

Biological Hazards and Contaminants Unit (BIOCONTAM UNIT)

Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards
Minutes of the 96th Plenary meeting
Held on 29-30 April 2015, Parma (Italy)
(Agreed on 28 05 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 Havelaar¹, Konstantinos Koutsoumanis, Roland Lindqvist, James McLaughlin, Truls Nesbakken, Miguel Prieto, Antonia Ricci (apologies), Giuseppe Ru, Moez Sanaa, Marion Simmons, John Sofos (apologies), and John Threlfall.

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

- Paolo Caricato (for items 6.3), Lucie Carrouée-Pook (for item 6.4), Kris De Smet (for items 6.1 and 6.2), Sofie Hofkens (for items 6.6), Rosa Peran (for items 6.5 and 6.6) (DG-SANTE)²

• **EFSA:**

- BIOCONTAM Unit: Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Valentina Rizzi, Giusi Amore, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felício, 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 5.4), Laura Ciccolallo (for items 5.2 and 5.4)
- Pesticides (PRAS) Unit: Jean-Pierre Cugier (for item 6.6)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from P. Butaye, T. Hald, A. Ricci and J. Sofos.

¹ Attended by webmeeting in the afternoon of 29 April 2015 only.

² Attended by webmeeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with changes. The item 6.6 “Request for a Scientific Opinion concerning the risks for public health related to the presence of *Bacillus cereus* and other *Bacillus* spp., including *Bacillus thuringiensis* in foodstuffs” was added.

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel Members

In accordance with EFSA’s Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes³ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest⁴, 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 95th Plenary meeting held on 4-5 March 2015, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 95th Plenary meeting held on 4-5 March 2015 were agreed by written procedure on 23 April 2015⁵.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

5.1 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 third WG meeting took place on 21 April 2015 in Parma, where the draft Scientific Opinion was discussed. The Chair of the Panel, as WG Chair, led the thorough reading of the Scientific Opinion. For this point, he asked Paul Cook 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.

5.2 Scientific Opinion on the update of the list of QPS recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA⁷

The sixth, seventh and eighth WG meetings took place on 23 March 2015 in Parma and on 31 March 2015 and 16 April 2015 by web conference. The first of those three meetings was focused on the Scientific Opinion, while the last two meetings were targeted to revise the Extensive Literature Search (ELS) pilot search exercise that ran in March. This ELS will support the assessment of the microorganisms recommended for the QPS list in 2013 and their qualifications. The search strategy was piloted by the Assessment and Methodological Support (AMU) Unit with the WG. The summary of the main conclusions from that exercise was shared with the BIOHAZ Panel and the possible follow up was discussed. The next WG meeting will take place on 2 July 2015 for discussing both the Panel Statement and Scientific Opinion (Parma). The Scientific Opinion is to be finalised by December 2016.

³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150204a-m.pdf>

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

⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00189>

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 2015⁸

The sixth WG meeting took place on 23 March 2015 in Parma. At that WG meeting it was proposed that the second Panel Statement will consider the microorganisms notified to EFSA from October 2014 until March 2015 (instead of January 2015). The draft evaluation of taxonomic units currently included in the Panel Statement was presented for thorough reading to the BIOHAZ Panel. This Panel Statement is due for adoption in June 2015.

5.4 Scientific Opinion on the public health risks associated with Enterotoaggregative *Escherichia coli*⁹

The third WG meeting took place on 27 March 2015 by web conference. The WG Chair updated the Panel on the progress of the draft Scientific Opinion and on the feedback from the WG on the ELS using the Distiller tool for critical topics in the scope of this mandate. It was agreed to wait for additional feedback from the WG at the fourth WG meeting which will be held on 21 May 2015 (web conference). A decision will be taken on the use of ELS at the next Panel meeting. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is the end of December 2015.

