

Questions and Answers on the UNSCEAR Public Exposure Global Survey

Status: 2021-05-07

Questions	Answers
General	
<p>We have a lot of the requested data in other table formats or databases (INIS). Is it enough for you if we deliver this data to you without further reformatting or does the data inevitably have to be transferred into UNSCEAR's table format?</p>	<p>Our preference will be if NCPs present and submit the requested data electronically using the questionnaire format as this is the matter of quality of the data. NCPs can also send the data (preferably in electronic format in reports or databases (e.g. csv format) and we will import them to the UNSCEAR database, but the secretariat will come back to NCPs for a quality check in order to make sure that the data is correct.</p>
<p>In a case where there is no published scientific data, can the country add data based on measurements taken by the industries (internal reports) and how will UNSCEAR verify the quality, in this case?</p>	<p>For the global assessment it is important that we have quality data from each Member State. In this case, it would be up for the expert subgroups to make sure how this could be relevant for the global assessment. The expert subgroups also review the peer-reviewed literature to complement the missing data. We have technical experts in subgroup 1, who ensure the quality of data used in the project. If the countries have companies working with data and they find the data trustworthy enough to share with UNSCEAR – you are welcome to use it after careful review. Officially, this would be national data shared by the Member States with UNSCEAR.</p>
<p>Should we only report information for which there is a reference in form of a peer-reviewed publication or report?¹</p>	<p>We are looking for any relevant peer reviewed information that you can provide. This can be an article or a governmental report that has undergone an independent review and can provide reliable information and data to the UNSCEAR questionnaire. The reference field is there for your convenience if there is a report that provides additional information on the method how the data was collected, analysed, calculated and the source. This can be a short description from your side, a web link or you can submit a report electronically. In parallel to the survey, our expert group is conducting a search for peer reviewed literature in the time frame of 2007 to 2022. Both sources of information will complement each other.</p>
SG2	
<p>What are the criteria/definition for high background radiation areas?</p>	<p>If you have an area in your country where the background exposure deviates 3,4 or 5 times from the standard values, or it is in some way unusual – please report it. The UNSCEAR has concluded that natural radiation sources indicate that the average annual effective dose to the world population is</p>

¹ New questions marked in bold

	approximately 2.4 mSv, which is the same as the previous estimates.
The cosmic rays are not to be included separately in relation to this topic. Also, this type of survey usually indicates the number of miles covered, not number of measurements conducted.	We request absorbed dose rate in the air or ambient dose equivalent rate at ground level, which includes cosmic radiation. But we do request dose rates caused by cosmic rays separately. If a country has conducted measurements of dose rates from cosmic rays separately, please share that data as supplementary data.
Water treatment plants are only to include ground water.	At present we primarily focus on the topics of previous reports, which is the ground water and not the surface water. If you do not have some information or you have different information related, please state this in the comments and explain why.
Reports focus mainly on radioactive waste, but not explicitly from the NORM industries.	We will cover NORM waste from oil and gas, other NORM industries, and radioactive waste, as some countries do not categorise NORM waste as radioactive waste. Please specify in your response how waste from NORM industries is classified.
90% of the time the exposure is indoor exposure and NORM is used in building materials. What would be the place to provide this information?	In section 1.1.1 of the questionnaire we are requesting both, indoor and outdoor absorbed dose rate in the air or ambient dose equivalent rate at ground level. We included building materials separately in section 1.1.3.
For part 1 on exposure from natural radionuclides, we are wondering if some fields are missing. The ‘note’ on the top of the page states that data is requested for “Concentrations of natural radionuclides in water, food, soil, rocks, and other raw material”, amongst other things. However, from what we can see, there are no fields for information on radionuclides in water or food. We can only see that dose rates, soil and building materials (1.1.1-1.1.3), as well as information on NORM industries (1.2). Are there any fields missing, or have we misinterpreted?	The initial version of the questionnaire had food and water, but it was decided to reduce the amount of data to be asked from NCPs and we now rely on review of scientific publications for this topic first. The questionnaire was updated, distributed to NCPs and published on the survey website. The revised questionnaires include a change log.

SG3

We have a project which estimates exposure in new buildings, but the project runs towards 2022. Should we include the results?	Yes, however, please submit the data you have so far, as well and indicate in the response (due in Sept 2021) that there will be other data submitted in the future.
We have surveys which already were used in previous UNSCEAR reports. Should we include these?	Yes, if relevant and indicate this in the comments section of the questionnaire.

SG4-5

No questions asked.	
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SG6

Should we also provide information for patient's relatives/contacts?	Yes, please provide relevant data for relatives, but no personal data. If you do not have detailed
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	information, please provide what you have or just the operational procedures in the country.
I discovered a leakage of neutrons from linear accelerators when the beam is off. Even when we use TODs or OSLs we cannot measure the neutron dose effectively.	This issue is definitely not straightforward, however, here we look primarily for published data on public exposure at the national level. If you think that the neutron dosimetry is not adequately reflected, please indicate that this specific component is not covered yet. Please provide public exposure data you have and indicate the information missing. Any technical related data on the equipment (accelerator) is more appropriate to be addressed to other organisations such as IAEA.
Please provide us further information on medical exposure in relation to the other work done by UNSCEAR, such as the occupational exposure report.	This survey and project will not cover patients, volunteers, visitors, workers. Visitors may be relatives and their exposure after the patient is released would be addressed. Only the people who are exposed among the general public in any way. The data on occupational exposure will be present in the occupational report (scheduled for approval in 2021).
SG7	
Data which comes from pre-2007 but was not mentioned in the previous UNSCEAR reports, should we include it as well?	If you have information about something which was not previously published, please include it, but we will have to make an internal decision whether we use it in the end.
Did you say that only sources within the country are to be listed here? I'm asking because the public can be exposed to releases from sources originating from without the country as well, e.g. from Chernobyl.	Information on public exposure in your Member State needs to be reported. It would fall into the fallout category; they should still be reported for your country.
For part 5 on legacy and accidents, it is stated that only sites currently contaminated from civil or past military activities are to be included. Are we correct to interpret this as pertaining to contamination originating from within the country? We ask specifically because in Norway, significant levels of Chernobyl fallout are still present in the environment and measures to reduce levels are still used in food production. We are wondering whether data on this type of contamination is also requested?	The survey should include any contamination sites in the reporting Member State that are being managed as a result of any activities (in the scope of this project) regardless of the origin. Therefore, Chernobyl fallout that has impacted other countries where sites have to be managed for exposure to the public should be included in the survey responses.