

Parma, 23 April 2012  
EFSA/CONTAM/1710

**MINUTES OF THE 51<sup>ST</sup> PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON  
CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN (CONTAM) HELD FROM  
21 TO 23 MARCH 2012 IN PARMA**

Agreed on 30 April 2012

**PARTICIPANTS.**

*CONTAM Panel Members:*

Jan Alexander, Diane Benford (vice-chair), Alan Boobis, Bruce Cottrill, Jean-Pierre Cravedi, Alessandro Di Domenico, Daniel Doerge, Eugenia Dogliotti, Lutz Edler, Peter Farmer, Metka Filipič, Peter Fürst, Thierry Guérin, Helle Katrine Knutsen, Miroslav Machala, Martin Rose, Josef Schlatter (chair) and Rolaf van Leeuwen (vice-chair)

*European Food Safety Authority (EFSA):*

*Unit on Contaminants (CONTAM unit)*

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia (acting deputy head of unit), Gina Cioacata, Carolina Di Bona, Mari Eskola (acting head of unit), Nicklas Gustavsson (trainee), Silvia Nicolau Solano, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Doina Stoica, and Natalie Thatcher

*Unit on Dietary and Chemical Monitoring (DCM unit)*

Francesco Vernazza (deputy head of unit)

*European Commission (EC):*

Marina Marini (DG Health and Consumers, unit 03) and Frank Swartenbroux (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3).<sup>1</sup>

**1. WELCOME.**

The chair of the CONTAM Panel welcomed the members to the 51<sup>st</sup> CONTAM plenary meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Sandra Ceccatelli, Johanna Fink-Gremmels and Antonio Mutti of the CONTAM Panel, and Almut Bitterhof (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3) and Frans Verstraete (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3).

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<sup>1</sup> Available by tele-web conferencing.

**3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.**

The draft agenda was adopted.

**4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interests, EFSA screened the Annual Declaration of Interest (ADoI) and/or Specific Declaration of interest (SDoI) filled in by the experts invited for the present meeting. No conflicts of interests related to the issues discussed in this meeting were identified during the screening process or at the beginning of this meeting.

**5. DRAFT OPINION ON BROMINATED PHENOLS AND THEIR DERIVATIVES (EFSA-Q-2012-00055). FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION.**

The chair of the CONTAM WG on brominated flame retardants (BFRs) presented the draft opinion on brominated phenols and their derivatives in food (EFSA-Q-2012-00055) where the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risk for public health related to the presence of brominated phenols and their derivatives in food. The CONTAM Panel adopted this opinion subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation to the members of the WG on BFRs and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft opinion.

**6. DRAFT OPINION ON MINERAL HYDROCARBONS IN FOOD (EFSA-Q-2010-00170). FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION.<sup>2</sup>**

The chair of the WG on mineral hydrocarbons in food (EFSA-Q-2010-00170) presented the draft opinion where the European Commission had asked EFSA to evaluate the risk for public health from the presence of mineral oil hydrocarbons in food. The CONTAM Panel appreciated the current draft opinion but requested further refinements in relation to the hazard characterisation and the recommendations. Therefore the draft opinion was not adopted in the plenary meeting and it will be presented for possible adoption at the 52<sup>nd</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (2 to 4 May 2012).

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<sup>2</sup> Agenda item 6 was chaired by Rolaf van Leeuwen, vice-chair of the CONTAM Panel.

**7. WORK PROGRAMME.**

**7.1. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION SERVICES ON MATTERS RELATING TO CONTAM.**

The CONTAM Panel received a brief update of the current status of risk management in relation to the requests for scientific advice.

**7.2. OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA FOR CONTAM PANEL.**

The CONTAM Panel discussed briefly and agreed to the clarifications of the terms of reference for the request from the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) on evaluation of maximum levels of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in commercially available food for infants and children.

A request for a scientific opinion on estimation of the risk to human health from the presence of nickel (Ni) and chromium (Cr) in vegetables and hexavalent chromium (Cr<sup>6+</sup>) in bottled water (M-2012-0094) was received by EFSA from the Hellenic Food Authority (EFET) and was allocated to the CONTAM Panel. The CONTAM Panel decided that two scientific opinions: **1)** a scientific opinion on the risks to human health related to the presence of nickel in food (EFSA-Q-2012-00378), and **2)** a scientific opinion on the risks to human health related to the presence of chromium in food (EFSA-Q-2012-00379) will be delivered. Further discussions on the request will take place between EFSA and EFET in relation to terms of reference. The CONTAM Panel agreed to initiate a new WG on chromium and nickel in food and Eugenia Dogliotti agreed to be the chair of this WG.

**7.3. UPDATE FROM WG ALKALOIDS.**

The chair of the WG on alkaloids informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that as further clarifications are needed in relation to the occurrence dataset of ergot alkaloids, this may delay the delivery of the draft opinion (EFSA-Q-2010-01000). However, it will be aimed to present the draft opinion for discussion at the 52<sup>nd</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (2 to 4 May 2012). The WG will start working on the opinion on tropane alkaloids. The delivery of this opinion is expected in the second half of 2012.

**7.4. UPDATE FROM WG ON ASPERGILLUS IN FOOD AND FEED.**

The chair of the WG on Aspergillus toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on sterigmatocystin in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01005) is progressing well and the draft opinion will be presented for possible adoption in the second half of 2012.

