

Unit on Contaminants

Parma, 19 April 2013
EFSA/CONTAM/1962

Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain

Minutes of the 58th plenary meeting

Held on 20-22 March 2013, Parma

(Agreed on 25 2013)

Participants

- **Panel Members:**

Diane Benford, Sandra Ceccatelli, Bruce Cottrill, Michael Dinovi¹, Eugenia Dogliotti, Lutz Edler, Peter Farmer, Peter Fürst, Ron Hoogenboom, Helle Knutsen, Anne-Katrine Lundebye-Haldorsen², Carlo Nebbia, Michael O'Keeffe, Ivonne Rietjens, Dieter Schrenk, Vittorio Silano, Hendrik van Loveren², Christiane Vleminckx and Pieter Wester

- **Hearing Expert:**

Rolaf van Leeuwen (for item 6.1)³ and Johanna Fink-Gremmels (for items 6.2 and 6.3)⁴

- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

Frank Swartenbroux (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3)

- **EFSA:**

- **CONTAM Unit:**

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia, Bistra Benkova, Gina Cioacata, Mari Eskola, Valentina Mota, Silvia Inés Nicolau Solano, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Doina Stoica, Marina Sutunkova and Natalie Thatcher

- **DCM Unit:**

Petra Gergelova (for item 6.5), Jose Gomez Ruiz (for item 8.2.2) and Nadezhda Kriulina

¹ Participated via tele-conference.

² Present on 20-21 March 2013 only.

³ Present on 20 March 2013 for item 6.1 only.

⁴ Present on 21 March 2013 for items 6.2 and 6.3 only.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Manfred Metzler (CONTAM Panel), Marina Marini (European Commission, DG Health and Consumers, unit 03) and Frans Verstraete (European Commission, DG Health and Consumers, unit 03).

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of interest

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes regarding Declarations of Interests (DoIs)⁵ and the Decision of the Executive Director implementing this Policy⁶, EFSA screened the Annual Declaration of interest (ADoI) and the 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 have been identified during the screening process or in the Oral Declaration of interest (ODOI) at the beginning of this meeting.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 57th Plenary meeting held on 22-24 January 2013 in Parma

The minutes were agreed by written procedure on 15 3 2013 and published on the EFSA website.⁷

5. Written procedures since 57th Plenary meeting

No written procedures.

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

6.1. Discussion and possible adoption of the draft guidance on methodological principles and scientific methods to be taken into account when establishing reference points for action (EFSA-Q-2011-00149)

The chair of the CONTAM WG on RPA presented the draft guidance (EFSA-Q-2011-00149), in which the European Commission had asked EFSA to consider the methodological principles and scientific methods to be taken into account when establishing reference points for action. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) was consulted in relation to this guidance. The CONTAM Panel adopted this guidance subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed her appreciation to the members of the WG on RPA and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of the draft guidance.

⁵ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130122-m.pdf>

6.2. Discussion and possible endorsement of the draft chapters related to public health hazards to be covered by meat inspection of Domestic solipeds (EFSA-Q-2011-00962) and of Farmed game (EFSA-Q-2011-00961)

The chair of the CONTAM WG Meat inspection – contaminants presented the draft chapters of two opinions, in which the European Commission had asked EFSA to consider contaminants in relation to meat inspection of solipeds (EFSA-Q-2011-00962) and of farmed game (EFSA-Q-2011-00961). The CONTAM Panel endorsed both chapters subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The three chapters from the three different Panels will be integrated into a single Scientific Opinion by the SCICO WG. This Scientific Opinion will be then submitted for adoption by the BIOHAZ Panel. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed her appreciation to the members of the WG Meat inspection contaminants for the preparatory work of these draft chapters.

6.3. Discussion and possible adoption of the draft opinion on sterigmatocystin in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01005)

The chair of the CONTAM WG on Aspergillus toxins presented the draft opinion (EFSA-Q-2010-01005), in which the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risk for public and animal health related to the presence of sterigmatocystin in food and feed. The CONTAM Panel discussed the draft opinion and requested further clarifications for certain chapters and conclusions. Therefore the draft opinion was not adopted in the plenary meeting, and it will be presented for discussion and possible adoption at the 59th CONTAM Panel meeting (15-17 May 2013).