5.5 Scientific Opinion on an update of the 2011 Scientific Opinion on hatchery waste as animal by-products¹⁰

The first meeting of the WG was held 18 March 2015 via web conference. The first draft was prepared by the WG. The next WG meetings will be organised on 7 May 2015 (web conference) and 27 May 2015 (Parma). A work plan has been prepared in agreement with the Animal and Plant Health (ALPHA) Unit. The deadline for this Scientific Opinion is 31 October 2015.

5.6 Scientific Opinion on a review of a scientific publication concerning the zoonotic potential of ovine scrapie prions¹¹

The second WG meeting took place on 15 April 2015. The next WG meeting will take place on 13 May 2015 in Parma. The WG Chair explained the interpretation of ToR2 following discussions with the European Commission and led the first reading of the Scientific Opinion. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 15 July 2015.

5.7 Scientific Opinion on the evaluation of an alternative method, continuous multi-step catalytic hydro treatment to be applied to rendered fat for the production of renewable fuels (NExBTL)¹²

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 Panel was informed of the results of the completeness check. The applicant has been requested to provide missing information before the application is considered validated. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 6 months following receipt of a complete application.

⁸<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00695>

⁹<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00536>

¹⁰<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00902>

¹¹<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00048>

¹²<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00118>

6. New Mandates

6.1 Request for a Scientific Opinion on the growth of spoilage bacteria during storage and transport of meat¹³

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 has been established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the Scientific Opinion. Dr. D. Bolton was appointed as Chair for this WG by written procedure on 20 March 2015. The terms of reference were presented. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is end of October 2015.

6.2 Request for a clarification on the Scientific Opinion on the public health risks related to the maintenance of the cold chain during storage and transport of meat (Part I and II)¹⁴

A new request for scientific and technical assistance was received in EFSA from the European Commission and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit. An *ad hoc* EFSA WG has been established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the scientific report of EFSA. The terms of reference were presented. M. Hempen (BIOCONTAM Staff member) will be the Chair for this WG. Once completed, the report is intended to be presented for endorsement by the BIOHAZ Panel. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Report is end of October 2015.

6.3 Request for a Scientific Opinion on the evaluation of heat treatments, that could be applied to live bivalve molluscs in order to eliminate pathogenic micro-organisms¹⁵

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 has been established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the Scientific Opinion. Dr. K. Koutsoumanis was appointed as Chair for this WG by written procedure on 20 March 2015. The terms of reference were presented and discussed. The first WG meeting will be held on 11-12 May 2015 in Parma. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is end of December 2015.

6.4 Request for scientific and technical assistance to evaluate applications of Member States to be recognised as having a negligible risk of classical scrapie¹⁶

A new request for scientific and technical assistance was received in EFSA from the European Commission and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit. An *ad hoc* EFSA WG will be established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the scientific report of EFSA. The terms of reference were presented. Valentina Rizzi (BIOCONTAM Staff member) will be the Chair for this WG. Panel members were asked for their interest to join the WG. The European Commission agreed with EFSA's proposal to deliver three reports, one for each country. Once completed, the reports are intended to be presented for endorsement by the BIOHAZ Panel. The deadline to deliver the scientific reports is end of October 2015.

6.5 Request for a joint EFSA and EMA Scientific Opinion on measures to reduce the need to use antimicrobial agents in animal husbandry in the European Union and the resulting impacts on food safety¹⁷

A new request for a joint EFSA and EMA Scientific Opinion was received in EFSA from the European Commission and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit with involvement from the Animal and Plant Health (ALPHA) and Feed (FEED) Units. An *ad hoc* WG will be

¹³<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00163>

¹⁴<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00162>

¹⁵<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00161>

¹⁶<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00240>

¹⁷<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00216>

established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the Scientific Opinion. Dr. J. Threlfall was appointed as Chair for this WG. Panel members were asked for their interest to join the WG. The terms of reference were presented and discussed. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 20 December 2016.

