

**CONFERENCE - 6 & 7 JUILLET 2009**

École des Mines - PARIS

**Gouverner  
l'incertitude :**

**les apports  
des sciences sociales  
à la gouvernance des  
risques sanitaires  
environnementaux**

**Governing Uncertainty:**

**the contribution of social  
sciences to the governance  
of risks in environmental health**

**PROGRAMME**

## Objectives of the Conference

The conference aims to confront the contributions of social sciences to risk assessment/management approaches and practices in order to highlight evolutions, stakes and conflicted issues embroiled in the characterization of environmental health risks, and in particular:

- To illustrate the specificities of these risks.
- To analyse the emergence and dissemination of these risks in society.
- To question the ways in which these risks have been assessed, managed, made acceptable, controlled and anticipated.
- To discuss the methods and tools developed by social sciences in order to build knowledge.
- To support the policymaking process.

General elements along with case studies and both European and international comparative analyses will be presented.

## Presentation

In order to assess and anticipate the consequences of environmental exposures on human health, public authorities have turned to scientific experts, often working within health regulating agencies, for their advice on the existence, importance and impact of various risks. This choice is consistent with a wider recourse to evidence-based approaches and the call on scientific experts for the production of knowledge to support the policy-making process. But in the case of environmental health, this institutional arrangement encounters several difficulties, due to the greater number of uncertainties, and even unknown factors, related to the risks that are being considered, along with the fact that these risks cannot be detached from deeper technical and scientific, but also political and social, transformations.

Compared to food and drug related risks, environmental risks are characterised by a greater variety of uncertainties that cannot be reduced to their sole scientific component. These uncertainties refer to the features and the nature of a given activity but also to the ways in which it is produced, used and controlled. Hence, a social science approach is necessary, not only to understand how scientific uncertainties are constructed, and then mobilised in the production of expertise, but also to discuss the other types of uncertainties. For the moment, these "other uncertainties" are not assessed by the processes set up to provide expert advice. Yet, they are crucial if one wants to understand the motives and dynamics of social movements and controversies that tend to multiply around various activities, and how these may sometimes evolve into full-blown crises or scandals.

Risks in environmental health cannot be detached, furthermore, from a wider set of transformations that concur directly to their definition. The activities where these risks occur have a history, are embedded in certain places, come under the responsibility of organisations and depend on technical procedures. Once again, social sciences can contribute to shed light on these multiple dimensions: the purpose being to put forward the social and political dimensions of what are otherwise all too often regarded as strictly scientific issues.

The aim of this conference is to convince all the interested stakeholders that by introducing a social science perspective on risks in environmental health, our societies will be more fit for governing what are inherently political issues. Social sciences can supplement the more traditional scientific expertise used to analyse these risks, all the more easily since current controversies over GMOs, radiofrequencies or nanotechnologies have underpinned the need for other methods capable of addressing the multiple uncertainties attached to these activities. In turn, this calls for a more general reappraisal of the instruments that have been used to assess and manage these risks.

French - English translation will be provided for Plenary Sessions and Workshop 1.

## Organising Committee

- Yannick BARTHE (CSI - CNRS)
- Olivier BORRAZ (CSO - CNRS)
- Régine BOUTRAIS (Irisso - Afsset)
- Céline DELYSSE (Afsset)
- Pierre-Benoît JOLY (Inra - Ifris)
- Matthieu FINTZ (Afsset)
- Danielle SALOMON (CSO - Risks & Intelligence)
- Benoit VERGRIETTE (Afsset)

# MONDAY 6 JULY

## Risk analysis and its Uncertainties

8:45 Registration

**9:30** **Opening by Martin Guespereau**, General Director of the French Agency for Environmental and Occupational Health Safety (Afsset) and **Olivier Borraz**, President of Risk and Society Network (R<sup>2</sup>S)

### Session 1 - The Quantification of Risks as a Mode and Science of Government

Chairman: Paul Frimat, President of the Scientific Council, Afsset

**9:45** **Quantification or Qualification: Which Risk Assessment?**  
Bernard Chevassus au Louis, General Inspector of Agriculture

**10:05** **Uncertainty in Quantitative Health Risk Assessment**  
Denis Bard, EHESP (french school of advanced studies in public health)

**10:25** **Discussant : Silvio Funtowicz**, European Commission - Joint Research Centre

**10:35** Discussion

10:50 Coffee break

**11:20** **Scientific Uncertainty and the Political Structure of Risks**  
Robert Hoppe, University of Twente – NL

**11:40** **Risk, Uncertainty and Government of Low Doses: a Historical Perspective**  
Soraya Boudia, Strasbourg University

