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Diagnose-Funk e.V., Postfach 150448, 70076 Stuttgart

Wissenschaftsforum EMF
z.H. Frederik Freudenstein
Anna-Louisa-Karsch-Straße 2
10178 Berlin

Your invitation from the 20.03.2013

Why the consumer protection organization Diagnose-Funk e.V. declines the invitation by the Science Forum EMF to participate in the Workshop "Evaluating Evidence in Research: Communication, Ethics & Credibility" in Berlin

Dear Mr. Freudenstein,

thank you for your surprising, short-notice invitation from 20 March 2013 to participate in the Science Forum EMF Workshop "Evaluating Evidence in Research: Communication, Ethics & Credibility" on 18/19 April 2013 in Berlin.

In cooperation with expert scientists, the science department of Diagnose-Funk e.V. evaluates the available research knowledge regarding wireless communication technologies, and documents its findings, among other places, at Mobile Phone Studies: www.mobilfunkstudien.de. We strive for objectivity, and we are open to critical engagements – including the industry. We see your invitation as a sign that the competence of Diagnose-Funk e.V. as an NGO is hereby acknowledged. However, we have to decline this invitation. We would like to explain our reasons for doing so.

The Science Forum EMF (WF-EMF) was established based on an initiative of the wireless industry and its proponents in the science community. It is not its intention to clarify open questions regarding the risk of wireless communication technologies, but to develop strategies as to how well-founded concerns can be dispelled, that is, to enforce the industry's interests. Right from the start, the wireless industry had used so-called "risk assessment research" as a part of its marketing strategy to invalidate criticism. For this purpose, biased expert reports as well as institutions with a scientific flair such as the Research Association for Radio Applications (FGF), the Information Centre for Mobile Communication (IZMF), the *Kinderumwelt gGmbH*, and others were used. In various publications, we analyzed this network of those sounding the all clear and their influence in politics.¹ A new addition is the Science Forum EMF that was founded in 2011 under the guise of a commitment to ethics. Thus its founding member and financial backer, the telco giant Telekom, writes:

"It is our goal to reduce the public feelings of uncertainty through an objective, science-based, and transparent information policy. Thus we have become involved with an industry initiative of wireless

¹ <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/behoerden-int/vom-elend-des-deutschen-strahlenschutzes.php>

network companies, that is, the Information Centre for Mobile Communication, which offers comprehensive information and opportunities for dialogue to the public. Our desire to offer cutting-edge technologies also includes our support of scientific research in order to recognize possible risks early. In addition to our long-standing commitment to the Research Association for Radio Applications (FGF), we do so, in particular, by financially supporting the research activities of the German federal government within the framework of the German Telecommunication Research Programme (DMF) and the Environment Research Plan (UFOPLAN). The latest addition is the establishment of the Science Forum EMF – an important research platform that fills a gap, which had been left open after the dissolution of the FGF. We initiated the establishment of this science forum and financially support it.”²

The Science Forum EMF tries to assume a leadership role in the area of “Ethics & Credibility”. One of the main initiators of the Science Forum and currently an advisory board member is Prof. Alexander Lerchl. Among other things, Lerchl is an active and regular participant in the Internet forum Information Centre against Mobile Communication (IZgMF)³. He joins in blogs in which Diagnose-Funk e.V. is constantly defamed in unacceptable ways. It is here that Diagnose-Funk board members are slandered as charlatans, esoterics, maniacs, and phobiacs, and even called such names as *Obersturmbandführer* (lieutenant colonel of the SS), thereby moving them near Nazis and right-wing extremists. As recently as the end of January, Lerchl himself had accused Dr. Warnke and our head of the editing and science department of “plagiarism”, without even producing a single piece of evidence.⁴ In this same forum, electrosensitive people are severely insulted,⁵ and an electrosensitive person who is known for her commitment as a critic, was – in a rather audacious move – even compared with the mass murderer A. Brejvik.⁶ One of the few regular participants of the forum has already been convicted of neglect in a different context, and in 2009 a court attested to the fact that the IZgMF uses “particularly malicious” language or slander.⁷ Lerchl contributes regularly to this lowbrow forum and, at the same time, is a member of COPE, the Committee On Publication Ethics.⁸

Lerchl is responsible for the falsifying and downplaying statements in the last report of the Committee on Non-Ionizing Radiation of the German Commission on Radiological Protection (SSK-NIS) regarding the state of telecommunication research as well as for the subsequent “Fifth Report on Telecommunication Research” submitted to the Federal German Government. The level of manipulation in these reports has been well documented by Diagnose-Funk e.V.⁹ The indefensible smear campaign against the authors of the REFLEX-study as well as the most recent slander attacks against Prof. Lenart Hardell also go back to Lerchl.¹⁰

² http://www.geschaeftsbericht.telekom.com/gb10/backstage_04/documentpool/de/konzernlagebericht/risiko-und-chancenmanagement/risiko_und_chancenmanagement.pdf, p. 17

³ IZgMF (Information Centre against Mobile Communication) is a private home page of the Schall couple from Munich, which operates under the label of „against.“ This page is targeted at citizens, initiatives, physicians, scientists, agencies, and politicians with the goal of ridiculing EMF risks and anybody who makes critical statements regarding these risks. Denunciation is another tool of choice. The forum is served by the Schall couple, Alexander Lerchl, and 3 to 4 other persons.

