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**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC AND IBM LAUNCH LANDMARK PROJECT
TO MAP HOW HUMANKIND POPULATED PLANET**
Five-Year Genographic Project Allows Individuals to Trace Own Migratory History
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WASHINGTON—The National Geographic Society and IBM today launched a groundbreaking research initiative that will trace the migratory history of the human species.

The Genographic Project, a five-year research partnership, will use sophisticated laboratory and computer analysis of DNA contributed by hundreds of thousands of people, including indigenous peoples and members of the general public, to map how the Earth was populated. Led by National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Spencer Wells, Ph.D., a team of international scientists and IBM researchers will collect genetic samples, analyze results and report on the genetic roots of modern humans.

With funding from the Waitt Family Foundation, the scientists will establish 10 centers around the world and will study more than 100,000 DNA samples from indigenous populations. The project is expected to reveal rich details about global human migratory history and to drive new understanding about the connections and differences that make up the human species.

"We see this as the 'moon shot' of anthropology, using genetics to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of human history," said project leader Spencer Wells. "Our DNA carries a story that is shared by everyone. Over the next five years we'll be deciphering that story, which is now in danger of being lost as people migrate and mix to a much greater extent than they have in the past."

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Global field science supported by the Waitt Family Foundation



A research partnership of National Geographic and IBM

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The resulting public database will house one of the largest collections of human population genetic information ever assembled and will serve as an unprecedented resource for geneticists, historians and anthropologists.

Members of the general public are able to participate in the Genographic Project by purchasing a kit and allowing their own results to be included in the database. Individuals will be able to follow the progress of their own migratory history as well as the global research by logging on to nationalgeographic.com.

"National Geographic has been exploring and mapping the world for 117 years," said John Fahey, President and CEO of the National Geographic Society. "Now, as a result of our remarkable partnership with IBM and Spencer Wells, we are deploying state-of-the-art science and technology to map our journey across the planet. We hope this ambitious and important project will increase our understanding and appreciation of our shared history. The field science work, so generously supported by the Waitt Family Foundation, will go into a virtual museum of human history."

"IBM and National Geographic are embarking on a historic expedition into our collective past," said Samuel J. Palmisano, chairman and CEO of IBM. "Our two organizations have long contributed to scientific exploration and achievement, extending in different ways the boundaries of human knowledge and understanding. We continue this tradition of innovation that matters for the world and welcome the participation of the hundreds of thousands of people who will join in this amazing journey."

Scientists from IBM's Computational Biology Center, one of the world's foremost life sciences research facilities, will use advanced analytical technologies and data sorting techniques to interpret the samples and to discover new patterns and connections within the data they contain. IBM is also providing the core computational knowledge and infrastructure that will manage the hundreds of thousands of genotype codes being analyzed by the Genographic Project.

"The more we can improve our understanding of the common origin and journey of humankind, the greater the possibility for all of us to see each other as members of the same family," said Ted Waitt, founder of the Waitt Family Foundation. "And with that awareness, we can find ways to live and work together on a global basis."

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The Genographic Project has three core components:

- Field Research – Collecting DNA samples and field research with indigenous populations are central to the project. Blood samples from indigenous populations, whose DNA contains key genetic markers that have remained relatively unaltered over hundreds of generations, are reliable indicators of ancient migratory patterns. Wells and a consortium of scientists from prominent international institutions will conduct the field and laboratory research. An international advisory board will oversee the selection of indigenous populations for testing as well as adhering to strict sampling and research protocols.

- Public Participation and Awareness Campaign – The public can take part by purchasing a Participation Kit, (U.S. \$99.95 plus shipping and handling), and submitting their own cheek swab samples, allowing them to track the overall progress of the project as well as learn their own migratory history. These personal results will be stored securely and anonymously to ensure the privacy of participants. National Geographic and IBM will regularly update the public and the scientific community on project findings, by such means as the Web site (www.genographic.com) and National Geographic's many other media platforms worldwide. A television program, "The Search for Adam," will air in the U.S. on the National Geographic Channel Explorer series and around the world on the National Geographic Channel. Public participation may be restricted in some countries, such as China and India, where the export of genetic materials requires government approval. The Genographic Project will work with relevant authorities to achieve the broadest level of public participation possible.

- Genographic Legacy Project – Proceeds from the sale of the Genographic Participation Kits will help fund future field research and a legacy project, which will build on National Geographic's focus on world cultures. The legacy project will support education and cultural preservation projects among participating and other indigenous groups.

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About National Geographic: Founded in 1888, National Geographic is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. Its mission is to increase and diffuse geographic knowledge while promoting the conservation of the world's cultural, historical and natural resources. National Geographic reflects the world through its six magazines, cable television channels and programs, films, radio, books, videos, maps, interactive media and merchandise, reaching as many as 300 million people each month.

About IBM: IBM is the world's largest information technology company, with more than 80 years of leadership in helping businesses innovate. It has a long history of innovating on behalf of society, and in recent years has launched a series of major research initiatives designed to overcome many of the remaining "grand challenges" of science, including the Deep Blue chess-playing computer and unraveling the mysteries of protein folding with BlueGene, the world's fastest supercomputer. IBM Research is the world's largest information technology research organization, with more than 3,000 scientists and engineers at eight labs in six countries. For more information about IBM, visit www.ibm.com.

About the Waitt Family Foundation: Established in 1993 by Gateway Computer founder and now Chairman Ted Waitt and his wife, Joan, the Waitt Family Foundation focuses on humankind's past, present and future. Specifically, the foundation funds projects aimed at making discoveries about our past that will help inform the way we are today and reveal untapped possibilities for the future. For more information about the Waitt Family Foundation, visit www.waittfoundation.org.

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