

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND ADVISORY FORUM UNIT

Oslo, 12 June 2008
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Minutes

**TWENTY SIXTH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY FORUM
ROME (ITALY), 10-11 APRIL 2008**

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY FORUM

Chair: *Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle*, Executive Director, EFSA

Austria	<i>Roland Grossgut</i>	Italy	<i>Agostino Macrì</i>
Belgium	<i>Charles Crémer</i>	Latvia	<i>Gatis Ozoliņš</i>
Bulgaria	<i>Stefka Petrova</i>	Lithuania	<i>Ingrida Miliute</i>
Cyprus	<i>Stella Canna-Michaelidou</i>	Luxembourg	<i>Felix Wildschutz</i>
Czech Republic	<i>Klára Zuzánková</i>	Netherlands	<i>Evert Schouten</i>
Denmark	<i>Henrik C. Wegener</i>	Poland	<i>Jan Krzysztof Ludwicki</i>
Estonia	<i>Küllli Rae</i>	Portugal	<i>Manuel Barreto Dias</i>
Finland	<i>Kirsti Savela</i>	Romania	<i>Alecsandra Dida Cozachievici</i>
France	<i>Valérie Baduel</i>	Slovak Republic	<i>Zuzana Bírošová</i>
Germany	<i>Andreas Hensel</i>	Slovenia	<i>Ada Hočevar Grom</i>
Greece	<i>Vassilios Krestos</i>	Spain	<i>Jesús Campos Amado</i>
Hungary	<i>Maria Szeitzné Szabó</i>	Sweden	<i>Leif Busk</i>
Ireland	<i>Jeffrey Moon</i>	United Kingdom	<i>Judith Hilton</i>

Observers and Invitees of the Executive Director

Norway	<i>Kirstin Færden</i>	European Commission	<i>Jeannie Vergnettes</i>
Switzerland	<i>Roger Meuwly</i>	European Parliament	<i>Thomas Gijsselaers</i>

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority

<i>Silvia Bellocchio</i>	<i>Riitta Maijala</i>
<i>Bernhard Berger</i>	<i>Elena Marani</i>
<i>Per Bergman</i>	<i>Torben Nilsson</i>
<i>Gian Luca Bonduri</i>	<i>Steve Pagani</i>
<i>Lucia De Luca</i>	<i>Claudia Paoletti</i>
<i>Hubert Deluyker</i>	<i>Sérgio Potier Rodeia</i>
<i>Anne-Laure Gassin</i>	<i>Reinhilde Schoonjans</i>
<i>Alessandro Gianini</i>	<i>Karen Talbot</i>
<i>Herman Koëter</i>	<i>Ariane Titz</i>
<i>Karine Lheureux</i>	<i>Victoria Villamar</i>
<i>Djien Liem</i>	<i>Christophe Wolff</i>

1 WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE MEETING

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle opened the meeting and thanked the Italian Ministry of Health and the *Istituto Superiore di Sanità* (ISS) for kindly hosting the Advisory Forum (AF) meeting.

Prof. Enrico Garaci, Italian AF member and President of the ISS, welcomed the participants and thanked the AF for coming to the ISS.

Dr. Romano Marabelli, Head of the Department of Public Veterinary Health, Nutrition and Food Safety, Italian Ministry of Health, welcomed the participants, mentioned the importance of EFSA and of its close cooperation with the national authorities, and informed that the theme of the World Expo 2015 in Milan would be “Nutrition for the Planet”.

Dr. Fabrizio Oleari, Director General of the National Secretariat for Risk Assessment in the Food Chain, Italian Ministry of Health, also welcomed the participants and emphasised the importance of cooperation.

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle welcomed the new AF observer of Switzerland and the Irish, Lithuanian and Romanian representatives replacing the AF members at this meeting. She mentioned that apologies were received from Malta. Finally, she emphasised the importance of urgently receiving the few missing declarations of interests.

2 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted with a few additional issues under agenda items 9.6 (Other issues raised by the Member States) and 10.2 (Other issues raised by EFSA).

3 ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 25TH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY FORUM IN PARMA ON 31 JANUARY - 1 FEBRUARY 2008

The minutes were adopted without changes or comments.