**12:10** **Discussant : Claude Henry**, Sciences Po - Columbia University

**12:25** Discussion

12:45 Free lunch

## Session 2 - Varieties of Uncertainties

Chairman: Benoit Vergriette, Head of Risks and Society Unit, Afsset

### Plenary session

- 14:15 **The Risks of Risk-Based Governance**  
Henry Rothstein, King's College - London
- 14:35 **Protests, Controversies and Uncertainties in Environmental Health**  
Olivier Borraz, CSO (Centre for Sociology of Organisations) - Sciences Po - CNRS  
Danielle Salomon, CSO - Risks & Intelligence
- 14:50 **Defending a Cause, Finding Causes: Mobilisation and Inquiry Work**  
Yannick Barthe, CSI (Centre for Sociology of Innovation - École des Mines) - CNRS

### Thematic workshops

- 15:30 • **Workshop 1**  
**Social and Scientific Controversies: Mobile Telephony**
- **Workshop 2**  
**The “Confinement” of Occupational Risks: Occupational Exposure to Toxic Substances**
- **Workshop 3**  
**New Dangers, New Uncertainties: Nanotechnologies**
- **Workshop 4**  
**Urban Air Pollution: an “Acceptable” Risk?**
- **Workshop 5**  
**Epidemics of Unexplained Symptoms**

Detailed Workshops' Programme on following pages

- 17:30 Closing

# TUESDAY 7 JULY

## Reducing Uncertainty

8:45 Registration

### Session 3 - Reducing Uncertainties through Instruments

Chairman: Alain Grimfeld, President of the Committee for Prevention and Precaution

- 9:15 **Risk Analysis: Making Sense of the International Diffusion of a Concept**  
David Demortain, CARR-LSE (Centre for Analysis of Risk and Regulation - London School of Economics)
- 9:35 **Economic Evaluation and Cost-Benefit Analysis**  
Nicolas Treich, LERNA-INRA (Laboratory of Economy of Natural Ressources – National Institute for Agronomic Research - Toulouse School of Economics)
- 9:55 **Uncertainty and the Precautionary Principle: 10 Years of Jurisprudence**  
Christine Noiville, CRDST - Paris 1 University - CNRS (Research Centre “Law, Science and Technics”)
- 10:15 **Discussant: Pierre-Benoît Joly**, Ifris - Inra (Paris Institute “Research, Innovation and Society”)
- 10:25 Discussion
- 10:45 Coffee break
- 11:15 **How Improved Models of Risk Perception Can Inform Risk Communication**  
Lennart Sjöberg, CRS Stockholm (Centre for Risk Research - Stockholm School of Economics)
- 11:35 **Emancipating Ourselves from some Myths about the Fears of “The Public”**  
Brian Wynne, CSEC (Centre for the Study of Environmental Change) - Lancaster University
- 11:55 **Can we Observe Political Manipulation in Alarm Processes? Power Games and Mobilisations in Environmental Health Issues**  
Francis Chateauraynaud, GSPR - EHESS (Group for Pragmatic and Reflexive Sociology - School for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences)
- 12:15 **Discussant: Alain Kaufmann**, Lausanne University
- 12:25 Discussion
- 12:45 Free lunch

## Session 4 - Lessons for the Future

Chairman: Claude Gilbert, Senior Researcher, UMR PACTE & MSH - Alpes Grenoble

### 14:15 Summary of the Thematic Workshops Held on Monday

- **Workshop 1 - Social and Scientific Controversies: Mobile Telephony**  
Danielle Salomon, CSO - Risks & Intelligence
- **Workshop 2 - The “Confinement” of Professional Risks: Occupational Exposure to Toxic Substances**  
Jean-Noël Jouzel, CSO - CNRS
- **Workshop 3- New Dangers, New Uncertainties: Nanotechnologies**  
Matthieu Fintz, Afsset
- **Workshop 4 - Urban Air Pollution: an “Acceptable” Risk ?**  
Olivier Borraz, CSO - CNRS
- **Workshop 5 - Epidemics of Unexplained Symptoms**  
Madeleine Akrich, CSI

### 15:30 Round table:

- **André Cicolella**, Spokesman, Environment and Health Network (France)
- **David Gee**, European Environment Agency (Copenhagen)
- **Alain Gest**, Member of the French Parliament, Member of the OPECST (Parliamentary Office for the Evaluation of Scientific and Technological Choices)
- **Martin Guespereau**, General Director of Afsset
- **Denis Zmirou**, HCSP (High Council for Public Health) – EHESP (French School of Advanced Studies in Public Health)

