

Author's response to reviews

Title: Reproductive toxicity of seafood contaminants: Prospective comparisons of Swedish east and west coast fishermen's families

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Version: 5 **Date:** 25 April 2008

Author's response to reviews: see over

Dear Editor,

We have revised the manuscript according to the suggestions provided. A detailed description of the changes made is included below.

Kind regards,
Anna Axmon

- The title of the manuscript should use plural 'families' rather than singular 'family'.
This has been done.
- The abstract needs some adjustment. In the first sentence, replace comma with a period after '(POPs)?', then remove 'whereas?', and begin the next sentence with 'Their west coast'.
This has been done.
- Third sentence is not necessary; it repeats information in 1st.
The sentence has been removed.
- Fish consumption is not an exposure measure, so substitute by dietary questionnaire or questionnaire assessment of fish consumption.
“Questionnaire assessments of” has been added to the sentence.
- The last sentence should be revised to support the use of the epidemiological design. Our suggestion is 'Although some associations may have been affected by beneficial effects of essential nutrients in seafood, the overall findings are meaningful in the context of reproductive toxicity and support the usefulness of the epidemiological design.'
The original sentence has been replaced with the suggested one.
- In the main text, you use the word 'throughout' repeatedly, e.g., on p. 6 line 5. It would be better to substitute 'throughout all future studies' by 'in subsequent studies'.
“Throughout” has been replaced where needed.
- Likewise, the word 'indeed' seems to be used more often than needed, sometimes inappropriately.
“Indeed” has been replaced throughout the manuscript.
- We previously asked you to explain the word 'validate'. That a parameter or method has been validated does not by itself indicate that it is valid. It would be better to describe the reliability in concrete terms, e.g., correlation with the truth, if known.
A section has been added with correlations and kappa agreement found between actual past concentrations and concentrations estimated using the mathematical model.
- Further, on p. 12, line 12, you claim that the exposure parameters are 'robust and valid'. Although you have good reason to be proud of this research, hyperbole should be avoided and substituted by objective terms.
The claim regarding robust and valid exposure measured has been removed, and replaced by the claim that the use of biomarkers of exposure is a strength of the studies.
- In our opinion, all exposure measures are imprecise and usually cause biases toward the null hypothesis. Despite this tendency, you have found some meaningful and plausible associations. The last sentence of the Conclusions needs to correct the spelling of 'beneficial' and should also include some sentence similar to the one suggested above as

the last sentence of the abstract.

The last sentence has been replaced according to the suggestion above.