4 MATTERS ARISING SINCE THE 25TH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY FORUM

4.1 Management Board meeting and “Away Day” in Cyprus on 27-28 March 2008

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle informed the AF that the Management Board (MB) adopted a revised “Decision concerning the operation of the AF” at its meeting in Cyprus on 27 March 2008. The revised decision takes into account the principles previously agreed with the AF, including the adoption of minutes by written procedure. She further explained that observers from the MB could attend AF meetings. The MB also approved the annual activity report for 2007. The Annual Report will be ready for publication in June 2008. EFSA’s draft management plan for 2009, forming the basis of the budget request for 2009, is being amended with MB comments. Subsequently, it will be shared with the Scientific Committee (SC) and AF for comments and discussion about priorities as done last year. There will also be consultations with stakeholders, the European Commission and the European Parliament. The “Away Day” of the MB in Cyprus on 28 March 2008 focused on EFSA’s multi-annual strategic plan for 2009-2013. This work has started in EFSA and the AF will be involved too. Finally, the MB discussed and endorsed a new set of performance indicators.

Germany found the work on the performance indicators important to assess efficiency and effectiveness and emphasised the importance of defining criteria to evaluate EFSA’s efficiency and effectiveness both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle agreed on the need to measure both quantitative and qualitative aspects and suggested a further discussion on the performance indicators at a future AF meeting.

Action 1: EFSA to send its Annual Report for 2007 to the AF as soon as it is ready.

Action 2: EFSA to share its draft management plan for 2009 with the AF to receive comments from the Member States and to seek their views on the priorities.

Action 3: The AF to discuss EFSA’s multi-annual strategic plan for 2009-2013 and EFSA’s performance indicators at a future AF meeting.

Action 4: EFSA to provide the AF with regular updates based on the performance indicators, the budget execution and the status of recruitment.

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle also informed the AF that on 2 April 2008 she addressed the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety to update the MEPs on EFSA's activities and achievements and to seek their views on the future tasks of EFSA. The meeting was characterised by a constructive discussion and many questions.

4.2 Scientific Committee meeting in Parma on 14-15 February 2008

Djien Liem referred to the published minutes of the 29th Scientific Committee (SC) meeting in Parma on 14-15 February 2008 and highlighted the important discussion on the future work programme of the SC. He also informed the AF that the 30th SC meeting in Parma on 21-22 April 2008 will comprise a discussion of the updated opinion on animal cloning after the public consultation, an initial discussion of the document from the SC working group on nanotechnology, expected endorsement for publication of the guidance document on botanicals, and further discussion of the guidance document on transparency before its expected adoption at the SC meeting in September 2008. The SC would also be consulted on the draft "Decision of the Executive Director on the selection of experts".

4.3 Meeting of the AF Working Group on Communications (AFCWG) in Parma on 21 February 2008

Anne-Laure Gassin briefed the AF on the outcomes of the AFCWG meeting in Parma on 21 February 2008, which are presented in the published minutes. She highlighted the brainstorming session in three breakout groups discussing 1) Strengthening cooperation on key food safety issues, 2) Building communities of interest within the group and wider communication teams, and 3) Building awareness in the Member States about EFSA and the EU Food Safety System. She also mentioned that the next issue of EFSA's newsletter on scientific cooperation, "Moving together", would be published in June 2008 and that EFSA is further strengthening its procedures for the pre-notification of news under embargo to ensure a common understanding of the procedure and full clarity on who receives the information.

4.4 Meeting of the AF Working Group on IT (AF IT WG) in Athens on 8 April 2008

Torben Nilsson briefed the AF on the outcomes of the meeting of the AF Working Group on IT in Athens on 8 April 2008, including a decision to revise the terms of reference of the AF IT WG, since most of the expected project outputs were achieved already, there are new needs in the context of the Strategy on Cooperation and Networking, the informal exchanges amongst IT people in different food safety institutions are useful, and there is an interest in creating a closer interaction between the AF and the AF IT WG. He also informed that a task force composed by a few volunteer AF IT WG members and EFSA staff

would propose the revised terms of reference based on discussion with the AF IT WG, and that the revised terms of reference would be ready for discussion and endorsement by the AF at its meeting in November 2008.

