can be sourced or manufactured by new processes closer to home. Nanotech’s new designer materials could topple commodity markets, disrupt trade and eliminate jobs. Worker-displacement brought on by

commodity-obsolescence will hurt the poorest and most vulnerable, particularly those workers in the developing world who don't have the economic flexibility to respond to sudden demands for new skills or different raw materials.”

***ETC Group at the World Social Forum in Caracas, Venezuela – January 25-29, 2006:***

ETC Group and partner organizations will participate in four workshops at the World Social Forum in Caracas. (Check our website, [www.etcgroup.org](http://www.etcgroup.org), or [www.forosocialmundial.org.ve](http://www.forosocialmundial.org.ve) for updates on times and locations of workshops.)

Workshop activities include the following:

**From Biotechnology to Nanotechnology: Science for Whom?**

Organized by ETC Group

A panel discussion with Pat Mooney (ETC Group, Canada), Andrés Barreda, (CASIFOP, Mexico), Elizabeth Bravo (Acción Ecológica, Ecuador), Edgardo Lander (Universidad Central de Venezuela), Silvia Ribeiro (ETC Group, Mexico):

Panel followed by questions, debate and strategy session, focusing on the social, economic and environmental impacts of biotech on local communities and what we can expect with the advance of nanotechnology – the manipulation of matter, both living and non-living, at the scale of atoms and molecules. Where are we now after two decades of biotech and life patenting? We'll consider the current state of affairs, including control and ownership of nanoscale technologies, unanswered questions about the impacts on health, safety and the environment, and the implications for commodity production and trade in the global South. We'll also examine the meaning of converging technologies (B.A.N.G - bits, atoms, neurons and genes). What will technological convergence mean for democracy and human rights?

**Biopiracy and Human Genomics**

Organized by ETC Group

This workshop will include presentations and debate on the human Genographic Project (IBM and National Geographic), Craig Venter's global expedition to “sequence the genome of the seas,” the creation of novel life forms (synthetic genomics) and the implications of the global effort to collect human DNA through the “HapMap” Project.

**Issues at stake at the Convention on Biological Diversity, Brazil 2006: Strategy session for civil society**

Organized by ETC Group, Centro Ecológico (Brasil), CBDC (Community Biodiversity Development and Conservation), Via Campesina.

A workshop to discuss issues and strategies leading up to the March, 2006 meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Curitiba, Brazil. Brief presentations on new forms of biopiracy, new technologies that affect biological and cultural diversity, and the international campaign to ban Terminator seed technology (suicide seeds).

**Ban Terminator!**

Organized by The Ban Terminator Campaign ([www.banterminator.org](http://www.banterminator.org))

A report on the biotech industry's revitalized quest to commercialize genetically engineered “homicide seeds.” Members of the Ban Terminator Campaign will discuss national and international strategies to ban Terminator seed technology: AS-PTA (Assessoria e Serviços a Projectos em Agricultura Alternativa), ETC Group, GRAIN, Indigenous Peoples Council on

Biocolonialism, Third World Network, PAN Asia Pacific.

***Coming Soon: ETC Group Enters Blogosphere***

Stay tuned for news of ETC's blog launch later this month. ETC's blog will allow us to provide frequent bits of news, views, insight and analysis on emerging technologies, corporate power, ETC.

**For more information:**

Pat Mooney and Jim Thomas (Canada)

tel: +1 (613) 241-2267

[etc@etcgroup.org](mailto:etc@etcgroup.org)

[jim@etcgroup.org](mailto:jim@etcgroup.org)

Hope Shand and Kathy Jo Wetter (USA)

tel: +1 (919) 960-5223

[hope@etcgroup.org](mailto:hope@etcgroup.org)

[kjo@etcgroup.org](mailto:kjo@etcgroup.org)

Silvia Ribeiro (Mexico)

tel: +52 55 55 632 664

[silvia@etcgroup.org](mailto:silvia@etcgroup.org)