

## **Direct visualisation of heavy ion induced DANN fragmentation using Atomic Force Microscopy**

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Atomic Force Microscopy of phiX174 plasmids irradiated in vitro was used to visualise the DNA fragmentation induced by heavy ions and to compare it to the fragmentation pattern obtained after X-irradiation. Fragment distributions induced by low ion fuences were found to be much more shifted towards small fragment sizes than the distributions obtained after corresponding doses of X-rays. The average fragment length was found to be significantly smaller than the full plasmid length even for single ion traversals.