

PROTECT: Newsletter March 2008

Third PROTECT Newsletter

Welcome to the third newsletter of the EURATOM funded project PROTECT. This provides an update of our progress and gives information on the forthcoming final workshop to be held in Aix-en-Provence 14th-16th May 2008 (**deadline for registration is 28th March**).

Deliverable 3 - A review of approaches to protection of the environment from chemicals and ionising radiation: Requirements and recommendations for a common framework

The first stage of the PROTECT project was dedicated to reviewing national and international regulatory methodologies and criteria currently applied to environmental protection from radioactive substances. This included assessing the regulatory instruments, procedures, underlying principles, and criteria currently applied in different countries. Environmental regulators, nuclear and non-nuclear industries, international organisations and NGO's were asked to identify the key regulatory instruments and give their views on how environmental regulation is applied. The gathering of this information was completed using questionnaires (both verbal and electronic) and a workshop which included the participation of experts from outside the PROTECT consortium. Questionnaire responses were received from 50 of the approximately 130 organisations contacted. Regulators constituted 36% of the respondents, industry 36%, NGOs and international organisations 10% and advisory bodies, 18%.

Key recommendations in the deliverable were:

- Protection should focus on the population level and protection goals should be translated into measurable targets.
- There was strong support for linking radiological protection to the processes used for chemicals assessment. For example, the use of *Species Sensitivity Distribution* and *Assessment Factor* approaches to determine benchmark dose rates based on agreed tolerable risks should be encouraged and the use of purely expert judgement should be avoided.
- The use of the numeric values currently being

applied, or suggested, should be assessed and the need for screening values and other standards considered.

- PROTECT should produce a clear document outlining the derivation of any proposed benchmark values, in particular explanation of any limitations in application because of poor data quality is needed.

Deliverable 3 is available from:

<http://www.ceh.ac.uk/protect/outputs/>

Summary of Oslo workshop held 28th-30th January

The workshop continued the evaluation of approaches to demonstrate protection of the environment from ionising radiation with presentations by a number of external experts. These focused on examples of where the approaches have been applied to real situations e.g. waste repositories. The PROTECT consortium reported on a comparison of the screening tiers of RESRAD-BIOTA, EA R&D128 and the ERICA-Tool. The workshop also considered: (i) recently available relevant publications, including the draft report released by ICRP Committee 5 (www.icrp.org/draft_animals.asp); (ii) approaches suggested by PROTECT to propose levels of environmental protection; (iii) comparison of human and non-human biota exposure assessments.

The workshop report is available from <http://www.ceh.ac.uk/protect/outputs/> - reading the report on-line allows you to access all presentations from the workshop. The report concludes with a number of 'take home messages' agreed during the workshop including:

- Large (unacceptable) ranges in screening assessment results which are often a consequence of varying transfer parameters.
- There are important points (transparency, periodic review) from recent OECD-NEA documents which PROTECT should consider.
- Reservations about the clarity of ICRP RAP approach in the available draft report.
- Application of available tools has shown the importance of clear problem formulation.
- General agreement on need for/use of a screening level dose rate for use in assessments.

- General agreement on use of SSD for the derivation of a screening level
- General agreement on the need for an 'action level(s)'.
- Lack of agreement on how an action level is derived and what it actually is.
- PROTECT needs to consider the implications of including the precautionary principle, optimisation etc. in environmental management.
- The ICRP-60 statement could not be supported or repudiated and further work is required.

Aix-en-Provence workshop 14th-16th May 2008

The final workshop of PROTECT will be an open meeting (*c.* 50 participants). The aim is to discuss the approaches to deriving benchmark values (and the corresponding numeric values) to be suggested by PROTECT in Deliverable 5b (to be circulated late April).



The outline agenda is:

Tuesday 13th May evening reception
 Wednesday 14th May – Overview of PROTECT's progress; invited speakers to provide international context and response to WP3 deliverable; view from a chemicals expert; presentations of the deliverable by WP3
 Thursday 15th – Feedback on WP3 suggestions; breakout discussions on issues raised; WP2 assessment tools - application in practice; breakout groups focussed on issues from WP2.
 Friday 16th - Open discussion, will PROTECT recommendations influence the international context/national activities?

The workshop will close at lunchtime on Friday.

A registration form for the workshop can be found on the PROTECT website:

<http://www.ceh.ac.uk/protect/documents/PROTECTRegistrationformExperts14-16May2008.doc>

**This must be returned to IRSN by
 28th MARCH**

Important dates

28th March: Register for Aix workshop

Late April: Draft report on proposed target values available for comment (this deliverable will form the basis of discussions at the Aix workshop)

14th-16th May 2008: Aix-en-Provence workshop

30th May 2008: Deadline for submission of views on available tools (see <http://www.ceh.ac.uk/protect/package2/>)

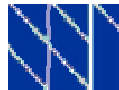
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The EURATOM funded project PROTECT is co-ordinated by the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (Brenda Howard – bjho@ceh.ac.uk).



**Centre for
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