### 17:00 Closing

**Mrs Chantal JOUANNO, Minister for Ecology**  
**Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Town and Country Planning (to be confirmed)**

# DETAILED WORKSHOPS PROGRAMME ON 6<sup>th</sup> JULY

## Workshop 1 - Social and Scientific Controversies: Mobile Telephony

Chairman: Jack Stilgoe, The Royal Society - Science Policy Center

- **Managing the Uncertainties of Mobile Phone Risk in the UK**  
Jack Stilgoe, The Royal Society - Science Policy Center
- **The Impossible Dialogue between Scientists and Associations Regarding Radiofrequencies: How the Health and Radiofrequencies Foundation Tried to Manage it?**  
Martine Hours, INRETS (The French National Institute for Transport and Safety Research), Scientific Council of the Health and Radiofrequencies Foundation
- **The Transparency Forum: Expert Authorities Engaging in Public Dialogue in Sweden**  
Linda Soneryd, SCORE (Stockholm Center for Organizational Research)

## Workshop 2 - The “Confinement” of Occupational Risks: Occupational Exposure to Toxic Substances

Chairman: Marcel Goldberg, Inserm (Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale)

- **How Science and Expertise Contribute to the Invisibility of Occupational Hazards**  
Emmanuel Henry, University of Strasbourg
- **How Social Sciences Contribute to the Production of Knowledge on Toxicological Hazards in Agriculture**  
Nathalie Jas, University of Paris 11
- **Technical Expertise and Social Experiments: How Do They Interact? Some Observations and lessons**  
Omar Brixi, Consultant in Public Health

## Workshop 3 - New Dangers, New Uncertainties: Nanotechnologies

Chairman: David Vernez, Afsset

- **Risks, Known and Unknown Uncertainties: “Nanotoxicology” Issues**  
Francelyne Marano, University of Paris 7
- **Uncertainty: an Additional Challenge for Nanotechnology Risk Regulation**  
Stéphanie Lacour, CNRS - CECOJI (Studies Center on International Legal Cooperation)
- **The Contribution of Participatory Technological Assessment to the Governance of Nanotechnological Risks**  
Alain Kaufmann, University of Lausanne



# DETAILED WORKSHOPS PROGRAMME ON 6<sup>th</sup> JULY

## Workshop 4 - Urban Air Pollution: an “Acceptable” Risk?

Modérateur : Sylvia Medina, InVS (Institute for Public Health)

- **How Controversial are Policies to Reduce Urban Air Pollution?**  
Franck Boutaric, Lecturer
- **Urban Air Pollution: Health Impact Assessments**  
Philippe Glorennec, EHESP (French School of Advanced Studies in Public Health)
- **Air Pollution and Proximity in Local Governance**  
Isabelle Roussel, APPA (Association for the Prevention of Air Pollution)

## Workshop 5 - Epidemics of Unexplained Symptoms

Chairman: Jeanne Favret-Saada, EPHE (Practical School of Advanced Studies)

- **Multiple Chemical Sensitivity: a Debated Environmental Illness**  
Alain Collomb, Health and Environment Association - Provence
- **The Social Construction of Illness, the Case of Two Controversial Diseases (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Fibromyalgia)**  
Marc Lorient, Georges Friedman Laboratory
- **Chemical Odor Intolerance**  
Nadia Nikolova, CAPTV Paris (Poison Control Center)
- **Is Uncertainty Acceptable? The Case of the Sick Building Syndrome**  
Catherine Rémy, CSI (Centre for Sociology of Innovation - École des Mines)

# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

École des Mines de Paris  
60 bis, boulevard Saint-Michel  
75006 PARIS - France

## Transports

Bus : 21, 27, 38, 82, 84, 85, 89  
"Luxembourg" stop

Fast tube / Train parisian  
system : "Luxembourg" station



Seating limited. Compulsory registration by **25 june 2009** (free of charge) on:  
[www.adelie-evenements.com/colloque6&7juillet/](http://www.adelie-evenements.com/colloque6&7juillet/) or by fax on 01 55 60 06 21  
or by mail at: [colloque6-7juillet@adelie-evenements.com](mailto:colloque6-7juillet@adelie-evenements.com)

Contact : ADELIE / Apolline Fourastier / Tél. : 01 55 60 11 53 / [colloque6-7juillet@adelie-evenements.com](mailto:colloque6-7juillet@adelie-evenements.com)