

Scientists Warn New 'Mirror Life' Could Threaten All Creation

When God completed His creation and declared it good, the order of life was set in place. Yet humanity continues to push past the boundaries of nature, seeking to remake what has already been called perfect. The latest frontier in this pursuit is "mirror life," a technology so potentially dangerous that many scientists are calling for it to be banned before it even exists.

"We should choose not to build mirror life and pass laws to ensure nobody can," wrote John Glass, a synthetic biologist who helped create the first living cell with a synthetic genome, in a commentary for the Financial Times. "The question is not whether we are able to prevent this threat – it is whether we will act while we still can."

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Mirror organisms would turn the foundations of biology upside down. All known life on Earth carries right-handed DNA and left-handed proteins. Mirror life would reverse this structure, a shift scientists fear could unleash catastrophic consequences.

In December, two Nobel laureates joined other experts in publishing a report that warned the technology "could be globally disastrous," even to the point of wiping out entire forms of life if pathogens emerged. More than 150 scientists and ethicists gathered this summer in Paris to weigh the risks, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation has said it will not fund any efforts to create mirror organisms.



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Glass painted a grim picture of what could happen if researchers move forward. "To the best of our knowledge, our immune systems produce very weak antibody responses against mirror molecules, if any," he explained. "A mirror bacterial infection might be like having many immune deficiencies at once."

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Beyond human health, ecosystems could be ravaged. Without natural predators, mirror bacteria could spread unchecked. "Contaminated areas could become irreversibly uninhabitable, compromising our agriculture and natural world," Glass said. "Huge numbers of people, animals and plants could be wiped out, with some driven to extinction."

Despite the warnings, some researchers see promise in the medical potential of mirror proteins, which might create more durable drugs. Glass admitted that any future restrictions would have to be carefully crafted: "This will require precision about what research can continue and what should cease."

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Still, this is clearly an urgent matter. "Once it is possible to build a mirror cell, it would be comparatively easy to engineer many more kinds of mirror bacteria," Glass wrote. "If this is achieved and Pandora's box opens it could pose extraordinary risks."

The question remains: if creation was already good, why does humanity keep striving to reengineer it?

Prepared by Charisma Media Staff.