

John N. Wolfe

January 19, 1959

Allyn M. Seymour

**AVAILABILITY OF RONGELAP DATA**

**SYMBOL: RME:AMS**

In reply to your inquiry about the above mentioned subject the following comments are offered.

Dr. Dunning's report summarizes the data through 1956. Since that time three "radiobiological surveys" have been made - July, 1957; March, 1958; and September, 1958. No formal reports combining all the observations from one trip into one report has been made but sections of data have been completed and submitted to DBM.

The University of Washington assumes that part of its responsibility in the Rongelap program is to provide information to DBM from which Dr. Dunning can evaluate the health hazard to the Rongelapese of eating the local food items. Furthermore it assumes that the recommendations and suggestions made by DBM previous to the return of the natives in June, 1957 still prevail especially since all the data for the last three surveys show no increase in radioactivity - in fact the decline has been about as expected and can be reasonably well predicted.

All the Rongelap data from the University of Washington is on file in the Environmental Sciences Branch and has also been sent to Dr. Dunning.

Data received since 1956 is as follows:

<u>Description of data</u>	<u>Date Received</u>	<u>Date cc sent to Dunning</u>
Rongelap diets (Held ltr, 7 pp	9/25/58	direct from Held
Cs <sup>137</sup> in Daily Rations of Foods	12/10/58	12/10/58
Grown at Rongelap Atoll (8/58)		
Survey Meter Reading at Rongelap	4/9/58	4/9/58
Feb-Mar, 1958		

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<u>Description of data</u>	<u>Date Received</u>	<u>Date CC sent to</u> <u>    Dunning</u>
Sr <sup>90</sup> in the muscle of Land Crabs Collected at Rongelap Atoll (for 1956, 57 & Mar. 58)	7/20/58	7/20/58
Gross $\beta$ activity of Rongelap, Kabellie, and Eniwetok Island Soils (at 1" increments to 9".)	7/20/58	7/20/58
Sr <sup>90</sup> in Scaevola Leaves from Rongelap Atoll - 7/57 - 3/58	7/20/58	7/20/58
Sr <sup>90</sup> in Bone Samples from Rats Collected at Rongelap Island, 3/58	May, 1958	5/14/58
Sr <sup>90</sup> in Pig Bone collected at Rongelap Island, Mar '58	June, 1958	
Sr <sup>90</sup> in Skeletons of Land Crabs collected at Rongelap. July, 1956 July, 1957 and March 1958	June, 1958	
Sr <sup>90</sup> in the Liver of Land Crabs Collected at Rongelap Atoll July '56, July '57, March '58	October, 1958	10/14/58
Average Values of Survey meter Readings on Land at Rongelap and Kabellie Islands (for 8 surveys from Mar '54 to Aug '58)	October, 1958	10/14/58
Gross beta Activity of fat and non-fat fractions of coconut crab liver collected at Rongelap, March, 1958.	October, 1958	10/14/58

In addition two reports relative to Rongelap have been prepared: UWFL-55, Radiobiological Studies of the Fish Collected at Rongelap and Ailinginae Atolls July, 1957, and March, 1958; UWFL-56, The Occurrence of Antimony-125, Europium-155, Iron-55 and other Radionuclides in Rongelap Atoll Soil. Both of these reports were submitted to Oak Ridge in April 1958 for publication. #56 was received January, 1959; #55 is yet to be published.

The status of the Rongelap data was also been reviewed in two recent memos; one of June 19, 1958 to Dr. Dunning and the other of September 24, 1958 to Dr. Potts. A copy of these two memos are attached.

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Before I left the Branch I told Dr. Dunning that upon arrival at the University of Washington the laboratory would assemble in one package and present in report form the information from the last three field trips. This has not been done because there was a large backlog of Rongelap samples to be counted and I became occupied with other parts of the Laboratory's program. (The unusually large backlog of samples for counting was occasioned by electronic difficulties with the scaling units). Within the last two days counting has been completed on  $Sr^{90}$  in plants from the March 1958 collection and  $Sr^{90}$  in the skeleton muscle and liver of coconut crabs from the September 1958 collection. Needless to say these data are unreported. Completed but not yet in final form for submission to DDM are data on the decline of radioactivity of recently collected samples of Plankton, fish and lagoon bottom from Rongelap. The reporting of this and other information on the last three collections can be made the number one order of business in which event the report would be available in about a month.

Mrs. Sullivan now knows where the Rongelap data are filed. Integration of the Rongelap files with other Branch files is needed and would make the information more readily available.

cc: Dr. Dunham  
Dr. Dunning  
Dr. Seymour

RMES

Seymour: dpb  
1/19/59