Germany requested an overview on the costs and outcomes of the AF IT WG and said that there is a need to start using the tools developed, e.g. videoconferencing and Extranet. Germany also suggested a need for more interaction between the focal points, AF and working groups. Denmark said that it would be important to define the desired profile of the AF IT WG members. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle agreed on the need to review the present status as part of the revision of the terms of reference. Hubert Deluyker emphasised the importance of the AF IT WG in the area of data collection and database management. Torben Nilsson agreed on the need for more interaction between the focal points, AF members and working group members at national level and said that EFSA would facilitate this by making the information on the membership more readily accessible on the Extranet. He also confirmed that the revision of the terms of reference of the AF IT WG would indeed consider the desired profile of its members. Finally, he informed that the Extranet users should soon be able to personalise their passwords.

Action 5: EFSA to inform the Extranet users on how to personalise their passwords as soon as this is possible.

5 COOPERATION AND NETWORKING

5.1 AF Extranet structure - proposal for endorsement

Torben Nilsson presented the proposed revised structure of the AF Extranet with two main workspaces: One restricted for the AF and one with broader access for scientific cooperation. Each workspace would have sub-communities and projects with well-defined access rights and would provide an overview calendar with all relevant meetings as well as information on the membership of the AF, its working groups and the focal point network. The workspaces related to the different EFSA Scientific Cooperation projects (ESCOs) would be accessible from both workspaces by their members.

The AF endorsed the proposed structure with two amendments: 1) AF members, SC members and focal points should have read-only access to the ESCOs and 2) AF members should also have access to the information on special AF meetings on animal health and plant health.

5.2 Focal point meeting in Parma on 5-6 March 2008

Bernhard Berger briefed the AF on the outcomes of the first focal point meeting in Parma on 5-6 March 2008 and mentioned that it was expected that all Member States would have signed focal point agreements with EFSA by summer 2008. Also the EEA/EFTA countries have been invited to establish focal points. A

guidance table with practical examples of focal point tasks has been developed. A task force on the exchange of scientific information has been created and its first meeting is scheduled for May 2008. And the focal points were encouraged to create national focal point web sites. The next focal point meeting will take place in Parma on 4-5 June 2008. The focal point reports are required by October 2008 in order to provide the AF with a summary report in November 2008. If the AF agrees, it is EFSA's intention to renew the focal point agreements in December 2008.

Romania asked if the focal points represent the Member States in a network parallel to the AF. Germany requested clear terms of reference for the focal points and said that adequate financial resources would be required to perform well. The Netherlands requested more information on the process for establishing national focal point web sites, and Sweden emphasised the importance of exchanging experiences. Bulgaria asked for more information on the financial aspects. The United Kingdom said that the focal point meeting had been very useful and that the focal points would contribute to make EFSA's work more visible. Italy mentioned that a key challenge for the focal points will be the coordination and information collection at national level. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle emphasised that the role of the focal points is to support the practical aspects of networking and cooperation, so they will support the work of the AF without duplication of efforts. She also mentioned that it is a learning process, so regular feedback will be provided to the AF. Bernhard Berger reiterated that the focal points will support the AF members and that each Member State will organise its own coordination at the national level. He also said that the focal point tasks are clearly described in the focal point agreements and should be covered by the reporting, so the purpose of the focal point discussions was merely to share ideas on how to undertake these tasks. Anne-Laure Gassin mentioned that the creation of national focal point web sites would also be discussed at the next AFCWG meeting. Solutions would differ in different Member States, but the idea is that EFSA can assist through facilitation and by taking advantage of the initial experiences in some Member States. Germany supported the networking role of the focal points and said that more funds would be needed also for communication activities. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle replied that the funding issue would be taken into account on the basis of the initial experiences when renewing the focal point agreements. She concluded that the AF would be kept updated on the focal point activities and that the focal points would only undertake tasks that are agreeable to the AF.

6 EXPERT DATABASE PROJECT PLAN AND DRAFT DECISION ON THE SELECTION OF EXPERTS

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle introduced this agenda item by mentioning that the purpose of the decision on the selection of experts is to increase transparency and clearly present EFSA's procedures for selecting experts. Hubert Deluyker

presented the draft decision on the selection of experts. Bernhard Berger presented the expert database project plan, including the eligibility criteria for inclusion in the database. He thanked the ESCO working group on the establishment of the expert database for its valuable contribution. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle invited the AF members to make strategic comments at the meeting, while editorial comments on the draft decision on the selection of experts could be submitted in writing subsequently.

