

This response was submitted to the consultation held by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics on *Public Health: ethical issues* between May and September 2006. The views expressed are solely those of the respondent(s) and not those of the Council.

European Commission, Directorate-General Environment

Dear Mr Schmidt,

Thank you for your letter of 23 August 2006 related to the consultation on the ethical issues raised by public health.

I welcome your initiative to develop a Consultation Paper on this important topic and would like to congratulate you on the quality of the document.

I would like the Nuffield Council on Bioethics and the Working Party to consider – if possible – an additional important issue, notably the "*ethical aspects of Human Biomonitoring*". As you probably know the Commission has adopted an Environment and Health Action Plan¹ in which Human Biomonitoring plays an important role. Human Biomonitoring in the framework of this Action Plan relates to the periodical measurement of environmental pollutants in human tissues/fluids in order to obtain information on the prevalence of exposure to environmental agents and the related public health impact with a view to developing and evaluating policies that protect human health.

While implementing this action on Human Biomonitoring we have experienced different challenges related to Human Biomonitoring, ethical aspects being one of them. We would therefore encourage the Working Party to look into this issue as well.

In case you would like to know more about the Commission's activities on Human Biomonitoring please visit the website <http://www.eu-humanbiomonitoring.org>

We wish you success in the elaboration of the Report in 2007 and would be interested to receive a copy.

Chantal BRUETSCHY



¹ Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee on a European Environment and Health Action Plan 2004-2010 – adopted on 9th June 2004 (COM(2004)416 final).