

TERMS OF REFERENCE

OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC NETWORK ON MICROBIOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Objectives

The main overall goals of the Scientific Network on Microbiological Risk Assessment are: to improve dialogue among participants; to build mutual understanding of risk assessment principles; to enhance knowledge on and confidence in the scientific assessments carried out in the EU; and to provide increased transparency in the current process among Member States and EFSA. The Network also aims to raise the harmonisation level of the risk assessments developed in the EU.

The Network strengthens the scientific cooperation on microbiological risk assessment. It aims at anticipating and reducing the duplication of activities and hence avoiding divergence of opinions. The Network is a privileged environment to share data and methodologies facilitating harmonisation of assessment practices and to assist in anticipating emerging risks in the EU.

The specific objectives of the Scientific Network on Microbiological Risk Assessment are:

- a. Identifying common themes and areas for mutual collaboration;
- b. Identifying and avoiding duplication and divergence of opinion;
- c. Identification of experts in specific areas and on special issues;
- d. Sharing of data availability and quality;
- e. Strengthening cooperation amongst risk assessors and managers;
- f. Exchanging information between EFSA, the EU Member States and other stakeholders;
- g. Strengthening communication between EFSA and the EU Member States and among risk assessors, risk managers and stakeholders;
- h. Focusing attention on and streamlining of common research needs;
- i. Identifying potential emerging risks when addressing current issues.

EFSA may entrust to the Network certain tasks, in particular preparatory work for scientific opinions, scientific and technical assistance, and collection of data.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE DEPARTMENT

Members of the scientific network

Members of networks shall be appointed in accordance with Articles 2 and 3 of the Decision of the Management Board of EFSA on the establishment and operations of networks¹.

The network is composed of national representatives, experts on microbiological risk assessment. The desirable profile of the experts includes:

- Experience in microbiological risk assessment, research or diagnosis;
- Knowledgeable of the national status and of the European and/or international context of microbiological risk assessment.

Working language

English will be the working language of the network.

Working Methods

The Network shall meet at least once a year. The meeting(s) shall be recorded and the records published on the EFSA website.

In addition, the Network will use other means of collaboration:

- exchanges of MS risk assessments and other information via the information exchange platform;
- web-based electronic interfaces for sharing information and data, such as the EFSA Sciencenet;
- e-mails on specific questions or issues.

Member States' representatives in this Network shall commit to liaise as appropriate at national level before and after each Network meeting in order to make sure that all the necessary information is shared without prejudice to Article 10 of the Decision of the management Board concerning the establishment and operation on European Networks of scientific organisations operating in the field within the Authority's mission.

Timeline

The terms of reference for the Network will be due for revision in 2020.

¹ MB 18 03 10 – item 7 doc 6 Management Board Decision concerning the establishment and operation of European Networks of scientific organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's mission, EFSA 2010.