⁴ <http://www.izgmf.de/scripts/forum/index.php?mode=thread&id=52311>

⁵ In this forum, electrosensitivity is defined as a “social behavior disorder,” and applying for “official care” or the less costly “attorney’s note” are recommended as effective “solutions,” more at: Brochure 8 of KI e.V. „Strahlenschutz durch Leugnung des Risikos“, page 15; from April 2013, www.kompetenzinitiative.net

⁶ Cf <http://www.izgmf.de/scripts/forum/index.php?id=49742>, *ibid*

⁷ Cf Brochure 5 of KI e.V. “Strahlenschutz im Widerspruch zur Wissenschaft” (see footnote 6), p. 23–26, where Prof. A. Lerchl’s involvement in these events is also discussed in more detail and additional passages from the court’s sentence can be looked up.

⁸ The motto of COPE: Promoting integrity in research publication.

⁹ Cf Analysis of the Fifth Report of Telecommunication Research: <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/aktuell/brennpunkt/gremien-versuchen-abgeordnete-zu-manipulieren.php>; also the analysis of the Fourth Report of Telecommunication Research: <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/politik-int/stellungnahme-zum-bericht-der-dt-bundesregierung.php>

¹⁰ In an APA press release, Lerchl attacks Prof. Hardell with 30-year-old arguments of the U.S. industry lobby. Back then the argument was about the IARC classification of dioxin (agent orange) as a carcinogen. Needless to say that all “arguments” were refuted;

During the period when Lerchl was the head of the SSK-NIS, he played a central role in preventing the resolutions of the European parliament¹¹, the Council of Europe¹², and the European Environment Agency¹³ for an active precautionary policy from being translated into practical policies in Germany. At continuing education events of the IZMF (Information Centre for Mobile Communication),¹⁴ he instead presented to health care professionals and political decision makers, affirming that the harmlessness of wireless communication technologies is almost conclusively proven. Due to these activities, however, he was not accepted to join the IARC commission of the WHO that re-evaluated the carcinogenic potential of radio-frequency electromagnetic fields.¹⁵ He is one of the keynote speakers at your workshop.

In those persons and their networks, we are unable to recognize any sincere effort of translating different perceptions into appropriate policy suggestions. On the contrary, the Science Forum EMF and its director Prof. Dr. Wiedemann play a central role in organizing controversies on industry terms in order to discuss to death such important results as the IARC/WHO classification¹⁶ from May 2011.¹⁷ Furthermore the industry-financed cooperation of Wiedemann and Lerchl makes clear of how little interest there is in health prevention.¹⁸

Other members of your advisory board seem to suffer from similar shortcomings in their communication skills that require objectivity. A typical example is the obvious false statement by the Science Forum EMF advisory board member and SSK representative Prof. Caroline Herr. At a hearing of the Bavarian parliament, she said on 5 July 2012 that "there is not a single study that had shown any change in sperm activity"¹⁹, even though in this case the level of evidence can already be described as "sufficient."²⁰

Documents available to us indicate that your Science Forum systematically degrades the term "communication" to the disposal of existing risks and consistent evidence of the dangers of EMF. The attempt is made to actively prevent a precautionary policy by employing old methods of relativizing risks and exploring new ways of "risk communication". In chapter II "The Precautionary Principle and False Alarms –

see also Lerchl's press release from 14 Nov 2012: http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20121114_OTS0093/krebs-durch-mobilfunk-alles-falsch.

These attacks were published and commented in great detail by us: <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/behoerden-int/vom-elend-des-deutschen-strahlenschutzes.php>. It remains incomprehensible that, despite his extreme misconduct, A. Lerchl continues to receive public research grants as a "scientist" and even can become a member of COPE. Information regarding these events is available in English at: <http://www.pandora-foundation.eu/>

¹¹ Cf <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/politik-int/eu-parlament-macht-druck.php>

¹² Cf <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/politik-int/europarat-fordert-kurswechsel.php>

¹³ Cf <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/behoerden-int/krebsgefahr-eua-mahnt-zur-vorsorgepolitik.php>

¹⁴ IZMF (Information Centre for Mobile Communication) is the propaganda headquarters of the wireless network operators; IZGMF (Information Centre against Mobile Communication) is a home page, which contrary to its name also represents the interests of the wireless industry and is part of its risk communication (see footnote 3).

