

PRESS RELEASE



International Scientists Petition U.N. to Protect Humans and Wildlife from Electromagnetic Fields and Wireless Technology

New York, NY, May 11, 2015. An *Appeal* has been submitted today by 190 scientists from 39 nations to the United Nations, requesting the World Health Organization (WHO) adopt more protective exposure guidelines for non-ionizing electromagnetic fields (EMF) in the face of increasing exposures from many sources. Called the *International EMF Scientist Appeal*, the petition calls on the United Nations and its organizations to encourage precautionary measures and conduct an environmental assessment; for the WHO to educate the public about health risks, particularly to children and pregnant women; and for the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) to assess the potential impact of EMF exposure on all living organisms.

EMF—a general term that includes frequencies along the electromagnetic spectrum—is generated in the radiofrequency bands (RF/EMF) by popular wireless devices like cell phones, cordless phones, baby monitors, tablets, Wi-Fi enabled computer equipment, cell phone towers/antenna arrays, radio/television broadcast facilities, and wireless smart meters, among others. EMFs are also emitted in the extremely low frequency band (ELF/EMF) by electrical appliances, electrical wiring, and power lines; and in the intermediate frequency (IF) range by electronic devices that generate high frequency transients on electrical wiring (dirty electricity). Some electrical current flows along the ground and scientists have documented health effects on both livestock and farmers. In fact, all of nature is threatened —people and, animals, as well as trees and other plants.

The signatories of the *International EMF Scientist Appeal* have all published papers in peer-reviewed journals on the biological or health effects of EMF and note that the overall weight-of-evidence strongly supports greater precaution.

Non-ionizing electromagnetic fields are the fastest growing forms of environmental pollution. Numerous scientific publications have found that EMF affects living organisms at levels far below international exposure guidelines adopted by most industrialized nations. There is discrepancy in how this matter is considered at the WHO, however. While WHO accepted its International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)'s recommendation that classifies both ELF/EMF and RF/EMF as Group 2B "Possible Carcinogens," it also, in direct contrast to these warnings, recommends the adoption of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection's (ICNIRP) guidelines for exposure standards. These guidelines, developed by a self-selected

independent industry group, have long been criticized as not protective given the science now established. ICNIRP guidelines set exposure standards for high-intensity, short-term tissue heating thresholds, considered not applicable for the long-term, low-intensity, chronic exposures we typically experience today. Furthermore, ICNIRP standards are written with only human health in mind. There are no standards for the natural environment.

Given the existing body of published research, many scientists, doctors, engineers and public health officials globally are now calling for IARC's classification of EMF to be upgraded to a Group 2A "Probable Carcinogen." Today's ***International EMF Scientist Appeal*** calls for the WHO to take heed of the urgency of this and go further.

According to published research, the effects of low-intensity EMF include: increased cancer risk, cellular stress, free radical formation, increased permeability of the blood brain barrier, and genetic damage. Other potential effects include learning and memory deficits, neurologic/neurotransmitter disorders, reproductive effects, and negative impacts on general well-being. Moreover, there is growing evidence of harmful effects on plant and animal life. The ***Appeal*** thus calls upon all member nations of the United Nations to:

- Protect children and pregnant women from EMF;
- Make EMF standards more protective;
- Encourage manufacturers to develop safer technology;
- Require electric utilities to maintain adequate power quality and ensure proper electrical wiring to minimize harmful EMF emission;
- Inform the public about the potential health risks from EMF and teach people how to reduce risks;
- Train medical professionals to diagnose and treat patients with electromagnetic sensitivity;
- Fund training and research on EMF that is independent of industry and mandate industry cooperation with researchers;
- Establish EMF-free areas; and
- Encourage the media to disclose experts' financial relationships with industry when citing their opinions regarding the safety of EMF-emitting technologies.

To view an introductory announcement about the ***Appeal*** by Dr. Martin Blank, go to <https://vimeo.com/123468632>. To read the ***Appeal*** and the list of signatories, go to EMFscientist.org.

Elizabeth Kelley, MA, who directs the Appeal Committee, said, "Solutions must be found that place the highest priority on protecting people and the planet over the powerful economic forces driving new technologies without thought for biology. We *can* have both innovation and public safety, if there is political will. This transcends national boundaries. WHO and UNEP are the best organizations on earth to make these recommendations."

Joel Moskowitz, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Family and Community Health in the School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley, and a member of the

Appeal committee, said “There has been strong support from the international scientific community, even from scientists who feared jeopardizing research funding, or who believe scientists should not take public policy positions. Some have taken personal risks to sign the appeal because this is a public health issue that affects everyone now, as well as future generations.”

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