

PRESS RELEASE

The European Commission is funding a project to support the development of a coordinated approach for human biomonitoring in Europe.

A group of 22 European experts on human biomonitoring (HBM), coming from national governments, research institutes, industry and NGO's in 17 Member States and Croatia started the work to prepare a coordinated European approach on HBM.

Human Biomonitoring is a scientific technique for assessing human exposure to and health effects from environmental pollutants based on sampling and analysis of human tissues and fluids (e.g. blood, urine) and it is seen as a powerful tool to support environmental policy as well as public health policy. By linking the biomonitoring results with environmental and health data Human Biomonitoring can build bridges between exposure to pollutants and health effects and can give indication for appropriate measures.

The ultimate aims of a European coordinated approach are the improvement of data comparability and accessibility within and between countries and a more effective use of resources through shared development of scientific tools and appropriate communication strategies. Human biomonitoring is therefore an important element in the European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010 adopted by the European Commission in June 2004. A coordinated approach is strongly supported by the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee.

The 22 experts formed a consortium called „ESBIO“ (Expert team to Support BIOmonitoring) that is funded by the European Commission (Directorate-General Research) under the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development over the next two years. ESBIO's work is mainly focussed to prepare the concept for a coordinated EU approach, to develop quality control and assurance protocols, to elaborate how biomonitoring results can be integrated most efficiently with environment and registered health data and to develop communication strategies and scenarios for a more extensive use of HBM for policy making.

The concepts elaborated by the experts will be discussed in depth with the Commission and in the „Consultative Forum on Environment and Health“, consisting of Member States and representatives of major stakeholder organisations and aiming to evaluate the progress on the the implementation of the European Environment and Health Action Plan.

ESBIOs work will contribute to the European Pilot Project on Human Biomonitoring scheduled to be launched at the end of 2006.

For more information please visit the homepage www.eu-humanbiomonitoring.org that will be soon available or contact BiPRO, the coordinator of ESBIO (mail@bipro.de).

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