Germany said that EFSA wishes the best experts, but that it is difficult to have them available due to the workload and travel time, so there would be a need to approach institutions. Germany also asked if the expert database would be available to the Member States or for EFSA only. The United Kingdom asked about the validation process, giving as an example that a recent PhD may have valuable expertise despite a relatively short list of publications. The European Commission found that the expert database would be a very useful tool, but that there would be a need to be flexible to invite external experts in order to find the best experts. France expressed some scepticism about the expert database, which was found to be too complex to become functional. The Netherlands found that it was a good proposal and asked if the expert database would also contain non-EU experts. Norway asked who would choose the experts. Hubert Deluyker agreed to maintain flexibility and mentioned that in some cases the regulations foresee that the Member States nominate experts. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that the external calls for SC and Panel experts will continue. Bernhard Berger explained that the ESCO working group on the establishment of the expert database, based on experience of the European Commission, had recommended a relatively open approach to populating the expert database in order not to lose potential experts. EFSA will use the expert database as a tool for the selection of experts, including non-EU experts, and also the AF members will have access to the expert database. Cyprus expressed appreciation of the documents and supported a flexible approach in assessing the expertise, since other risk assessment tasks than scientific publications, *e.g.* consultancies, may be equally qualifying. Germany questioned the benefit of national institutions when their experts work for EFSA and suggested that national institutions should be contacted before doing the list of experts. France agreed, in principle, with an open database, but mentioned that some people would be “recognised” as experts by being included in the expert database. Bernhard Berger clarified that the assessment of expertise would not only consider scientific publications. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle concluded that after receiving possible written comments, EFSA would finalise the decision on the selection of experts and proceed with the expert database in order to launch it in June 2008. Germany suggested a review after two years.

Action 6: The AF members to provide possible further comments on the draft decision on the selection of experts and the expert database project plan to EFSA before the end of April 2008.

7 CRISIS EXERCISE

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle explained the need for EFSA and the Member States to be prepared in the event of a food safety crisis and mentioned that the purpose of the crisis exercise was to test EFSA's draft crisis manual. The outcome of the exercise as well as comments from the AF members on EFSA's draft crisis manual would be taken into account when finalising documents.

The crisis exercise was organised and conducted by two external consultants (Jon Bell and Lynne Bell) in cooperation with EFSA. The AF members and EFSA staff were divided into three groups dealing with the same imaginary case of food contamination. The exercise considered both risk assessment and risk communication aspects. It focused on the cooperation between EFSA and the Member States in a crisis situation. The rapporteurs of each group reported back to the AF plenary after the crisis exercise. Subsequently, the AF discussed the way the crisis exercise had been conducted with a view to suggest improvements for future crisis exercises and commented on the draft crisis manual.

The AF members found that the crisis exercise had been useful and had illustrated the quite different expectations of different Member States to EFSA in a crisis situation, *e.g.* some Member States would await EFSA's guidance, while others would take action independently at the national level. It was recommended to use a simpler scenario for future crisis exercises and to consider also the interaction between risk assessors and risks managers in a crisis situation, *i.e.* by considering the cooperation and division of tasks between EFSA and the European Commission.

Upon Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle's request, Jon Bell explained that the crisis manual is a detailed reference document, the crisis procedures are intended as a public document explaining EFSA's role in a crisis situation, and the crisis leaflet is a kind of checklist that is only useful during a crisis if the user is already familiar with the crisis manual. In reply to questions from several AF members, Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle clarified that the purpose of the crisis manual is to cover only crisis situations, not routine risk assessments. Denmark advised EFSA to discuss the crisis manual with the ECDC to harmonise the terminology. Denmark also asked how EFSA's Panels would be consulted during a crisis when the experts would also face urgent requests at national level. Belgium suggested updating the list of crisis contacts in the Member States. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle agreed with the suggestions and informed the AF that EFSA would also be involved in an ECDC crisis exercise. She further informed that the SC would discuss rapid response procedures for EFSA's Panels at its next meeting. Finally, she mentioned that EFSA's crisis manual would be finalised by summer 2008.

