



Advancing Sound Public Health Policy  
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**For Immediate Release**

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**THE EMR POLICY INSTITUTE JOINS CALLS FOR POSTPONEMENT OF IARC'S MAY 2011 MEETING IN LYON, FRANCE:**

FOR THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND ITS AGENCY, IARC, TO RECONVENE AN OPEN AND TRANSPARENT MEETING WITH PANEL MEMBERS, INVITED EXPERTS AND OBSERVERS WHO HAVE NOT ENGAGED IN CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS.

The EMR Policy Institute joins calls from the International EMF Alliance (IEMFA) (see below), the UK's Powerwatch, and scientists from around the world for postponement of the World Health Organization's (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) meeting scheduled to begin May 24th, in Lyon, France. The IARC panel is to conduct an assessment of the cancer risks associated with exposure to sources of radiofrequency (RF) and microwave (MW) radiation and release a Monograph report.

Objection to the IARC panel's composition and calls for postponement of the Lyon meeting have come amid serious concerns that the panel is rigged with telecommunications industry connections and will engage in a white-wash of the scientific evidence demonstrating harmful biological effects from RF/MW exposures - rendering a decision favorable to commercial interests.

Concern about the IARC panel's conflict of interest problem was confirmed in the Sunday, May 23, 2011 press release by Swedish investigative journalist, Mona Nilsson, revealing Anders Ahlbom, chosen to participate in the Lyon meeting as an epidemiology expert, "is the co-founder of 'Gunnar Ahlbom AB' a Brussels-based lobbying firm aiming to assist the telecom industry on EU regulations, public affairs and corporate communications."

Following this revelation, IARC dropped Professor Ahlbom from the panel but allowed him to attend the meeting as an "invited guest", which Ahlbom has declined. IARC's decision, despite the revelation, to allow Ahlbom to attend in any capacity demonstrates it does not understand the seriousness of IARC's conflict of interest problems. Had Ahlbom attended he would have been afforded the opportunity to influence the outcome of the meeting, as will the invited industry representatives, as discussed below.

It has been speculated that Anders Ahlbom was to chair the IARC epidemiological expert group on cancer assessment at the Lyon meeting and that following Ahlbom's removal, Jack Siemiatycki, University of Montreal, Canada, is to replace him. This appointment, if true, is also troubling given Professor Siemiatycki's recent comments quoted in the May 20, 2011 *National Post* concerning the precautionary principle: "It's an interesting question, but if we had applied it 2,000 years ago, we'd still be in caves making fires by rubbing sticks together. At what point does the precautionary principle paralyze any technological development?" Does Siemiatycki have a pre-conceived bias against the precautionary principle? Certainly such an expression does not garner public confidence that Siemiatycki has the objectivity or takes seriously the global public

health issue of exposure to radiofrequency electromagnetic fields - to chair the IARC epidemiological expert group. He is not an appropriate choice for chair.

Another member of the Lyon expert panel, Dr. Rene de Sege, has come under scrutiny in a French TV Documentary aired May 19, 2011 claiming he intervened to suppress the results of a study on behalf of *Bouygues Telecom* that demonstrated radiation health risk.

It is also disturbing that IARC's actions allow invitation of telecommunications industry representatives. For this May 2011 meeting, IARC has invited three industry representatives – two from the US -- as observers, yet refused to permit the press or any independent observers to be present. The inclusion of Joe Elder, Mobile Manufacturers Forum, and Mays Swicord, CTIA (Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association), both prior US employees of Motorola, will provide access to the proceedings and members of the IARC panel, and opportunities to lobby on behalf of industry's interests at the expense of the public's. IARC allows no equivalent access to advocates for the public. These industry representatives will be able to eye closely which scientists' opinions support or do not support industry's interests. Given the "war gaming" against scientists who have had the courage to speak out about the scientific evidence demonstrating health risks, inviting industry to the Lyon meeting will chill deliberations. Commercial interests should not be allowed to influence the outcome of IARC's deliberation. The three telecommunications industry representatives' invitations should be revoked.

The WHO has stated: "An IARC Monograph is an evaluation exercise that demands complete independence from all commercial interests and from advocates who might be perceived as advancing a pre-conceived position." IARC has not followed its own guideline when it invited industry representatives and those with ties to industry, and must follow its own standard to regain the public's confidence. To this end IARC should release all conflict of interest statements and remove those who have connections to industry.

