Report activities ISEE-Europe, December 5, 2013

1. We have held monthly conference calls of the Council
2. A main activity focused on the promotion of the proposals concerning the Horizon2020 research program by the European Commission. In contact with many senior members of ISEE in Europe we proposed numerous changes in the original text and promoted these changes both in the Commission and through contacts with “National Contact Points” in each EU country. NCPs are the persons appointed by each country with whom the EC discuss proposals and programs for research. This systematic contact and support for some of our motions by NCP from different countries helped modify positively the health program 2014-2015 that now includes more explicitly references to environmental health in several parts.
3. On the same topic we promoted a joint statement (first drafted by us) by the ISEE, IEA, EUPHA (European Public Health Association) and EPHA (European Public Health Alliance – an NGO). The statement was sent to the Commissioner of Research of the EU, Mrs Quinn and we recently received a response indicating her support for public health research. This joint activity that was very positive, was however not easy and those of us involved (A Peters, B Hoffmann and M Kogevinas) had a feeling that in this contact with the other organizations we did not control the actions taken to publicize the joint statement particularly actions by the NGO.
4. We have taken further actions regarding the plan of activities discussed at the ISEE-Basel conference particularly concerning the action on education. We have established a small working group lead by Mireille Toledano and including colleagues from Eastern Europe to identify environmental health training and education opportunities and to evaluate possibilities for e-learning.
5. Concerning public health action, ISEE sent a position letter to Mr Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for Environment signed by A Peters and M Kogevinas titled “Strengthened European policies and actions are needed urgently to reduce the burden of disease caused by air pollution.” The letter was prepared jointly by the policy committee of the ISEE and the ISEE Europe Council (B Hoffmann and S Birkett) and refers to the promotion of new initiatives and regulations by the EU concerning air-pollution.