

# Switzerland

## Report on EMF Activities

### 9<sup>th</sup> International Advisory Committee Meeting on EMF

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## 1. General Research Activities

### ***Proposal for a national research program***

A proposal for a national research program has been submitted by the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape. It was evaluated by the Swiss Federal Office for Education and Science and the Swiss National Science Foundation and got a good note, but the final decision was postponed till the end of the year. If accepted, the program will cover ELF and RF, be fully sponsored by the government and run for approximately 3-5 years with approximate funding of 5-7 Mio. CHF.

### ***Swiss Research Foundation on Mobile Communication***

The major research activities in Switzerland in the field of mobile communication are running in the frame of the Research Foundation. More information about the Foundation and the running projects can be found under:

[http://www.mobile-research.ethz.ch/english/index\\_e.htm](http://www.mobile-research.ethz.ch/english/index_e.htm)

One of the projects that should be specially mentioned is the: "***Study on the feasibility of future epidemiological studies on health effects of mobile telephone base stations***". The study is conducted by an international expert group, lead-managed by ARC Seibersdorf research GmbH (Georg Neubauer) and financed, along with the Foundation, also by Swiss Federal Offices.

### ***TNO replication study***

A replication and an extension of the TNO study will be carried out, focusing on the UMTS-exposure only. It will be conducted by the University of Zurich (Dr. Achermann), with the participation of other Swiss institutions, coordinated by the Swiss Research Foundation and financed by Swiss Federal Offices and mobile phone operators (maybe also by some Dutch Authorities). The study should start in June 2004 and be finished within a year.

### ***Swiss EMF questionnaire survey***

A questionnaire survey has been conducted by the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health. Health questionnaires were distributed to people who complained about symptoms of ill health which they ascribed to exposure to electromagnetic fields. The objective of the survey was to gain a better knowledge of the anxieties of people concerned, to obtain hints of possible problems and of actions that should be taken to solve these problems. A full paper has been published in the "Journal of Environmental Hygiene and Health", 207 (2004), 141-150. The database of electrosensitive persons will be used to recruit the volunteers for the TNO replication study

***Technology assessment study: “Precautionary Principle in the Information Society – Effects on the Health and Environment”***

The above mentioned study has been initialized by the Swiss Science and Technology Council, founded by different Federal Offices and conducted by several institutions. A very comprehensive final report (350 pages) can be found under (German only, summary in English):  
[http://www.ta-swiss.ch/www-remain/reports\\_archive/publications/2003/030904\\_PvC\\_Bericht.pdf](http://www.ta-swiss.ch/www-remain/reports_archive/publications/2003/030904_PvC_Bericht.pdf)

## **2. New Policies and Legislations**

***Report: "Health Protection in the Field of nonionizing Radiation"***

At the moment, an interdepartmental work group is reviewing the situation in Switzerland regarding health protection in the field of non ionizing radiation. In a report, addressed primarily to the members of parliament, the present situation in the fields of legislation, prevention, precaution, information and research will be laid down, the need for action recognized and some ideas for solutions presented.

## **3. Areas of Public Concern and National Responses**

***Reactions to the TNO study***

See separate contribution.

***Dialog on sustainable mobile communication***

From summer 2003 until spring 2004, the Swiss foundation “Risiko-Dialog” will lead a scientifically accompanied project concerning the dialogue on sustainable mobile communication. It is aimed at improving the communication between the groups involved in the mobile communication debate.

***Report “Precautionary Principle in Switzerland and Internationally”***

The report has been worked out by an interdepartmental group with the aim to provide a catalogue of criteria for the implementation of the PP based on prevailing law, to enable the Federal Administration to communicate the various interpretations of PP in an informed manner and to provide a guideline for Swiss delegations when conducting negotiations on international agreements.

The English version of the report can be found under:

<http://www.bag.admin.ch/themen/weitere/vorsorge/e/index.htm>