6.4. Discussion of the draft opinion on nivalenol in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01003)

The chair of the CONTAM WG on Fusarium toxins presented the draft opinion (EFSA-Q-2010-01003), in which the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risk for public and animal health related to the presence of nivalenol in food and feed. The CONTAM Panel discussed the draft opinion and proposed further revisions for some chapters. The draft opinion will be presented for discussion and possible adoption at the 59th CONTAM Panel meeting (15-17 May 2013).

7. New mandates

No new official mandates falling within the mandate of the CONTAM Panel have been received by EFSA.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/the Scientific Panel, Working Groups, EFSA and the European Commission

8.1. Scientific Committee and other Scientific Panels

This agenda item was deferred to the 59th CONTAM Panel meeting (15-17 May 2013) due to lack of time. Information on the 60th plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) (27-28 February 2013) is available on the EFSA website⁸.

The Chair of the CONTAM Panel asked the CONTAM Panel members to submit their comments for the questionnaire of the SC on the use of the SC guidance documents in the scientific opinions of the CONTAM Panel. The comments should be sent to the Chair of CONTAM Panel and the acting head of the CONTAM Unit by the end of March 2013. These comments will be sent to the SC for background information to be used by the standing SC WG on Guidance review.

8.2. CONTAM working groups

8.2.1. Working group on Acrylamide in food

The chair of the WG on Acrylamide in food informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the work for the preparation of the draft opinion on acrylamide in food (EFSA-Q-2013-00007) will start in April 2013, and that EFSA will consult the EFSA stakeholders on the mandate of the acrylamide in food.

8.2.2. Working group on Alkaloids

The chair of the WG on Alkaloids informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on tropane alkaloids in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01038) is progressing well. The proposed approach for exposure assessment was presented. The draft opinion will be presented for discussion in the 59th CONTAM Panel meeting (15-17 May 2013) and for discussion and possible adoption in the 60th CONTAM Panel meeting (9-11 July 2013).

8.2.3. Working group on Aspergillus toxins

See agenda item 6.3.

8.2.4. Working group on Chromium and nickel

The vice-chair of the WG on Chromium and nickel informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on chromium in food (EFSA-Q-2012-00379) is progressing well.

8.2.5. Working group on Fusarium toxins

The chair of the WG on Fusarium toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on beauvericin and enniatins in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-00999) is progressing well. See also agenda item 6.4.

⁸ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130227.htm>

8.2.6. Working group on meat inspection – contaminants and EFSA SCICO Scientific coordination group on meat inspection

The chair of the WG on meat inspection provided feedback on the main outcome from the 2nd SCICO WG meeting which was held on 8th March 2013.

8.3. EFSA

8.3.1. Advisory Forum

This agenda item was deferred to the 59th CONTAM Panel meeting (15-17 May 2013) due to lack of time. Information on the Advisory Forum meeting (6-7 March 2013 in Dublin, Ireland) is available on the EFSA website.⁹

8.3.2. Management Board

This agenda item was deferred to the 59th CONTAM Panel meeting (15-17 May 2013) due to lack of time. Information on the Management Board meeting (14 March 2013 in Parma, Italy) is available on the EFSA website.¹⁰

8.3.3. Other

The chair of the CONTAM Panel encouraged the CONTAM Panel members to participate in the specialised courses on advanced aspects of risk assessment for EFSA Panel members and staff organised by EFSA in collaboration with Karolinska Institutet (KI) in 2013-2015. The courses are the following: course on evidence base for risk assessment, course on variability and uncertainty and course on exposure assessment. The registration for these courses is through KI web site¹¹. The CONTAM Panel members are asked to notify the CONTAM Unit of their application.

In addition, the EFSA Scientific Assessment Support (SAS) Unit is organising six training sessions on scientific literature search techniques in relation to systematic reviews (SR) in food and feed safety risk assessment for EFSA panel members, WG members and staff in the spring 2013. The registration for these courses is through CONTAM Unit.

The CONTAM Panel members noted that these courses are overlapping with several CONTAM Panel meetings. In addition, the notification on acceptance on participation in the courses is received very late. This feedback will be brought to the attention of the organisers.

