

Moreover, the Scientific Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment (CSTEE) had already, in 2001, adopted a scientific opinion on the possible effects of EMF, Radiofrequency Fields and Microwave Radiation on human health². The main conclusion was that, based on the information available on carcinogenic and other non thermal effects of radiofrequency and microwave radiation frequencies, a revision of exposure limits set by the Commission on the basis of the conclusions of the 1998 opinion of the Steering Scientific Committee³ would not be justified. With regard to extremely low frequency (ELF) electromagnetic fields, the CSTEE concluded that while the evidence of an association between exposure to ELF and childhood leukaemia had been strengthened, the association did not meet adequate criteria to be considered causal. Furthermore, there was no convincing suggestion of any other carcinogenic effect of ELF. Overall, the CSTEE had insufficient scientific evidence, as to thermal and non thermal effects, to propose alternatives to the technical annex of the Council Recommendation.

However, in response to growing concerns amongst the general public about EMF exposure, the Commission has asked the CSTEE to update the existing scientific advice on health risks associated with exposure to EMF in the light of new evidence on exposure and research on health effects.

The recent preliminary opinion of the Scientific Committee on Newly Identified and Emerging Health Risks (SCENIHR) is aimed at updating the CSTEE opinion, in light of all new relevant scientific data available.

A public consultation was held on the preliminary scientific opinion of the SCENIHR. The SCENIHR is now considering comments and information received and will produce a final text that will soon be published on the Internet⁴. In this context, I will instruct my services to bring the report of Dr Hyland to the attention of the Committee. In light of the final opinion of SCENIHR and of the updated information on the situation in the Member States, we intend to present to the Parliament and Council in 2007 a new Commission report on the application of Recommendation 1999/519/EC. The report will, in particular, discuss whether it is necessary to revise the limit values, which as you know are in line with the recommendations of the International Commission for Non-Ionising Radiation Protection, taking into account the state of scientific knowledge and any appropriate precautionary consideration.

Finally, I would like to assure you that the Scientific Committees of the Commission are organised and work in a manner designed to ensure the highest possible level of independence and competence. This applies in particular to opinions on important and sensitive issues like the possible health effects of EMF.

Yours sincerely,



² http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/environment/EMF/out128_en.pdf

³ http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/sc/ssc/out19_en.html

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihhr/scenihhr_opinions_en.htm