Given the documented conflicts regarding Ahlbom and de Sege, IARC has a burden to publicly document that no other such conflicts exist with other panel members.

It is imperative that IARC demonstrate independence and transparency by not engaging in an assessment process or issuing a decision on the carcinogenicity of RF and MW radiation exposures until it gets its house in order. It should reconstitute the panel with members and expert specialists who have no conflicts of interest and by facilitating a transparent process to include inviting the media and independent observers. It is inappropriate for any industry representatives to be present in any context or venue during the period the meeting is taking place.

**The EMR Policy Institute calls on Emilie van Deventer, Director of WHO's International EMF Project, and Dr. Christopher Wild, IARC Director, to effectuate the necessary actions to ensure IARC's proceedings and decision, and resulting Monograph, will not be tainted and compromised by conflicts of interest, lack of transparency and lack of complete scientific information. The world's peoples deserve nothing less than for IARC to do its due diligence and do its job right – ethically and responsibly - to protect the millions globally who now use or who will use mobile phones.**

**The EMR Policy Institute supports the statement of the International EMF Alliance, sent forth here, as follows:**

**Global Scientists Rebuke Coming Decision on Carcinogenicity of Radiofrequency (RF) and Microwaves (MW) by WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), Calling Any Opinion Rendered "Irresponsible" Without Full Disclosure of the 2004 Interphone Study Results.**

May 20, 2011, Oslo, Norway. In collaboration with the IEMFA, the scientists from Europe, North America, Australia and Israel have sent an Open Letter to Dr. Christopher Wild, Director of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), calling for postponement of the forthcoming meeting May 24-31, 2011 in Lyon, France, “Non-ionizing Radiation, Part II: Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields (includes mobile telephones),” at which determination of the carcinogenicity of cell phones and wireless technologies will be made.

**[The Open Letter to the International Agency for Research on Cancer](#)**

**[http://iemfa.org/images/pdf/OpenLetter\\_IARC.pdf](http://iemfa.org/images/pdf/OpenLetter_IARC.pdf)** signed by international scientists and public officials asserts:

1. No decision should be made by IARC on the carcinogenicity of radiofrequency radiation (RF/MW) until the interphone Study’s remaining elements are disclosed. To date, only the pooled 13-country data for glioma and meningioma elements have been published. Though the Interphone Study data was collected in 2004, the overall analysis of the risk of acoustic neuroma, parotid gland tumors and tumors in the regions of the brain most highly exposed to cellphone radiation have yet to be published. Also, single-country Interphone studies have not yet been fully published for Australia, Canada, Finland, Italy and New Zealand. However, other individual country studies that have been published show very significant risks for acoustic neuroma, parotid gland tumor and glioma. International scientists say scientific conclusions will only be possible when all of the country results, and all of the overall pooled results, are published.
2. Telecom industry observers at the IARC meeting places a “chilling effect” on grant-dependent researchers, and should be excluded. For example, the presence of observers Joe Elder, representing the Mobile Manufacturers Forum (previously a long-term Motorola employee); Jack Rowley, representing the GSM Association (a previously long-term Telstra employee); and Mays Swicord representing the Cellular Telecommunications Association (CTIA) (previously a long-term Motorola employee), create an environment of scientific intimidation and suppression through the presence of these influential corporate interests.
3. IARC’s required conflict of interest statements should be made public. Scientists say IARC, which calls itself “transparent”, must release the conflict of interest statements, as do scientific journals, but IARC Officer, Dr. Robert Bann, who will head the upcoming IARC meeting, has refused to release the IARC experts’ conflict of interest statements, claiming they are confidential. It is inappropriate, and lacking in transparency, for a publicly-funded organization, in this case with approximately 38 million Euros, to hide its conflict of interests statements from public view.

We also understand that Professor Anders Ahlbom of the Karolinska Institute of Sweden is to chair the IARC group on epidemiology. Professor Ahlbom has repeatedly stated that he believes that mobile phones are “safe” and we call for him to be replaced by a more neutral Chairman.

