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Elie Dolgin, assistant news editor for *Nature Medicine* in New York, reports on developments in the field of targeted alterations of the rat genome, including the Zinc Finger Nuclease (ZNF) technology, homologous recombination in ES cells, transposon technology and ENU mutant technology, featuring EURATRANS participants Aron Geurts and Howard Jacob of the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), Milwaukee, Austin Smith of the University of Cambridge, Zsuzsanna Izsvak of the Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine (MDC) in Berlin and Edwin Cuppen of the Hubrecht Institute in Utrecht, respectively.