

## Fluor and Iodine Commission: Annual Report 2022

### Mission

Initially founded to accompany the developments in connection with the usage of iodized salt in Switzerland, the commission nowadays engages in scientific and technical questions concerning iodine and fluoride intake, monitors intake of these nutrients and concerns itself with political issues in this field.

### Members

Dr. Maria Andersson, Zürich, Chair  
Andreas Baud, Pratteln (*new*)  
Clara Benzi Schmid, BLV representative, Bern (*new*)  
Dr. med. Silvia Dehler, Vaduz (*new*)  
Prof. Dr. med. Christoph A. Meier, Zürich  
PD Dr. med. Katharina Quack Lötscher, Zürich  
Prof. Sabine Rohrmann, Zürich  
Prof. Tuomas Waltimo, Basel  
PD Dr. med. Florian Just Wegehaupt, Zürich (*new*)  
Prof. Michael B. Zimmermann, Zürich

### Activities 2022

The Commission held two regular meetings this year, on September 1<sup>st</sup> and November 25<sup>th</sup>.

Members Prof. Hans Gerber, Mr. Stefan Trachsel, Dr. Giorgio Menghini, and Dr. Michael Beer stepped down from the Commission in 2022. The Commission expresses sincere appreciation for their long-standing engagement and extensive contributions over many years. New members are Andreas Baud, Clara Benzi Schmid, Dr. med. Silvia Dehler and PD Dr. med. dent. Florian Just Wegehaupt, endorsed by the SAMW Board on 28 October 2022.

The Commission's activities in 2022 were focused on marking 100 years since its foundation (former Kropfkommission, established on 21 January 1922) and celebrating 100 years of salt iodization. Switzerland introduced iodized salt as a safe and cost-effective public health intervention to correct and prevent iodine deficiency in 1922. The pioneering Swiss program has served as an international model and salt iodization is now implemented in about 150 countries.

A Symposium to celebrate 100 years of salt iodization was held on 6 October 2022 in Bern, organized by the Commission and the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (BLV). The meeting was attended by experts from public health, nutrition, and medical professions, along with representatives from the Swiss Saltworks, food industry, policymakers and politics. Experts gave an overview of the historical context and presented current scientific knowledge. A panel of nutrition experts, medical doctors, food producers, policy makers and politicians discussed the current challenges for salt iodization as a public health strategy in Switzerland. Further information is available at: [Salzjodierung \(samw.ch\)](https://www.samw.ch) and [Hundert Jahre jodiertes Salz \(admin.ch\)](https://www.admin.ch).

In connection with the centenary celebrations, SAMW published an article on the Swiss salt iodization program and iodine status in the population written by the Commission Chair in the SAMW Bulletin 2/2002 ([SAMW Bulletin](#)). The commission responded to numerous requests from Media and participated in radio programs produced by SRF4 News, SRF Treffpunkt and SRF Wissenschaftsmagazin. An historical article written by the journalist Jonah Goodman and reviewed by the Commission was published in Das Magazin on September 19 ([Die unglaubliche Geschichte von Jodsalz: Wie drei heldenhafte Ärzte die Schweiz vom Kropf erlösten | Tages-Anzeiger](#) ([tagesanzeiger.ch](http://tagesanzeiger.ch))).

Committee member Clara Benzi-Schmid presented and shared experiences from the salt iodization program at a European Symposium organized by the Iodine Global Network at the annual European Thyroid Association meeting in Brussels on September 10, 2022.

### **Outlook 2023**

The commission plans to develop an information campaign aiming to increase awareness of the importance of adequate iodine nutrition in the general population. Activities with the aim to improve the use of iodized salt in food production are also intended.

Following the completion and publication of the 5<sup>th</sup> Swiss National Iodine Study, the commission will make recommendations to the Swiss authorities based on the findings.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Andersson".

*Maria Andersson, Zürich, February 16, 2023*