6.6 Request for a Scientific Opinion concerning the risks for public health related to the presence of *Bacillus cereus* and other *Bacillus* spp., including *Bacillus thuringiensis* in foodstuffs¹⁸

A new request for a Scientific Opinion was received in EFSA from the European Commission and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit with involvement from the Pesticides (PRAS) Unit. An *ad hoc* WG will be established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the Scientific Opinion. Dr. A. Ricci was appointed as Chair for this WG by written procedure after the BIOHAZ plenary meeting, on 30 April 2015. Panel members were asked for their interest to join the WG. The terms of reference were presented and discussed. The deadline mentioned in the mandate to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 31 December 2015. The feasibility of delivering by this deadline was discussed considering the complexity and breadth of the mandate. Consequently EFSA will ask for an extension of the deadline to be agreed with Commission.

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 72nd plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) held on 22-23 April 2015 in Parma¹⁹. In particular the Panel was informed about the latest developments of the draft guidance on uncertainty in risk assessment and the technical report on identification of emerging risks. Feedback was provided of the first WG meeting on Biological Relevance. In addition, the way forward of Science Quality in EFSA was presented. The next Scientific Committee meeting will take place on 8-10 June 2015 in Parma²⁰.

7.1.2 Scientific Committee Standing Working Group on Emerging Risks²¹

No WG meeting was held since the last Plenary meeting. An update will be provided at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. 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 Assessment²²

The last meeting of this WG took place on 28 April 2015 via web conference. The next meeting will take place on 8 May 2015 via web conference. An update will be provided at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting.

¹⁸<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00254>

¹⁹<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150422a.htm>

²⁰<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150608.htm>

²¹<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2012-00641>

²²<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00738>

7.1.4 Scientific Committee Working Group on production and consumption of insects as food and feed²³

The last WG meeting was held on 18-19 March 2015 in Parma. 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 meetings will take place on 7-8 May 2015 and 18-19 June 2015 in Parma. At the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting, the Scientific Report will be presented to the BIOHAZ Panel. 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)²⁴

The fifth WG meeting took place on 22 April 2015. The draft report was presented for thorough discussion. The next meeting is scheduled for 15 May 2015. The report will be presented for endorsement at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. 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 May²⁵ and 27-28 October 2015. The BSE-TSE network meeting will take place in October 2015 in Parma.

7.3 European Commission

None.

8. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

8.1 Self-task mandates of the BIOHAZ Panel

Five proposals for self-task mandates (i. *Listeria*; ii. *Campylobacter*; iii. TSE infectivity in cattle and small ruminants tissues; iv. Microbiological Criteria; v. Whole Genome Sequencing for risk assessment) were discussed. These will be further developed and discussed at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting. It was agreed that Panel members will be asked at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting to prioritize these proposals.

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

An update on the Scientific Conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together"²⁶ to be held in Milan, Italy, on the occasion of EXPO 2015 was presented. Panel experts were informed that there will be three posts for those Panel members who will not be in the next mandate of the BIOHAZ Panel and were asked to notify EFSA if they were interested. Members of the future BIOHAZ Panel mandate will be all invited to attend.

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

An update was given about the ProMethEUS project. The first deliverable was endorsed at the last SC meeting. A short presentation on the Scientific Report was provided.

²³ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00578>

²⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00528>

²⁵ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/150512a.htm>

²⁶ <http://www.efsaexpo2015.eu/>

9. Any other business

9.1 Re-publication of the Scientific Opinion on the public health risks related to the consumption of raw drinking milk

The BIOHAZ Panel was informed about the need for re-publication of the Scientific Opinion on the public health risks related to the consumption of raw drinking milk. The changes made were presented to the BIOHAZ Panel and approved.

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 were sent and that the Declarations of Interests are being screened. Panel members will be asked to provide to EFSA a short Curriculum Vitae.

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 ZOONOTIC POTENTIAL OF OVINE SCRAPIE PRIONS.** In accordance with EFSA’s Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes²⁷ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest²⁸, 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.

²⁷<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

²⁸<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>