



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

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OFFICE OF
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Tim Meredith, M.D.
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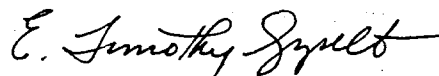
Dear Dr. Meredith:

EPA is pleased that the World Health Organization (WHO) has undertaken a project to review emerging science and its implications for toxic equivalency factors (TEFs) for dioxins, furans and dioxin-like PCBs. Since the last review and publication of TEFs in 1998, a significant amount of new data has become available and new approaches for the establishment of TEFs have been proposed. Much attention is being paid to this issue in the United States. As you are aware, in 2004 EPA and several of our Federal partners charged the United States' National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to review EPA's Dioxin Reassessment (NAS Review Draft, December 2003). The charge to the NAS included consideration of TEFs along with a number of other aspects related to the scientific assessment of dioxin and related compounds. We understand that the NAS is scheduled to have a prepublication draft report at the end of September. While we understand that you have undertaken a project to address emerging science with the potential to influence development and use of TEFs, we would ask that you carefully consider the timing of your activities and the anticipated completion of the NAS review.

We are pleased with the close collaboration with our staff and dialogue between NAS committee members and WHO staff in preparation for your expert meeting to be held June 28-30, 2005. I also applaud your efforts to involve interested parties in evaluating approaches to re-evaluation of TEFs by organizing a public session for June 27, 2005. The expert meeting is an important next step and will consider a number of thoughtful proposals that have been submitted to WHO for innovative approaches to developing TEFs and for characterizing their uncertainty. We believe that it will be important to take the time to fully consider the advice provided at the expert meeting together with the thoughts from the NAS before issuing WHO's update to the TEFs. I realize that this will require additional work beyond the current expert meeting, but we believe that it will result in a more scientifically robust product.

EPA will continue to collaborate with your organization on these efforts. We look forward to our continuing to work together to bring the best science to bear on technical issues of such mutual interest and importance.

Sincerely,



E. Timothy Oppelt
Acting Assistant Administrator

cc: William Farland