



## A Curiosity

Although the FGF normally deals with serious scientific subjects, sometimes there is a need to become involved with curiosities. In 2002 levitated water was a hot issue. According to the suppliers of “levitation machines” our drinking water is polluted by environmental influences (toxins and mobile radio waves). Levitated water is water which is physically energized and regenerated with “amazing effects”.

From a scientific point of view, information pertaining to levitated water contained nothing at all about the biological effects or the impact of this water.

The Federal Office for the Environment knows of no evidence regarding the biological effects, and claims made about health benefits are considered to be highly improbable. “The effects of levitated water are not comprehensible”. The Swiss Federal Office for Health has assessed the claims about levitated water as unfounded. “This whole business is more esoteric than scientific”.

## COST 281 – Workshop in Dublin “Mobile Phone Base Stations and Health”

The focus of the workshop is the alleged health risks from neighbouring mobile radio stations.

New radio masts for mobile radio communication networks result more often in the people living nearby complaining about health problems, which are mostly non-specific (headaches, sleeping problems or generally feeling ill or out of sorts). This is especially true when the masts were put up in areas that are solely residential. Even though in every case the limit values were complied with and in most of the cases exposures were considerably below the limit values, the electromagnetic radiation of these base stations was held responsible for existing health problems.

Therefore, there is public concern, even when the limit values are observed, regarding electromagnetic emissions from mobile radio communication masts and when looking at it in the long-run it could be problematic with regard to health.

Are there any objective reasons at all that speak for increased health risks for people who live near mobile radio communication masts? In order to investigate the public’s concerns from a scientific standpoint a workshop, within the scope of the EU’s COST 281 programme took place in Dublin on May 15 and 16, 2003 on the subject “Mobile Phone Base Stations and Health”.

The following subjects were dealt with separately:

Epidemiological studies: Which of the studies that have been done to date are relevant in this context? How should this type of study be conducted and what particular problems make this kind of study more difficult to conduct? In this context it is important to differentiate between the electromagnetic emissions from mobile radio communication masts and what is emitted while mobile phones are being used.

Testing measures: Is it possible to reliably determine the exposure rates in the areas where mobile radio communication masts are situated? (Is it in particular possible to estimate long-term exposure?).

Dosimetry: A simple dosimeter would be desirable, something similar to the device used to measure radioactivity exposure, a device which measures accumulated exposure over a longer period of time. What should this “mobile radio dosimeter” look like? Can it be designed so the person carrying it or wearing it can easily use it and carry or wear it at all times? Is a feasibility study worth doing?

Are the reported non-specific health problems occurring in the areas around mobile radio communication masts about objective effects or are they subjectively felt disorders which have no physical cause. How should the study be conducted, so that a clear distinction can be made between psychological and physical causes?

Risk communication: How can a dialogue be carried out between those concerned and those affected and between the authorities and science and how shall

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the scientific results of this composite of issues be conveyed to the public? With regard to risk communication what are the possibilities, and where do the risks and pitfalls lie?

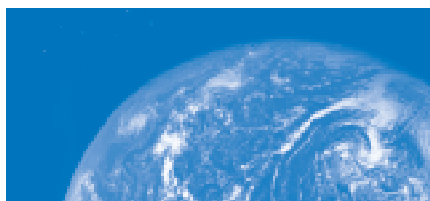
## International Conference in Luxembourg

From 24 to the 26 of February 2003 a three-day conference took place in Luxembourg on the subject of "Application of the Precautionary Principle to Electromagnetic Fields". The conference was organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Commission. The first day of the conference was organized so that the participants who travelled to Luxembourg (WHO members, researchers, representatives of manufacturers, members of various citizens' action groups, and representatives from government agencies), could obtain some general information on the subject. On the following day, the experts who were invited discussed the precautionary principle concerning high frequency and low frequency electromagnetic fields (EMF) and presented the statutory regulations of different countries. And yet it still prevails that no agreement can be reached on the necessity and the possibility of making the precautionary principle a law. Those advocating a reduction in limit values based on the precautionary principle, base their arguments particular-

ly on the suspected long-term effects and the alleged proof of health risks posed by EMF. Transforming the precautionary principle into a law could be a sheer political act in view of the apprehension involved. However its necessity is doubtful when no existing findings stating that EMF are dangerous have ever been proven .

## 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Bioelectromagnetics Society in Hawaii

This year the international scientific organization will meet again to discuss the effects of electromagnetic fields. The 25<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Bioelectromagnetics Society (BEMS) will take place from 22-26 of June in the Outrigger Wailea Resort in Hawaii. As what is usually done every year scientists from all over the world will meet to express their opinions, to exchange information and to present the latest scientific findings. For further information on the venue, agenda and reservations please see the following Internet sites: (<http://www.bioelectromagnetics.org>) and the Forschungsgemeinschaft Funk e. V. (<http://www.fgf.de>, under the heading, conferences.



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