



Powerwatch

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15th October 2014

To: Antonella Battaglini, RGI.

Dear Antonella Battaglini

Some comments regarding the RGI and the 2nd Bestgrid Workshop in Berlin 23 October 2014

A long-term colleague, Prof Mike O'Carroll, passed on your information to me. I am sending you some comments re. the remit of the RGI and also for the meeting on October 23rd.

My experience and perspective

I have co-ordinated Powerwatch now for about 25 years. We have been included on most UK stakeholder groups and were a key member of the Department of Health SAGE ELF EMF & health process for 6 years. We seek to find constructive solutions before public opposition has time to generate the strongly adversarial approach that has become common. I was also on an EC group in Brussels re EMF and health.

The European Grid Declaration and the RGI

The basic idea is excellent and necessary. However, I am amazed that health and landscape concerns have so far been excluded, as these are the two main concerns of individuals and citizen groups who challenge the need and location of new electricity transmission lines. Your European Grid Declaration stated in 2011 that these are "important concerns" and further work is likely to cover such aspects. It is now 3 years later and I am unable to find any signs of this yet within the RGI. If this necessary part of the process does not occur, there will almost certainly continue to be widespread opposition to new power lines, especially overhead ones, being built.

The EU Parliament and the Council of Europe Resolution have firmly put dealing with EMF- health issues on the European agenda and are asking for pro-active action to be taken.^[a]

1) When are the NGO stakeholders concerned with Health and Landscape issues to be invited to contribute to the RGI process?

I see that you have modified the meeting Agenda and inserted a talk on EMFs as "an emotionally sensitive topic". The UK SAGE process involved some 40 people and many meetings and produced two excellent reports of these matters.

2) Would you consider holding a full-day meeting and inviting Dr John Swanson (National Grid), Children with Cancer UK and Powerwatch to present our 'take' on the SAGE process and output and how it could be used constructively to feed into your RGI process.

Yours sincerely

Alasdair Philips, Director.

(a) The Council of Europe Resolution passed in Strasbourg on 28th May 2011 asks, among other things, that: "European countries introduce planning measures to keep high-voltage power lines and other electric installations at a safe distance from dwellings". This confirmed concerns which were passed in plenary by the EU Parliament in the 2009 'Ries' Resolution (P6_TA(2009)0216) such as:

"26. Calls on the Council and Commission, in coordination with the Member States and the Committee of the Regions, to encourage the introduction of a single standard designed to ensure that local residents are subjected to as low a degree of exposure as possible when high-voltage grids are extended."