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

Marina Sutunkova joined the CONTAM unit and Nadezhda Kriulina the DCM Unit as National Experts for Professional Training for three months starting from 1 March 2013.

Carolina Di Bona, administrative staff, left the CONTAM Unit and took up a new commitment at the EFSA Team on Corporate Services (CORSER) relating to the expert travelling organisation on 1 February 2013.

⁹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130306a.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130313.htm>

¹¹ <http://ki.se/ki/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=43955&l=en>

8.4. European Commission

The European Commission representative gave a comprehensive feedback on the activities of the European Commission in relation to the issued scientific opinions of the CONTAM Panel. Several amendments for current legislation have been made or are under discussion with the Member States as an outcome of the CONTAM Panel scientific opinions. In addition, several recommendations to the Member States have been made by the European Commission based on the opinions.

The CONTAM Panel expressed its appreciation on this feedback and noted that it is very interesting to learn the follow-up activities of the European Commission in relation to the published scientific opinions.

9. Other scientific topics for information

9.1. Present status of current outsourcing activities of the CONTAM Unit

The Article 36 grant for a study on the influence of food processing on nitrate levels in vegetables was signed with the University of Maribor, Slovenia in August 2012 for one year. The kick-off meeting was held in September 2012. A first interim report was delivered by the beneficiary in January 2013.

The procurement on a combined toxicokinetic and *in vivo* genotoxicity study on *Alternaria* toxins was signed with the Fraunhofer Institute, Germany, in August 2012 for two years. A first interim report is expected to be delivered by the beneficiary in the end of March 2013.

For the procurement to collate the literature on oral toxicity data on chromium and nickel the first interim report on chromium was delivered on the 21 March 2013. The final report on nickel is expected to be completed by June 2013.

For the procurement on an extensive literature search and provision of summaries of the studies on oral toxicity of perfluoroalkylated substances, their precursors and potential replacements in experimental animals and humans, the start-up contract was signed with RICARDO-AEA Ltd and the kick-off meeting was held 19 March 2013. The definitive protocol will be submitted beginning of April 2013.

A grant on a combined bioaccumulation/toxicity study on a broad mixture of mineral oil saturated hydrocarbons relevant to the human dietary exposure has been launched in February 2013. The deadline to present proposals is 27 May 2013.

A grant to collect occurrence data on sterigmatocystin in food has been launched in March 2013. The deadline to present proposals is 3 June 2013.

9.2. Feedback on other ongoing activities in relation to the CONTAM Panel and/or the CONTAM Unit

A letter in relation to the published scientific opinion on mercury and methyl mercury in food was received by the chairs of the closed WG on Mercury in food and the CONTAM Panel. In this letter further clarification on the interpretation of an epidemiological study was requested. The reply was prepared by the WG Chair, respective WG members, the CONTAM Panel chair and the CONTAM Unit. The reply letter was sent by the CONTAM unit in March 2013.

On 28 February 2013 the European Commission sent an urgent request to EFSA and EMA to produce scientific advice on the risks for human health related to the consumption of horse meat containing residues of phenylbutazone or other products adulterated with such food.

The deadline is 15 April 2013. EFSA and EMA set up a joint expert group formed by experts selected by EFSA (four members of the CONTAM Panel and a hearing expert) and by EMA (6 experts from the EMA Committees for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use (CVMP) and for Human Use (CHMP), and from the respective EMA Safety Working Parties). Two external reviewers were selected to review the final output before its publication.

The request from the European Commission on risks and benefits of fish/seafood consumption as regards methylmercury (EFSA-Q-2013-00006), which was discussed at the 57th CONTAM Panel meeting (22-24 January 2013)¹², was further discussed by the Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergens (NDA) in its 52nd Panel meeting (24-25 January 2013). A stepwise approach was proposed by the NDA Panel. A first step will be carried out by the NDA Panel to look at the available data on beneficial aspects of fish/seafood consumption, and whether these data would allow further quantitative assessment. Following the outcome of this first step, the European Commission, the NDA and the CONTAM Panel will decide the appropriate approach. An NDA WG has been established to address the first step.¹³

10. Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

¹² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130122-m.pdf>

¹³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130124-m.pdf>