France announced plans to mount a government-supported genome research effort in June 1990, and set aside funding beginning in October that year[38]. This augmented a relatively small grants program for genome research commenced in 1988. Canada joined the chorus in 1992[39]. Several European nations also augmented their funding for human genetics during this period,[36; 40] contributing to an accelerating pace of gene discovery. In June 1990, Latin American scientists formed a regional network to encourage collaboration on genome research with laboratories in North America and Europe and among themselves[41; 42].

The genome project thus grew rapidly into an international effort supported by many governments and the EC. There was strong consensus on the need for complete genetic linkage and physical maps, and general agreement about the need for new sequencing technologies. There was disagreement, however, about the degree to which large-scale DNA sequencing should be initiated and outright controversy about the best scientific strategy to pursue in large-scale sequencing efforts.

As the genome project was transformed from a series of meetings and policy reports into an actual scientific program, it added several process goals The technical goals for gene mapping remained, but several policy goals were added. One distinctive aspect of the genome project was its explicit attention to technology development in addition to science. Attaining the technical goals depended on new technologies, and developing new biological methods, instruments, automata and robots, and other new technologies became an explicit objective.

An unprecedented commitment to support research on social, legal, and ethical implications of genome research became the second process goal. Discussion about the social implications of human genetics had attended the genome debate from its earliest phases in Washington, and the history of eugenics cast a long shadow over the genome debate, particularly in German-speaking Europe. Both the NRC and OTA reports explicitly acknowledged the importance of social and ethical issues, and the need to address them head-on as the genome project progressed.