

## **500 million citizens are relying on SCENIHR:**

### **Is Science Being Hidden from the Public?**

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The European Commission in collaboration with the Greek Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC) under the auspices of the EU Council Greek Presidency organised a major workshop in Athens on EMF electromagnetic fields and health effects with a focus on public awareness, conciliating scientific findings and uncertainties in policy making. The event took place on 27<sup>th</sup> & 28 March 2014 at Cotsen Hall, Athens, Greece and included presenters from various parties from the European Commission, WHO, public authorities, industry, operators, environmental and consumer associations and academia. The goal of the conference was to reach a common approach for the future in order to respond to public concerns about electromagnetic fields, to enhance information dissemination and discuss new studies and scientific evidence in relation to EMF, and to identify knowledge gaps needed for sound policy making. In this context, the new SCENIHR draft opinion on EMF and potential health effects was presented.

SCENIHR, the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks, has been charged with providing reports for the European Commission and Members of the European Parliament which may be relied upon by all participating governments.

Eileen O'Connor was invited as a representative for the UK Radiation Research Trust charity and was joined by Sissel Halmøy representing International EMF Alliance.

The opening address was given by Marian Harkin MEP expressing the need for a review from up to date evidence and the need for accountability. She

stressed importance of openness towards lobbying and diverse opinions and the need for transparency and inclusion of all stakeholders. She reminded the EU Commission and SCENIHR that public consultation should not simply be a box ticking exercise and that consultation is only meaningful if addressing negative outcomes along with reports that have positive outcomes. Furthermore and perhaps most profoundly, she gave the stark reminder that **500 million citizens are relying on SCENIHR's review.**

Eileen O'Connor said "I was hoping for an equal and honest debate to be held in Athens, but was sadly surprised and extremely disappointed by the lack of inclusion for stakeholders with alternative views to scientists representing SCENIHR in Athens. I was one of only two voices invited to present with an alternative view and had taken time to prepare a presentation in the hope and anticipation of receiving a warm welcome and equal opportunity to be heard and taken seriously."

Sissel Halmøy said "It was plain for all to see that there was clear selection bias from SCENIHR's review as they clearly cherry picked their own research and promoted it as gold standard while heavily criticising Lennart Hardell's research."

The Hardell Group published five ground breaking studies in 2013, all of which have been ignored by SCENIHR in their report. The Hardell studies are the first to correlate mobile phone usage with incidences of brain tumours over a 20+year period of time, longer than any other epidemiological studies. They found a clear correlation between cell phone usage and two types of brain tumours, acoustic neuromas and the deadliest of all brain cancers, gliomas. Yet this startling risk of brain tumours was not only ignored, but denigrated by members of SCENIHR, the irony being IARC -- the World Health Organization's cancer committee -- accepted Hardell's science prior to 2013 for consideration when the IARC scientists almost unanimously voted for the 2B "possible carcinogen to humans" classification for the entire RF - EMF Spectrum.

Joachim Schüz, Head of IARC's Section of Environment and Radiation, promoted the Danish study while criticising Haredell's publications. Eileen O'Connor reminded him that the highest court in Italy favoured Hardell's study over the 2010 Interphone Studies, which had failed to find a similar correlation. She also reminded him that the Italian court considered Hardell's studies more reliable and independent than the Interphone study which had been part funded by the mobile phone industry.

Paolo Rossi, Italian Ministry of Health said, "Children should not use mobile phones as a toy". However, he then joined Theodoros Samaras, Chair of the EMF working group in criticising the decision from the Italian Supreme Court judge for awarding compensation towards a plaintiff who developed a neuroma brain tumour caused by his heavy mobile phone use. Paolo Rossi also criticised the methodology used in Hardell's research.

For years scientists have been offering incomplete, inconsistent and contradictory information, leading to confusion for the public and policy makers, resulting in members of the public seeking justice via the courts.

