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The American Society for Microbiology -- the world's largest scientific society of individuals interested in the microbiological sciences, with over 43,000 members in the United States and abroad -- recently issued a strong policy [statement](#) [4] discussing the scientific basis for evolution. Taking examples from the ASM's specialty of microbiology, the statement notes:

In microbiology, the validity of evolutionary principles is supported by [1] readily demonstrated mutation, recombination and selection, which are the fundamental mechanisms of evolution; [2] comparisons based on genomic data that support a common ancestry of life; and [3] observable rates of genetic change and the extent of genomic diversity which indicate that divergence has occurred over a very long scale of geologic time, and testify to the great antiquity of life on Earth. Thus, microorganisms illustrate evolution in action, and microbiologists have been able to make use of the microbes' evolutionary capacity in the development of life-improving and life-saving innovations in medicine, agriculture, and for the environment.

In contrast, the statement adds, "proposed alternatives to evolution, such as intelligent design and other forms of creationism, are not scientific, in part because they fail to provide a framework for useful, testable predictions." The statement concludes with a suggestion for educational policymakers: "It is important that society and future generations recognize the legitimacy of testable, verified, fact-based learning about the origins and diversity of life."

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