Action 7: EFSA to explore the possibility to organise a crisis exercise jointly with the European Commission.

Action 8: EFSA to consult with the ECDC on the crisis terminology.

Action 9: The AF members to inform EFSA about possible changes in their crisis contact details.

Action 10: The AF members to provide possible further comments on EFSA's draft crisis manual by the end of April 2008.

8 UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE ESCOS

Ireland updated the AF on the status of the work of the ESCO working group on folic acid: The work is progressing as planned. Minor amendments to the terms of reference are suggested to clarify the objective of the ESCO. A report summarising the current situation in the Member States represented in the ESCO is being prepared. A workshop in Sweden with invited experts on folic acid is under preparation. The meta-analysis work has been postponed to early 2009 as a significant number of new and highly relevant data are expected by then. It is proposed to submit the work on the meta-analysis to EFSA for funding under article 36 in 2009. The next meeting of the ESCO will take place in Dublin on 29 May 2008.

Austria updated the AF on the status of the work of the ESCO working group on fostering harmonised risk assessment approaches, including the outcomes of the meeting in Vienna on 13-14 March 2008 and the next steps. The next meeting of the ESCO will take place in Parma on 26-27 June 2008.

Djien Liem informed the AF that the sub-groups under the ESCO working group on emerging risks would meet in Brussels on 14-15 April 2008 and that the first meeting of the ESCO working group on botanicals would take place in Brussels on 15 April 2008 with two sub-groups focusing on testing the guidance document on botanicals on real cases and finalising the botanicals compendia, respectively. Portugal asked where information on the composition of the working groups can be found. Djien Liem replied that the mandates and composition of the working groups would soon be available on EFSA's web site.

Hubert Deluyker updated the AF on the status of the expert groups on chemical occurrence and food consumption data collection that will continue also after the present mandates.

9 UPDATE AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON MATTERS RAISED BY THE MEMBER STATES

9.1 Investigation of acrylamide and cancer in Denmark

Denmark briefed the AF on a recent study indicating that acrylamide may cause cancer through a non-genotoxic mechanism. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle thanked Denmark for sharing this information that would be considered at EFSA's

Scientific Colloquium on Acrylamide in Tabiano on 22-23 May 2008. The Netherlands found the results interesting, since such association was not found in a recent Dutch study.

9.2 BSE risk analysis in France

France presented the results of a BSE risk analysis in France that illustrated the effectiveness of the control measures taken in France. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that the information would be shared with EFSA's BIOHAZ Panel. Belgium informed that the BSE findings are similar to those reported for Belgium.

9.3 Combined toxic effects of multiple chemical exposures - a new opinion from the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety

Norway presented an opinion on combined toxic effects of multiple chemical exposures, as adopted by the Scientific Steering Committee of the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety on 7 April 2008: For substances exhibiting similar modes of action, adverse effects from multiple exposures may be experienced due to dose addition. For substances with dissimilar modes of action, adverse effects from multiple exposures are not expected, if exposures to the individual components are below their ADIs/TDIs. If exposures to multiple chemicals are significantly above their ADIs/TDIs, combined effects may occur, but they are difficult to predict. Although combined effects are presently only taken into account to a limited degree, the issue is not considered a matter of serious concern.

Action 11: AF members to provide possible feedback to Norway on the proposed flowchart for the risk assessment of combined chemical exposures.

9.4 Investigation of combined effects of endocrine disrupters in Denmark

Denmark presented partially published results of an investigation of combined effects of endocrine disrupters in Denmark.

Action 12: Denmark to share the study with the AF members when it becomes publicly available.

9.5 The Danish campylobacter action plan

Denmark presented its campylobacter action plan for 2008-2011: Campylobacter is the predominant cause of food borne disease and the main risk comes from imported chicken. Also the United Kingdom shared its experiences with campylobacter. Hubert Deluyker informed the AF that EFSA would organise a Scientific Colloquium on Campylobacter in Rome on 4-5 December 2008.

9.6 Other issues raised by the Member States

The United Kingdom updated the AF on its follow up on the study on combined effects of colours and said that the United Kingdom agrees with EFSA's opinion. The intention of the United Kingdom is to work with the industry for a voluntary withdrawal of the colours in question and to work for a common European approach. Cyprus suggested a precautionary approach at EU level.

