

Guide to the CORA¹ Framework

This guide shortly describes the categories of the CORA framework (CORA – Communicating health Risk Assessments to the general public). The framework was designed to help people without specialised scientific risk knowledge to judge the trustworthiness of a risk assessment report.

The framework can be used by risk assessors when drafting a report and/or by risk communicators and stakeholder when preparing a statement about a published risk assessment.

A completed CORA-description of a report informs about content, authorship and processes associated with the report's risk assessment activity. This information helps non-experts to judge the credibility of the document. The more complete the CORA-framework information about a report, the better a reader can judge its trustworthiness.

1. About

Source
Bibliographic information to the report
Link
Self-explaining
Supporting information
Other useful material / links concerning the report

2. Content and Mandate

Objectives
Aim and scope of the report / of the risk-assessment's objectives
EMF spectrum covered
Self-explaining
Status of report and authorship
Mandate and (institutional, legal) status of the report and the authorship
Funding
Self-explaining
Accountability
Self-explaining
Summary
Self-explaining

3. Authorship

Selection of Members
Selection criteria of the members of the expert group (authorship)
Composition (institutional)
Institutional background of the members of the expert group
Composition (expertise)
Expertise required to fulfil the mandate and expertise available in the team of authors
Impartiality
Procedures applied to get an impartial view; criteria to check for vested interests
Disclosure
Names, affiliations and vested interests, if any, of the authors
Summary
Self-explaining

¹ CORA was developed by WG5 of COST Action BM0704. Main authors: Peter Wiedemann, Gregor Dürrenberger, Jimmy Estenberg, Shaiela Kandel, Eric van Rongen, Evi Vogel.

4. Assessment Process

Literature search
Information about the literature search strategy. Is the inclusion of the relevant literature guaranteed? Biases?
Quality assurance
Information about how the scientific quality of the literature was assessed.
Weighing of evidence
Procedures to weigh the evidence from within and across disciplines, e.g. for specific endpoints. Formal procedures? Communicative validation?
Consultation activities
Information about consultation activities, if any. With other experts/peers, stakeholders, the general public?
Consensus finding
Information about formal procedures/rules for consensus finding. Any minority opinion in the report?
Summary
Self-explaining

5. Communication

Differentiation between biological and health effects
Does the report make this differentiation?
Unbiased descriptions
Does the report provide a balanced discussion of the pros and cons, including (remaining) uncertainties? Are the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence indicated?
Evidence-based conclusions
Do the conclusions correspond to the evaluations made in the body of the report?
Plain language summary
Self-explaining
Unbiased summary
Is the summary balanced, i.e. referring to both pros and cons – including uncertainties? Is the risk assessment discussed in the context of other risk assessments (comparative view)?
Summary
Self-explaining