

Biological Hazards and Contaminants Unit (BIOCONTAM UNIT)

Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards
Minutes of the 94th Plenary meeting
Held on 21-22 January 2015, Parma (Italy)
(Agreed on 26 February 2015)

Participants

• **Panel Members:**

Olivier Andreoletti, Dorte Lau Baggesen (apologies), Declan Bolton, Patrick Butaye (apologies), Paul Cook, Robert Davies, Pablo S. Fernandez-Escamez, John Griffin, Tine Hald (apologies), Arie Hendrik Havelaar¹, Konstantinos Koutsoumanis, Roland Lindqvist², James McLaughlin, Truls Nesbakken, Miguel Prieto, Antonia Ricci, Giuseppe Ru, Moez Sanaa, Marion Simmons, John Sofos (apologies), and John Threlfall.

• **Hearing Experts³:**

- Annemie Geeraerd (for part of item 8.5)

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

- Aidan Cahil, Lucie Carrouée-Pook, Kris De Smet, Klaus Kostenzer, Marina Marini, Martial Plantady (DG-SANTE)⁴

• **EFSA:**

- BIOCONTAM Unit: Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felicio, Michaela Hempen, Angel Ortiz Pelaez, Pablo Romero-Barrios, Pietro Stella (Scientific staff), Emmanouil Chantzis (trainee)
- Assessment and Methodological Support (AMU) Unit: Fulvio Barizzone (for items 5.2 and 8.4), Laura Ciccolallo (for items 5.2 and 8.4) and Olaf Mosbach-Schulz (for item 7.2.5)

¹ Attended by webmeeting in the afternoon of 22 January 2015 only.

² Present on 22 January 2015 only.

³ As defined in Article 11 of the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>.

⁴ Attended by webmeeting.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. The new BIOCONTAM staff member A. Ortiz Pelaez was welcomed and was invited by the Panel Chair to introduce himself.

Apologies were received from D. L. Baggesen, P. Butaye, T. Hald, and J. Sofos.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with changes. The item 6.2 “Request for a review of a scientific publication concerning the zoonotic potential of ovine scrapie prions” has been added. Under Any Other Business, following items were added: 9.3 “Manuscripts based on scientific Opinions of the BIOHAZ Panel”, 9.4 “Self-task mandates of the BIOHAZ Panel”, and 9.5 “TSE infectivity in all bovine animals tissues, and in particular Specified Risk Material”.

3. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Committee/Scientific Panel/ Members

In accordance with EFSA’s Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes⁵ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest⁶, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Panel Members invited for the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process. For further details on the outcome of the Oral Declarations of Interest made at the beginning of the meeting, please refer to the Annex.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 93rd Plenary meeting held on 3-4 December 2014, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 93rd Plenary meeting held on 3-4 December 2014 were agreed by written procedure on 15 January 2015⁷.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

5.1 Scientific opinion on the public health risks associated with Enteropathogenic *Escherichia coli* (EAEC)⁸

The first WG meeting was held in Parma on 11 November 2014. The WG Chair updated the Panel on the progress of the draft Scientific opinion, a first version of which will be discussed during the second WG meeting. The WG Chair explained the methodology that will be followed in relation to extensive literature searches (ELS) to be performed on critical topics. The second WG meeting will be held on 27 January 2015 in London. The deadline to deliver the Scientific opinion is the end of December 2015.

5.2 Scientific opinion on the update of the list of QPS recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA⁹

The fourth WG meeting took place on 12-13 November 2014 via web conference. The next WG meeting will take place on 3 February 2015 in Valencia. The assessment made for the microorganisms recommended for the QPS list in 2013 and their qualifications will be revised

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

⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/141203-m.pdf>

⁸ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00536>

⁹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00189>

according to new scientific knowledge through an ELS which is being developed by the Assessment and Methodological Support Unit (AMU), and in close collaboration with the WG. The draft protocol and the approach to follow were presented to the Panel. The Scientific opinion is to be finalised by December 2016.

5.3 Panel statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA 2: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until January 2015¹⁰

The second panel statement will consider the microorganisms notified to EFSA from October 2014 until January 2015. The next WG meeting will take place on 3 February 2015 in Valencia. The list of taxonomic units to be evaluated was presented to the Panel. This panel statement is due for adoption in June 2015.

5.4 Scientific opinion on the treatment by successive filtration as an alternative method for the HTST pasteurization of bovine colostrum (category 3 animal by-product)¹¹

The first WG meeting took place on 20 January 2015 via web conference. On 5 January 2015, the application was considered complete. The deadline to deliver the Scientific opinion is 6 months following receipt of the complete application.

6. New Mandates

6.1 Request for an update of the 2011 scientific opinion on hatchery waste as animal by-products¹²

A new request for a Scientific opinion was received in EFSA from the European Commission and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit. An *ad hoc* WG will be established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the scientific Opinion. The terms of reference were presented. Dr. J. Griffin was appointed as Chair for this WG. The deadline of end of October 2015 to deliver the scientific Opinion is under negotiation.

6.2 Request for a review of a scientific publication concerning the zoonotic potential of ovine scrapie prions¹³

A new request for a Scientific opinion was received in EFSA from the European Commission and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit. An *ad hoc* WG will be established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the scientific Opinion. The terms of reference were presented. Dr. M. Simmons was appointed as Chair for this WG. The deadline to deliver the scientific Opinion is 15 July 2015.

7. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/the Scientific Panel, EFSA, the European Commission

7.1 Scientific Committee and/or Scientific Panel(s) including their Working Groups

7.1.1 Scientific Committee

No Scientific Committee meeting was held since the last BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. The next Scientific Committee meeting¹⁴ is scheduled for 18-19 February 2015 in Parma.

¹⁰ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00695>

¹¹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00703>

¹² <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00902>

¹³ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00048>

¹⁴ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150218a.htm>

7.1.2 Scientific Committee Standing Working Group on Emerging Risks¹⁵

The last WG meeting was held on 19 January 2015. The draft report on the identification of emerging risks is due in June 2015.

7.1.3 Scientific Committee Working Group on Uncertainty in Risk Assessment¹⁶

No update was available for the latest meeting of this WG, which took place on 15-16 January 2015 in Brussels. The next meeting will take place on 29-30 January 2015 in Parma.

7.1.4 Scientific Committee Working Group on production and consumption of insects as food and feed¹⁷

The last WG meeting was held on 20 January 2015 in Parma. Two BIOHAZ Panel experts are involved in this WG. The progress of the WG was presented, and the Panel was invited to provide comments and input on any microbiological issue of concern in relation to this topic. The next meeting will take place on 19-20 February 2015 in Brussels. The deadline to deliver the Scientific opinion is 30 September 2015.

7.2 EFSA including its Working Groups / Task Forces

7.2.1 Scientific report on the evaluation of the temperature to be applied to pre-packaged fishery products at retail level (Art. 31)¹⁸

The third WG meeting took place in Parma on 20 January 2015. A brief update was provided on progress made to date. The next meeting is scheduled for 25 February 2015. The deadline for the scientific report is 30 June 2015.

7.2.2 Scientific report on the update on the risk of transmission of Ebola Virus (EBOV) via the food chain¹⁹

The European Commission agreed with EFSA's proposed ToRs "*Assess the risk of foodborne transmission of Ebola virus to persons in Europe arising from the consumption of raw foods imported from African countries where human outbreaks due to Zaire Ebola virus (ZEBOV) have occurred*".

The Chair of the WG presented the draft report and this was followed by a discussion. The delivery of the report by the end of March 2015 was agreed. The report will be tabled for endorsement at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting.

7.2.3 Scientific Network on BSE-TSE and MRA

No Scientific Network meetings have been held since the last BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. The next meetings of the BSE-TSE and MRA Network are foreseen to take place in Parma during Autumn and Spring of 2015, respectively.

7.2.4 The European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in 2013

The BIOHAZ Panel members were provided insight into the production of the European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in 2013. The main findings were presented and Panel members were welcomed to provide any further feedback. The report is foreseen for publication by end of January 2015²⁰.

¹⁵<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2012-00641>

¹⁶<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00738>

¹⁷<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00578>

¹⁸<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00528>

¹⁹<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00901>

²⁰<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3991.htm>

7.2.5 Scientific report on scientific assistance in the investigation of multinational foodborne outbreaks

The BIOHAZ panel experts were informed about a new request to EFSA on scientific assistance in the investigation of multinational foodborne outbreaks - tracing back & forward exercises on foodstuffs and their analysis. An overview was provided and the Terms of Reference presented. Panel experts were asked to express their interest to be involved.

7.3 European Commission

The European Commission representative informed the BIOHAZ Panel that the EC and EFSA will meet shortly to discuss future activities.

8. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

8.1 Joint ECDC-EFSA-EMA report on consumption of antimicrobials and antimicrobial resistance in animals, food and humans (JIACRA) – update on activities

A presentation of the Joint ECDC-EFSA-EMA report on consumption of antimicrobials and antimicrobial resistance in animals, food and humans (JIACRA) was given to the BIOHAZ Panel. The report is expected to be released by the end of January 2015²¹.

8.2 EFSA's Scientific Colloquium N°20 "Whole Genome Sequencing of food-borne pathogens for public health protection"

The draft summary report of EFSA's Scientific Colloquium N°20 "Whole Genome Sequencing of food-borne pathogens for public health protection"²² that took place in Parma on 16-17 June 2014 is foreseen for publication by the end of January 2015²³.

8.3 EFSA's 2nd Scientific Conference in the context of EXPO 2015

EFSA has now opened the registration & call for abstracts for the poster session of its second major scientific conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together" ²⁴ to be held in Milan, Italy, on the occasion of EXPO 2015. The accepted abstracts will be published in a dedicated EFSA Journal Supplement and the related posters are to be presented at the conference during the poster sessions. Abstracts for the poster session should be submitted by 3 April 2015, at the latest.

8.4 EFSA ProMethEUS project – PROMoting METHods for Evidence Use in Science

A presentation was given of the state-of-play of the ProMethEUS project. The first deliverable will be available by the end of February and will be presented to the BIOHAZ Panel at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting.

8.5 Briefing note on the maintenance of the cold chain during storage and transport of meat

The hearing expert A. Geeraerd gave a presentation on "Process criteria for safe transport of chilled Belgian Blue carcasses" and this was followed by a discussion.

The briefing note including the various questions posed by the European Commission was presented and answers were discussed and agreed upon.

²¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4006.htm>

²² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/140616.htm>

²³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/743e.htm>

²⁴ <http://www.efsaexpo2015.eu/>

8.6 Reflective notes from the EFSA Working Group on the risk posed by pathogens in Food of Non-animal Origin

The reflective notes prepared by the EFSA Working Group on the risk posed by pathogens in Food of Non-animal Origin were presented and a discussion was held.

The first draft of a self-task mandate on microbiological criteria was presented to the BIOHAZ Panel. This draft will be further revised and discussed at next BIOHAZ Plenary meetings.

9. Any other business

9.1 Meeting date of the 96th BIOHAZ Plenary meeting

It was agreed to change the meeting date of the 96th BIOHAZ Plenary meeting from 22-23 April 2015 to 29-30 April 2015.

9.2 Feedback of the 93rd Open BIOHAZ Plenary meeting

A short summary was given on the feedback from the 93rd Open BIOHAZ Plenary meeting, provided from the Observers and Panel members. This feedback will be considered in the revised Guidelines for Observers that will shortly be published on the EFSA website and shall be applicable for all open Plenary meetings in 2015.

9.3 Manuscripts based on scientific Opinions of the BIOHAZ Panel

The Panel experts were reminded that the EFSA scientific secretariat and BIOHAZ Panel are to be informed about manuscripts/proceedings being prepared for submission to scientific Journals and conferences. It was agreed by the BIOHAZ Panel that the author list should include the Working Group experts and EFSA staff involved in the work.

9.4 Self-task mandates of the BIOHAZ Panel

Several possibilities for self-task mandates were proposed by the BIOHAZ Panel members. Panel experts are invited to send to the EFSA secretariat a short summary of future self-task mandates to be discussed at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting.

One Panel expert enquired about the status of the mandate “on prudent use of antimicrobial agents in animal husbandry” by the European Commission.

9.5 TSE infectivity in all bovine animals tissues, and in particular Specified Risk Material

One Panel expert enquired about any plan for future activities in relation to the use of the EFSA TSE Infectivity Model (TSEi) to estimating the level of TSE infectivity in all bovine animals tissues, and in particular Specified Risk Material.

Annex I

Interests and actions resulting from the Oral Declarations of Interest done at the beginning of the meeting

a) **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** With regard to this meeting **MR. OLIVIER ANDREOLETTI** declared the following interest: <**CO-AUTHORSHIP OF THE SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION TO BE APPRAISED IN THE MANDATE “REQUEST FOR A REVIEW OF A SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION CONCERNING THE ZOONOTIC POTENTIAL OF OVINE SCRAPIE PRIONS”**>. In accordance with EFSA’s Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes²⁵ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest²⁶, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a Conflict of Interest.

This results in exclusion of the expert from any discussion, voting or other processing of item 6.2 by the concerned scientific group.

²⁵<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

²⁶<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>