O'Connor highlighted the fact that days after the mobile phone brain tumour ruling, the Italian trial court found six scientists and one government official guilty of manslaughter due to their failure to predict an earthquake. All were convicted for providing inexact, incomplete and contradictory information about the dangers preceding a devastating 2009 earthquake in Italy which killed 309 people. "This ruling is significant as we appear to be witnessing a repeat in regards to the EMF debate," announced O'Connor. "There is a lack of responsibility taken with policy makers saying they are relying on government and industry funded scientific reports from scientists. Then these same scientists say it is the duty of policy makers to protect public health. Who is truly speaking out for the 500 million citizens the European Commission oversees? Do we need to wait for the courts to hold those who are offering inexact, incomplete and contradictory information accountable?"

Eileen O'Connor held the five Hardell papers missing from SCENIHR's report up high for all to see and called for them to be included within the SCENIHR review. Reading the conclusion from one of the papers she said

**“Conclusions** Based on Hill’s viewpoints and his discussion on how these issues should be used, the conclusion of this review is that glioma and acoustic neuroma are caused by RF-EMF emissions from wireless phones. According to the IARC Preamble (54), the classification should be group 1, i.e., **“the agent is carcinogenic to humans”**, and urgent revision of current guidelines for exposure is needed.”

The deficiency of the SCENIHR opinion document was reported by many including former New York Times science writer Blake Levitt and University of Washington Professor Henry Lai as highlighted in Sissel Halmøy’ presentation. Lai and Levitt said the report fails to do a thorough review of recent literature on non-ionizing electromagnetic fields (EMF) and biological health effects. Only selected papers were evaluated using ambiguous criteria.

Most of the following publications since 2007 were not considered by SCENIHR.

- **Genetic effects:**  
RFR: 114 papers (65% reported effects)  
ELF EMF: 59 papers (83% reported effects)
- **Neurological effects:**  
RFR: 211 papers (68% reported effects)  
ELF EMF: 105 papers (90% reported effects)
- **Oxidative status:**  
RFR: 106 papers (88% reported effects)  
ELF EMF: 110 papers (88% reported effects)

Lai and Levitt said, "It is outrageous to ignore any effect of EMF exposure on human health and a crime to humanity not to recommend any action to curtail the exposure."

Demands have been made for the report to be returned for a new evaluation and an urgent call for independent experts to be included within SCENIHR.

Radiation Research Trust Director Eileen O'Connor has written to John F. Ryan, Acting Director for Public Health Directorate Health and Consumers Directorate General at the European Commission, and called for a thorough and complete overhaul of the report, stating that some of the scientists working within SECNIHR are offering inaccurate, incomplete and contradictory information. "The public and policy makers deserve to know the truth as 500 million citizens are relying on their opinion," demanded O'Connor. "The time has come and as a matter of urgency to demand the inclusion of truly independent scientists with a reminder that it is not just the 500 million citizens at risk today, but future generations due to the epigenetic properties this agent carries."

"The EU Commission has been called to insist that public health is priority," continued O'Connor, "with a reminder that ignoring this situation today will lead to false economy in the future due to the impact this technology will have on public health and the environment."

"The world urgently needs to be informed that these five papers by the esteemed Hardell Group were dismissed and ignored by Schüz, by IARC, by WHO, and as we witnessed in Athens, by SCENIHR," Eileen O'Connor stated. "These papers have been placed directly into the hands of the EU Commission along with the report from Lai and Levitt outlining hundreds of missing research papers demonstrating positive results in the hope that policy makers can hold SCENIHR accountable."

"This issue needs to be addressed and dealt with as a matter of global urgency," announced Sissel Halmøy. With a background in cybernetics and having worked as a rocket scientist for 18 years, Halmøy was chosen as one out of 17,000 employees by her former employer to meet with Apollo 13. She said "'Failure is not an option.' These are the famous words from the Apollo 13 control room chief officer Gene Kranz and these words have followed me since meeting him in 1999." The rocket scientist continued, "Our European Community is being irradiated by microwaves; people are becoming ill and suffering with many conditions including electrosensitivity. The World Health Organization has also declared a possible correlation to cancer in humans. It's not rocket science. It's just common sense and sound science."