The Netherlands informed the AF of the vivid debate on animal welfare in The Netherlands. France said that animal welfare is also subject to strong stakeholder attention in France. Riitta Maijala informed that EFSA would soon launch an article 36 call on animal transport.

Cyprus mentioned that accidental occurrence of allergenic substances in food can pose a real problem, especially in the case of limited information on imported food. Germany agreed with this concern. The United Kingdom said that products with insufficient declarations should simply be withdrawn from the market, so no risk assessment would be needed. The European Commission said that they would examine the problem. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that EFSA would wait for the European Commission to follow up on whether EFSA should be involved or if the problem should rather be addressed by the risk managers.

Cyprus mentioned that energetic drinks with high caffeine content, often consumed in combination with alcohol, pose a risk and asked for action at European level. Germany, Austria, Belgium and France agreed with the problem. Germany added that the problem goes beyond energetic drinks and also concerns a variety of mixed products containing alcohol and often targeted to consumers below the age of 18 years by unethical marketing campaigns. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle informed that EFSA is preparing an opinion on energetic drinks that will be ready before the end of 2008. She suggested that this opinion could form the basis for discussions on possible required actions.

France asked whether the decision of EFSA to address aspartame was based on new information and what the objective is. Herman Koëter referred to the discussion at the AF meeting in The Hague on 6-7 December 2007 and explained that despite previous opinions on aspartame indicating no risks, a public concern over the alleged carcinogenicity of aspartame persists. Hence, the objective is to scrutinize the existing scientific literature for any possible gaps or inconsistencies in order to either reconfirm the previous opinions, taking into account also the newest scientific knowledge, or to identify areas that would require further studies.

Greece requested EFSA to use the correct name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in its Management Plan and other public documents.

Hungary informed the AF members that they would receive invitations to attend a conference in Budapest on 22 May 2008 to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Hungarian Food Safety Office.

10 UPDATE AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON MATTERS RAISED BY EFSA

10.1 Animal health - EFSA's role

Riitta Maijala presented EFSA's role within animal health and informed that a special AF meeting on animal health would take place in Parma on 27-28 May 2008 with the AF representatives on animal health. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle added that a questionnaire on animal health would be sent to the Member States in preparation of this meeting together with the draft document on EFSA's role in animal health. Belgium mentioned that the dates of the special AF meeting on animal health coincide with those of the Annual Meeting of the OIE.

Action 13: EFSA to share the draft document on EFSA's role in animal health with the Member States prior to the special AF meeting on animal health.

Action 14: EFSA to check if the AF representatives on animal health are able to attend the special AF meeting on animal health on 27-28 May 2008.

10.2 Other issues raised by EFSA

Hubert Deluyker provided the AF with an overview of the status of article 36 and procurement calls and encouraged the institutions on the article 36 list to apply. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle added that most of the calls are on preparatory work, e.g. inventory of data and preparing guidelines.

Riitta Maijala briefed the AF on the request for comments on the shortlist of experts for EFSA's new ANS (food additives and nutrient sources) and CEF (food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings, and processing aids) Panels. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that the deadline for comments from the AF members is the 17 April 2008.

Riitta Maijala presented EFSA's electronic tool for the declarations of interest that will soon be launched.

Hubert Deluyker briefed the AF on the pesticide review process: The work load is very high in the coming months due to the legislative deadline, so double working groups are now working in parallel and there is a strong need for support from the Member States. The willingness exists on both sides and enormous efforts are required to meet the deadline.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Preparation of the next AF meeting

Torben Nilsson informed the AF that the next AF meeting in Oslo on 12-13 June 2008 would be organised as two half days and that a joint event would take place in the morning on 12 June 2008. A Dutch PhD student has requested permission to interview a few AF members in the margin of this AF meeting for her PhD thesis on public trust in food safety and institutions.

11.2 Other issues

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle drew the attention of the AF to EFSA's open call for seconded national experts.

Torben Nilsson informed the AF that the registration process for the Scientific Colloquium on Acrylamide in Tabiano on 22-23 May 2008 is still open until 17 April 2008.

12 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking the ISS for kindly hosting the meeting, the AF members and EFSA staff for their active participation in the meeting as well as the crisis exercise, and the interpreters.