**7.5. UPDATE FROM WG BFRs.**

The chair of the WG on BFRs informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on emerging and novel BFRs (EFSA-Q-2010-00220) is progressing well and it will be presented for possible adoption at the 53<sup>rd</sup>

CONTAM Panel meeting (27 to 29 June 2012). This will be the last opinion of the series of opinions on BFRs in food.

**7.6. UPDATE FROM WG FUSARIUM TOXINS.**

The chair of the WG on Fusarium toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on nivalenol (EFSA-Q-2010-01003) is progressing well and will be presented for possible adoption in the second half of 2012.

**7.7. UPDATE FROM WG MEAT INSPECTION INCLUDING THE EFSA OVERARCHING WG.**

A member of the WG (on behalf of the WG chair) informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinions on bovine meat inspection (EFSA-Q-2011-00111) and domestic sheep and goat meat inspection (EFSA-Q-2011-00960) are progressing well. The CONTAM Panel was reminded that the final adoption of the overall opinion on poultry meat inspection<sup>3</sup> will be by a written procedure in May 2012. The overall opinion will be adopted on the same day with the BIOHAZ and AHAW Panels.

**7.8. UPDATE FROM WG ON MERCURY AND METHYLMERCURY IN FOOD.**

The chair of the WG on mercury and methylmercury in food informed the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion is progressing, but some practical difficulties due to the high number of toxicological studies have been encountered. The members of the CONTAM Panel discussed these difficulties and provided further steering.

**7.9. UPDATE FROM WG PREVIOUS CARGOES – RE-EVALUATION.**

The chair of the WG previous cargoes re-evaluation informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on the re-evaluation of substances as acceptable previous cargoes Part II of III (EFSA-Q-2010-01463) is progressing well. The draft opinion on Part II will be presented for possible adoption at the 52<sup>nd</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (2 to 4 May 2012).

**7.10. UPDATE FROM WG ON REFERENCE POINTS FOR ACTION.**

The chair of the WG on RPAs informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on reference points for action (EFSA-Q-2011-00149) is progressing well and that it will be presented for possible adoption at the 53<sup>rd</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (27 to 29 June 2012).

**7.11. FEEDBACK FROM SC MEETING.**

The chair of the CONTAM Panel reported that the draft opinion on the threshold of toxicological concern (TTC) approach will be finalised soon. The opinion on

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<sup>3</sup> Endorsed by the CONTAM Panel at its 50<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (31 January to 2 February 2012).

risk assessment terminology has been scheduled for possible adoption at the 54<sup>th</sup> SC meeting (17 to 18 April 2012). The guidance of SC on selected default values to be used by the EFSA Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and Units in the absence of actual measured data was published on 7 March 2012<sup>4</sup>. This guidance should also be used in the opinions of the CONTAM Panel. The statement of the SC on the applicability of the margin of exposure approach for the safety assessment of impurities which are both genotoxic and carcinogenic in substances added to food/feed will be published later in March 2012<sup>5</sup>. The minutes of the 53<sup>rd</sup> SC meeting are available on the EFSA website<sup>6</sup>.

## **7.12. FEEDBACK FROM EFSA.**

### **Unit on Contaminants**

The acting director of the Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance Directorate Claudia Heppner informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that she will be the head of the EFSA Unit on Food ingredients and packaging (FIP) from 1 June 2012 onwards. The CONTAM Panel members thanked Claudia for her valuable support during the many years of her association with the CONTAM Panel and wished her all the best for her future career.

### **Other matters**

The acting head of the CONTAM unit informed the members of the CONTAM Panel on the following matters:

#### **Advisory Forum meeting 7 to 8 March 2012**

During the Advisory Forum meeting in Parma EFSA's policy on independence and scientific decision-making processes and implementing rules of EFSA's policy on independence and scientific decision-making process were discussed<sup>7</sup>.

#### **Management Board meeting 14-15 March 2012**

During the Management Board meeting in Parma the list of candidates nominated for appointment for the Scientific Committee and the eight Scientific Panels and placement of suitable candidates in the reserve list was adopted. In addition, the revision of the rules of procedure of the Scientific Committee, of the Scientific Panels and their Working Groups was adopted. The details are available on the EFSA website<sup>8</sup>.

### **Outsourcing activities**

The procurement to collate the literature on toxicity data on mercury in experimental animals and humans is ongoing.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2579.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2578.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/120207-m.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/120307.htm>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/120315.htm>

The procurement on the *in vitro* metabolic study on alkanes was concluded. The external report is available on the EFSA website<sup>9</sup>.

The Art 36 grant on occurrence of ergot alkaloids in cereals intended for human and animal consumption was concluded. The external report is available on the EFSA website<sup>10</sup>.

The Art 36 grant project on an experimental study on uptake of coccidiostats in vegetables is in its final stage and the external report will be published shortly.

Procurement on toxicokinetics, toxicity and allergenicity data on substances to be evaluated as acceptable previous cargoes for edible fats and oils is its the final stage. The external report will be published together with the last scientific opinion on previous cargoes of the series of the three opinions.

#### **7.13. UPDATE FROM WGS OF SC OF INTEREST TO CONTAM PANEL**

The members of the CONTAM Panel were informed about the outcomes of the SC WG on TTC Approaches and the SC WG on Default Assumptions (see 7.11).

#### **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No any other business.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/263e.htm>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/214e.htm>