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I, Yngvar Thomassen, as the leading scientist of the research project "*Development of methodology of monitoring, assessing, forecasting and prevention of risks connected with long-range transportation of toxic pollutants capable of accumulating in food chains and spreading through biological pathways in the Arctic ecosystems*" confirm that all samples collected as part of this project are analysed at NArFU Arkhangelsk or are stored for further analysis locally. Thus, all analyses of biological samples part of this project are and will be carried out only on the territory of the Russian Federation and are not or will be exported outside the country.

However, based on my own initiative and research interest, I kindly asked in 2018 my collaborators to support me with some few single human hair strings cut, with no hair roots, from the scalp of young indigenous and Indian women in order to apply laser-ablation inductive plasma mass spectrometry to measure the time resolved excretion of iodine for development of a long term iodine status marker. These samples or idea were not part of any research protocol of our mega-project and is solely my own. The samples were individually placed in envelopes without any traceable personal identification as age, ethnicity etc. Hair which is cut above the scalp does not **contain any genetic material** and unfortunately I have misjudged the Russian legislation which includes these hair strings as human material illegal to bring out of Russia without special permission. My misunderstanding of the possibility of bringing these hair strings out of Russia without such official permission was also based on the knowledge that Russian Federation is one of largest exporter of human cosmetic hair.

It has come to my knowledge that presently some Russian media speculate in that these few hair string were to be brought out of Russia for development of genetic weapons for NATO. Never in my scientific life, I have registered such ridiculous and absurd view – since hair does not contain any genes and there is already millions of Russians living outside your beautiful country.

And finally, we should acknowledge my colleagues at the Biomonitoring Laboratory at NArFU, after three years of hard work, they have established themselves at high international research levels.

Oslo 04.09.2020  
With kind regards



Yngvar Thomassen