

Dear ...

On behalf of environmental epidemiologist, we at the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE), the largest international professional organization for such scientists, are concerned about the recent scientific evidence suggesting an increase in the risk of thyroid cancer among residents of Fukushima that is much higher than previously anticipated.

The recently published study<sup>1</sup> demonstrates a 12-fold higher risk of developing thyroid cancer among residents of Fukushima compared to the rest of the Japanese population. This is an exceptionally high risk, as pointed out in the commentary to the published paper. This study builds on previous concerns about the lack of appropriate data and studies to monitor the long-term impact of the Fukushima nuclear disaster on local residents. Preliminary results of the study were presented at a special Symposium, organized at the ISEE Annual Meeting in Sao Paolo in September 2015. The discussion at the Symposium demonstrated great scientific interest of the Society members in follow up of health consequences of Fukushima accident.

The study illustrates the need of the on-going, systematic screening of the population affected by the accident, enabling early detection and treatment of the cases of thyroid cancer. Besides direct benefits to the affected population, such prospective study has great value for building up global knowledge about risks of ionizing radiation.

We appeal to the government as the stakeholder serving the interest of the people, to develop a series of measures to scientifically document and follow up the health of residents of Fukushima and to better understand and estimate the risks from the accident that happened in 2011. We believe that detailed monitoring of population exposure to radiation possibly remaining in the environment after the accident remains necessary both for scientific and preventive reasons. Such studies would provide invaluable contribution to the global body of knowledge on health consequences of nuclear accidents and ways for reduction such risks in affected populations.

ISEE would be available to assist and support activities where needed by utilizing the expertise of its members. We would be interested to know if, and how, you would envision the involvement of ISEE as an independent international professional organization.

We would appreciate hearing back about your perspective regarding our letter and your future plans regarding this important matter.

Sincerely

Francine Laden PhD  
President of ISEE

cc. World Health Organization

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<sup>1</sup> Tsuda T et al, Thyroid Cancer Detection by Ultrasound Among Residents Ages 18 Years and Younger in Fukushima, Japan: 2011 to 2014. *Epidemiology* 2015 DOI: 10.1097/EDE.0000000000000385