A recently published paper by International EMF Alliance co-founder, Don Maisch, PhD, of Australia, greatly elaborates on the conflicts of interest at WHO’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). See **[“Radiofrequency/Microwave Radiation and the International Agency for Research on Cancer \(IARC\) – The Problem of Conflict of Interest & Commercial Influence in WHO Agencies and the Need for Public Interest Representation”](#)**, found at **[http://www.emfacts.com/papers/who\\_conflict.pdf](http://www.emfacts.com/papers/who_conflict.pdf)**

L. Lloyd Morgan, B.S., brain tumor analyst and lead author of the landmark paper "[Cellphones and Brain Tumors: 15 Reasons for Concern](http://www.scribd.com/doc/19279963/Cellphones-and-Brain-Tumors15-Reasons-for-Concern-Science-Spin-and-the-Truth-Behind-Inter-Phone) – Science, Spin and the Truth Behind Interphone," <http://www.scribd.com/doc/19279963/Cellphones-and-Brain-Tumors15-Reasons-for-Concern-Science-Spin-and-the-Truth-Behind-Inter-Phone> , says:

"Leading international scientists fear the telecom-influenced IARC, in the upcoming meeting in Lyon, cannot be impartial because grant-giving executives are Observers and much of IARC's own 2004 data still remains inexplicably unpublished. If a decision is railroaded through in this scenario, indicating that RF/MW does not cause cancer, this would be a great disservice to public health globally and a sad day for science, as there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary. There is evidence of risk of many cancers from long-term use of cell phones, including gliomas (brain cancer), acoustic neuromas (tumors of the acoustic nerve), meningiomas (tumors of the brain), salivary gland tumors, eye cancers, testicular cancers and leukemia."

Alasdair Philips, of Powerwatch UK says: "Letters from many scientists have been sent to Dr. Christopher Wild, Director of IARC, protesting the meeting that will judge on the carcinogenicity of RF/MW, criticizing IARC for holding such a meeting 1) without full disclosure of the remaining 50% of the Interphone study results, six years after publication; 2) without full disclosure of the expert group on epidemiology's conflicts-of-interest statements; 3) with the heavy presence of powerful telecom industry Observers at the meeting. Thus far, Dr. Wild has not responded to the many complaints received from global scientists demanding greater disclosure, accountability and transparency on this important matter. Without these essential ingredients, science loses all integrity."

Conflicts of interest at IARC are not new. In 2005, the Editor of the *Lancet Oncology*, David Collingridge, submitted a paper on lack of transparency, [Lancet Oncology "What does IARC have to loose?"](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045%2803%2901086-6/fulltext) (<http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045%2803%2901086-6/fulltext>)

A transparency issue also exists in the current IARC decision-making process, where the database of scientific studies being considered, and studies submitted by global scientists for consideration, have not been made public, rendering the greater scientific community unable to evaluate the service being considered.

After partial results of the 13-country Interphone study were finally published in May 2010, Dr. Elizabeth Cardis, lead author of the Interphone study, and Dr. Siegal Sadetzki, who led the Israeli part of the study, separately subsequently published commentary on [brain risks from cell phones in \*The Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine\*](http://oem.bmj.com/content/early/2010/12/15/oem.2010.061358), urging caution <http://oem.bmj.com/content/early/2010/12/15/oem.2010.061358> . They said, "While more studies are needed, indications of an increased risk (of gliomas – a particularly dangerous form of brain tumour) in high and long-term users from Interphone and other studies are of concern. Even a small risk at the individual level could eventually result in a considerable number of tumours and become an important public-health issue."

Alex Swinkels, Co-founder of IEMFA, says, "It is clear from recent protests over the upcoming IARC meeting on RF/MW, and the earlier effort by Dr. Cardis and Dr. Sadetzki to clarify the risks in the Interphone study not previously emphasized by the Interphone Working Group's official statement, that scientists are increasingly not tolerating deceptions in science and commercial interests influencing regulatory bodies."

IEMFA suggests it would behoove public health and government officials, as well as media, to listen carefully to non-commercially connected LIFE scientists and analysts expressing concern about biological effects of radiofrequency and microwave radiation,

and to support the global movement underway toward greater transparency and integrity in science with consequences for public health.”

The [IEMFA IARC Statement](#) can also be found at:  
<http://www.powerwatch.org.uk/news/20110520-iarc.asp>