



## Editorial

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There are many aspects to the question of interactions between electromagnetic fields and living things, not the least of which is how such interactions affect human beings. Originally it was argued that the only thing to worry about was Joule heating, but it has since become clear that there is good evidence for non thermal biointeractions with electromagnetic signals.

One consequence of this is that the bioelectromagnetic interaction has become more of a scientific issue than a purely engineering matter. Instead of seeking better computer models to assess the distribution of thermal effects in the body, there is now greater emphasis on discovering biophysical mechanisms to explain why living tissue is sensitive to electromagnetic signals that are far too weak to do any heating. Another consequence is that there are some who now believe that the question of hazard connected to public electromagnetic sources warrants invoking the Precautionary Principle. One way of explaining this principle is to assert that, in the absence of certainty regarding a potentially hazardous action, the burden of proof falls on those who advocate taking this action.

In a meeting organized by Eva Marsalek and Michael Kundi on September 13–14, 2002, in Catania, Italy, arguments were made as to why the Precautionary Principle should be used to deal with the broad question of possible human hazard from exposure to electromagnetic radiation, both at electric power distribution frequencies and at the much higher frequencies associated with mobile phone use. The Catania meeting led to the participants agreeing to the resolution given on page 201.

This issue of EMB contains selected papers that were presented at the Conference on the Precautionary Approach to Electromagnetic Fields, held in Benevento, Italy, from February 22–25, 2006, and organized by Libby Kelley and Livio Giuliani. The accompanying resolution is given on page 197.

Note that the assistance of Carl Blackman, Settimio Grimaldi, and Henry Lai is gratefully acknowledged in helping select the articles that appear in this issue.

*A. R. Liboff*