Eileen O'Connor is the co-founders for the UK Radiation Research Trust and co-founder for the International EMF Alliance. In 2011, she became a member of the European Commission's DG SANCO expert group of stakeholders on electromagnetic fields. Eileen talked about her mission with this campaign since developing breast cancer in her 30's and discovering a cancer cluster surrounding the T-Mobile phone mast in 2001 in the tiny hamlet of Wishaw. She highlighted 10 epidemiological studies that assessed for health effects of mobile phone base stations. Seven of these studies explored the association between base station proximity and neurobehavioral effects and three investigated cancer. Eight of the 10 studies reported increased prevalence of adverse neurobehavioral symptoms or cancer in populations living at distances 500 meters from base stations.

Residents of Wishaw engaged with T-Mobile while searching for the truth in science and pleading for their lives and for T-Mobile remove the phone mast after the discovering the cancer cluster. T-Mobile shamefully highlighted the Stewart report claiming the mast was operating within Safety guidelines, while burying a report commissioned by T-Mobile in 2000. The ECOLOG report of over 220 peer-reviewed and published papers found evidence for the following:

- Adverse effects on central nervous system,
- Cancer initiating and promoting effects,
- Impairments of certain brain functions,
- Loss of memory and cognitive function.

Ecolog called for an immediate downward regulation for the ICNIRP guidelines. **This study, profound in its conclusions of harm, was not circulated and remained only available in German until discovered and translated by HESE UK many years later and was hidden to residents in Wishaw as O'Connor desperately sought answers for the cancer cluster in her village.**

In addition, the Insurance industry worryingly highlights the implications for human health, in particular with regard to the use of mobile phones, power lines or antennas for broadcasting. Potential impacts are rated as high and likely to hit the casualty area of insurance business over the next decade.

Professor Lukas Margaritas, leader for the Department of Cell Biology at University of Athens, along with Dr Adamantia F. Fragopoulou and fellow researchers attended the event. Experts famous in this field having published many peer-reviewed papers, including research on the impacts of mobile phone and DECT cordless phone base radiation on key proteins in the brain, demonstrating that radiation from mobile and cordless DECT phones can affect proteins of the mouse brain that are critical to learning, memory, and thinking. Both researchers strongly voiced concerns from the audience and Professor Lukas Margaritas joined in the call for SCENIHR to include Lennart Hardell's 2013 publications.

The Member of the European Parliament Marion Harkin's opening speech had called for officials to earn respect and the need to include other stakeholder's views and need for transparency. Sadly displays of arrogance and ignorance were demonstrated by some of the scientists and officials simply underscoring the differences of opinion which permeated this hearing.

A line was drawn in the sand at the end of the workshop in Athens by Eileen O'Connor. O'Connor's last glimmer of hope had disappeared after witnessing such bias reporting. The RRT Director said she was putting those at the conference "on notice". O'Connor announced to the assembled scientists, **"As of March 28, 2014 representatives of the telecom industry, government officials, and WHO scientists absolutely, irrefutably have the latest science from Hardell and know that Hardell himself is calling for RF to be classified a Group 1 carcinogen. The clock has now started ticking on liability. No more excuses. SCENIHR, The industry, the EU Commission, and WHO are now fully informed."**

The EU Commission survey will run until **16 April 2014**. Interested parties are invited to provide comments on the scientific evidence of this preliminary opinion online. Once adopted, this opinion will update previous Scientific Committee opinions of 19 January 2009 and 6 July 2009 in light of newly available information. Please consider providing information in the hope that the EU will listen and help protect the lives of future generations. Download details here: [EU Survey](#)

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