Reviewer's report

Title: hTERT promoter activity and CpG methylation in HPV-induced carcinogenesis

Version: 1 Date: 27 January 2010

Reviewer: Frank Roesl

Reviewer's report:

Aim of the present report was the investigation of epigenetic modifications of the hTERT regulatory region in different HPV positive cell lines and HPV-positive cervical samples. Here, an increased degree of DNA methylation of previously identified transcriptionally repressive sequences was detected.

This interesting study is clearly touching aspects which are relevant to understand the role of epigenetic events during cervical cancer development.

The project does not merely rely on tissue culture cells, but also includes human biopsy material, claiming that the detection of DNA methylation within the hTERT promoter might be a useful additional biomarker for cancer progression.

Minor comments:

Page 14: it should be explicitly mentioned that the luciferase activities shown in Fig. 2B&C are relative to the hTERT-297/-23 construct and NOT relative to the CMV promoter as depicted in Fig. 1B.

Page 15: it is written that region S2 encompasses pos. -108 to +104. However, this is in contrast to that what is outlined for region S2 in Fig. 3A.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests