
Biological Hazards and Contaminants Unit (BIOCONTAM UNIT)

**Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards
Minutes of the 95th Plenary meeting
Held on 4-5 March 2015, Parma (Italy)
(Agreed on 23 April 2015)**

Participants

- **Panel Members:**

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

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

- Marina Marini (DG-SANTE)¹

- **EFSA:**

- BIOCONTAM Unit: Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Valentina Rizzi, Giusi Amore, Pierre-Alexandre Beloeil, Frank Boelaert, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felício, Angel Ortiz Pelaez, Pablo Romero-Barrios, Pietro Stella (Scientific staff), Emmanouil Chantzis (trainee)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from P. Butaye, T. Hald, M. Sanaa and J. Sofos.

E. Liebana informed the BIOHAZ Panel about a change in the management structure of the BIOCONTAM Unit. Valentina Rizzi has been nominated as acting BIOHAZ Panel and Networks Team Leader.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with changes. The item 7.1.5 “The European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in

¹ Attended by webmeeting on 4 March 2015.

2013” was moved to the item 7.2.3. Under Any Other Business, following item was added: “Status of the Panel renewal process”.

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel Members

In accordance with EFSA’s Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes⁶ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest⁷, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Panel Members invited for the present meeting. For further details on the outcome of the screening of the ADol or the SDol, please refer to Annex. Oral Declaration of Interest was asked at the beginning of the meeting and no additional interest was declared.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 94th Plenary meeting held on 21-22 January 2015, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 94th Plenary meeting held on 21-22 January 2015 were agreed by written procedure on 26 February 2015².

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

5.1 Scientific Opinion on the public health risks associated with Enteroaggregative *Escherichia coli* (EAEC)³

The second WG meeting was held at the Plant and Animal Health Agency, New Haw, Addlestone (United Kingdom) on 27 January 2015. The WG Chair updated the Panel on the progress of the draft Scientific Opinion and on the protocol for extensive literature searches (ELS) to be performed on critical topics. The third WG meeting will be held on 27 March 2015 (web conference). 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 EFSA⁴

The fifth WG meeting took place on 3 February 2015 in Valencia (Spain). The assessment made for the microorganisms recommended for the QPS list in 2013 and their qualifications will be revised 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 search strategy is being piloted by AMU with the WG during March 2015. The next WG meeting will take place on 23 March 2015 for discussing both the Panel Statement and Scientific Opinion and on 31 March 2015 and 16 April 2015 for the ELS (all via web conference). 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 2015⁵

The second Panel Statement will consider the microorganisms notified to EFSA from October 2014 until January 2015. The fifth WG meeting took place on 3 February 2015 in Valencia (Spain). The next WG meeting will take place on 23 March 2015 via web conference. The draft evaluation of taxonomic units currently included in the Panel Statement was presented to the BIOHAZ Panel. This Panel Statement is due for adoption in June 2015.

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150121-m.pdf>

³ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00536>

⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00189>

⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00695>

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)⁶

The second WG meeting took place on 17 February 2015 in Parma, where the draft Scientific Opinion was discussed. The Chair of the Panel, as WG Chair, led the first reading of the Scientific Opinion. For this point, he asked Dr. Arie Havelaar to chair the BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 6 months following receipt of the complete application, i.e., 5 July 2015.

5.5 Scientific Opinion on an update of the 2011 Scientific Opinion on hatchery waste as animal by-products⁷

An *ad hoc* WG has been established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the Scientific Opinion. The first meeting of the WG has been scheduled for 18 March 2015 via web conference. The deadline of 31 October 2015 to deliver the Scientific Opinion is still under negotiation.

5.6 Scientific Opinion on a review of a scientific publication concerning the zoonotic potential of ovine scrapie prions⁸

An *ad hoc* WG has been established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the Scientific Opinion. The first WG meeting took place on 3 March 2015. The WG Chair updated the BIOHAZ Panel on the discussions held during the first meeting, including the approach to be followed to answer the Terms of Reference (ToRs) and the table of contents of the draft Scientific Opinion. The Panel agreed with the proposed approach. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 15 July 2015.

6. New Mandates

6.1 Request for the evaluation of an alternative method, continuous multi-step catalytic hydro treatment to be applied to rendered fat for the production of renewable fuels⁹

A new request for a Scientific Opinion was received in EFSA from the Finnish Competent Authority for the evaluation of an alternative method, continuous multi-step catalytic hydro treatment to be applied to Category 1 rendered fat for the production of renewable fuels and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit. The ToRs were presented. Dr. John Griffin was appointed as Chair for this WG. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 6 months following receipt of a complete application.

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

The chair of the BIOHAZ Panel highlighted the main items discussed in the 71st plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) held on 18-19 February 2015 in Parma¹⁰. In particular it was noted that (i) a protocol is being developed by the SC on how to deal with

⁶<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00703>

⁷<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00902>

⁸<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00048>

⁹<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00118>

¹⁰ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150218a.htm>

guidance documents, and that (ii) a presentation was given by the WG Chair about the lessons learnt from the two Scientific Opinions of the BIOHAZ Panel related to risk ranking (development of a risk ranking framework on biological hazards, development of a risk ranking toolbox for the EFSA BIOHAZ Panel). The next Scientific Committee meeting¹¹ will take place on 22-23 April 2015 in Parma¹².

7.1.2 Scientific Committee Standing Working Group on Emerging Risks¹³

The last WG meeting was held on 3 March 2015 in Parma. An update was provided on the progress made. 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 Assessment¹⁴

An update was provided on the progress made by this WG since the last BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. The last meeting of this WG took place on 29-30 January 2015 in Parma. The next meeting will take place on 31 March and 1 April in Copenhagen (Denmark).

7.1.4 Scientific Committee Working Group on production and consumption of insects as food and feed¹⁵

The last WG meeting was held on 19-20 February 2015 in Brussels (Belgium). Two BIOHAZ Panel members are involved in this WG. The progress of the WG was presented, in particular in relation to biological hazards issues. The next meeting will take place on 18-19 March 2015 in Parma. 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 update on the risk of transmission of Ebola Virus (EBOV) via the food chain¹⁶

The last WG meeting was held on 4 February 2015 by web meeting. The Chair of the WG presented the draft Scientific Report and after a thorough discussion it was endorsed by the BIOHAZ Panel. The delivery of the Scientific Report is due by the end of March 2015.

7.2.2 Scientific Report on the evaluation of the temperature to be applied to pre-packaged fishery products at retail level (Art. 31)¹⁷

The fourth WG meeting took place in Parma on 25 February 2015. A brief update was provided on progress made to date. The next meeting is scheduled for 22 April 2015. The deadline for delivering the Scientific Report is 30 June 2015.

7.2.2 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 MRA Network are foreseen to take place in Parma on 12-13 May and 27-28 October 2015. The BSE-TSE network meeting will take place in October 2015 in Parma.

¹¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150422a.htm>

¹² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150422a.htm>

¹³ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2012-00641>

¹⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00738>

¹⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00578>

¹⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00901>

¹⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00528>

7.2.3 The European Union Summary Report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and Indicator bacteria from humans, animals and food in 2013

The main findings of the European Union Summary Report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and indicator bacteria from humans, animals and food in 2013¹⁸ were presented and discussed.

7.3 European Commission

The European Commission representative provided feedback on ongoing activities related to previous work of the BIOHAZ Panel.

8. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

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

The Colloquium Report of EFSA's Scientific Colloquium N°20 "Whole Genome Sequencing of food-borne pathogens for public health protection" has been published¹⁹. It contains abstracts of the opening speeches, summaries of the group discussions and conclusions from the final plenary session. A presentation was given about the outcome of the Scientific Colloquium.

8.2 Self-task mandates of the BIOHAZ Panel

Three proposals for self-task mandates (i. Whole Genome Sequencing for risk assessment; ii. Microbiological Criteria and iii. *Listeria*) were discussed; these will be further developed and discussed at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. Another proposal (TSE infectivity in cattle and small ruminants tissues) was made and will be discussed further at the next BIOHAZ plenary meeting.

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

EFSA has announced the detailed programme of the individual sessions of its second major Scientific Conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together"²⁰ to be held in Milan, Italy, on the occasion of EXPO 2015. Panel experts were reminded about the registration deadline (15 May 2015) and deadline for sending abstracts for the poster session (3 April 2015).

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

An update was given about the ProMethEUS project. The first deliverable was discussed at the 71st SC meeting and will be tabled for endorsement at the next SC meeting. Therefore the presentation of the Scientific Report has been postponed to the next BIOHAZ plenary meeting.

8.5 EFSA guidance on statistical reporting

This item was postponed to the next BIOHAZ plenary meeting.

9. Any other business

9.1 Manuscripts based on Scientific Opinions of the BIOHAZ Panel

One Panel member has been invited to publish a brief paper in Spanish in a technical Journal for Industry on the role of EFSA in the evaluation of biological hazards in foods: relevance of

¹⁸ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4036.htm>

¹⁹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/743e.htm>

²⁰ <http://www.efsaexpo2015.eu/>

risk ranking. It was decided that there is no need for BIOHAZ Panel members to be included as co-authors.

9.2 Status of the Panel renewal process

The Panel members were informed that the official letters nominating the BIOHAZ Panel members for 2015-2018 will not be sent before the second half of April 2015.

Annex I

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI) or Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: In his SDoI filled for the present 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 ZONOTIC POTENTIAL OF OVINE SCRAPIE PRIONS.** In accordance with EFSA’s Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes²¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest²², 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 5.6 by the concerned scientific group.

²¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

²² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>