¹⁵ Cf <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/aktuell/brennpunkt/who-lehnt-prof-a-lerchl-als-mitarbeiter-ab.php>

¹⁶ Cf <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/behoerden-int/iarc-funkstrahlung-moeglicherweise-krebserregend.php>

¹⁷ Cf among others http://www.wf-emf.org/de/workshops/fachgesprach-mobilfunk-moeglicherweise-krebserregend-2b-und-wie-weiter-teil-2-2b-kommunikation/EIP_Broschure_Master_30.08.pdf/at_download/file

¹⁸ Cf the study "Children's health and RF EMF exposure" (2009), Wiedemann, Schütz, Börner, Berg-Beckhoff, Croft, Lerchl, Martens, Neubauer, Regel, Repacholi, financially supported by T-Mobile Germany. This report is a textbook example for how to downplay documented risks, which otherwise should not be argued away anymore. By way of contrast, see the publication of the group of scientists from www.mobilewise.org. The Kompetenzinitiative e.V. published a German translation of this latter report: <http://www.kompetenzinitiative.net/broschuerenreihe/mobilfunk-zum-schutz-der-kinder-taetig-werden/index>.

¹⁹ Cf our statement and the verbatim record of the hearing p. 34; <http://www.diagnose-funk.org/politik/politik-int/stellungnahme-zur-anhoerung--im-bayerischen-landtag.php>

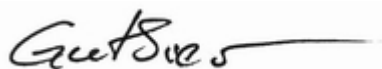
²⁰ There are epidemiological, in vivo, and in vitro studies that show sperm damage well below the exposure limit and at exposure levels found in real-life situations: "Unfruchtbarkeit beim Mann als mögliche Folge der Nutzung von Mobiltelefonen" by Hartmut Voigt (ECOLOG-Institut), EMF-Monitor 5/2011. Additionally, a plausible effect mechanism is documented: Dr. Neitzke, ECOLOG-Institut: Einfluss schwacher Magnetfelder auf Biologische Systeme: Biophysikalische und biochemische Wirkungsmechanismen, 2012. Dr. Ulrich Warnke: Ein initialer Mechanismus zu Schädigungseffekten durch Magnetfelder bei gleichzeitig einwirkender Hochfrequenz des Mobil- und Kommunikationsfunks", *umwelt-medizin-gesellschaft* 3-2009
Desai et al.: Pathophysiologie der Mobilfunkstrahlung: Oxidativer Stress und Karzinogenese mit dem Studienschwerpunkt auf dem männlichen Fortpflanzungssystem, *umwelt-medizin-gesellschaft* 3-2010.

Lessons Learned“ of the only recently released second volume of “Late Lessons from Early Warnings“ of the European Environment Agency, these strategies are referred to as “manufacturing doubt.”²¹

Furthermore the Science Forum is defined by a symbiotic work relationship with others. In one of your founding documents, the notes read as follows: “risk communication established (SSK, BfS, WIK, IZMF, Elektrosmog-Info and IZGMF)”. This clearly shows that the slandering of scientists, NGOs, and electrosensitive people by the IZGMF is obviously an integral part of your “risk communication.” The Science Forum stands for “Ethics & Credibility”; the “dirty work” is outsourced.

Based on the aforementioned information, we are unable to participate in this workshop. Under the leadership of a different organizer and with a balanced representation of invited scientists,²² provided that sufficient advance notice is given, we would be pleased to join the scientific and political dialogue.

Sincerely,



Vorsitzender von Diagnose-Funk e.V.

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Courtesy copies to:

- Members of the *Advisory Board + Auditing Group of the Science Forum EMF*
- Diagnose-Funk e-mail list of international scientists
- BMU / BfS / SSK-NIS
- Members of *Umweltausschuss des Deutschen Bundestags*
- Members of *Ausschuss für Bildung, Forschung und Technikfolgenabschätzung*
- Members of *Diagnose-Funk e.V., Kompetenzinitiative e.V., BUND AK-Immissionsschutz*

PS: Publishing this letter on the internet or other media is prohibited.

Diagnose – Funk e.V. is an international, interdisciplinary, and nonpartisan environmental and consumer rights organization that fights for the protection from electromagnetic fields and radiation.

²¹ “Several references and leaked documents have shown that some regulated parties have consciously recruited reputable scientists, media experts and politicians to call on if their products are linked to a possible hazard. Manufacturing doubt, disregarding scientific evidence of risks and claiming over- regulation appear to be a deliberate strategy for some industry groups and think tanks to undermine precautionary decision- making.” “Late lessons from early warnings: science, precaution, innovation”, 1/2013, Part A - Summary, p. 12

²² With Dariusz Leszczynski and Michael Kundi only two critical scientists participate in the workshop. Most of the other 20 “speakers” are or were closely associated with the ICNIRP or work at an institute that is in conformity with the ICNIRP.