

EXTERNAL RELATIONS UNIT

Milan, 15 June 2015  
EFSA/SHP/LdL/2015

## Minutes

**TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EFSA STAKEHOLDER  
CONSULTATIVE PLATFORM  
MILAN (ITALY) 15 JUNE 2015**

**MEMBERS OF THE EFSA STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIVE PLATFORM**

**Chair:** *Andreas Varlamos*

AESGP – Association of the European Self-Medication Industry	<i>Kinga Adamaszwilli</i>	Eurocoop – European Community of Consumer Cooperatives	<i>Emma Nolan</i>
BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation	<i>Ilaria Passarani,</i>	EUROPABIO – European Association for Bioindustries	<i>Violeta Georgieva,</i>
CEFIC – Food & Feed Cluster	<i>Line Jensen</i>	FEFAC – European Feed Manufacturers Federation	<i>Alexander Döring</i>
COPA-COGECA - European Farmers European Agri-Cooperatives	<i>Annette Toft</i>	FEFANA – European Association of Speciality Feed Ingredients and their mixtures	<i>Elena Miceli,</i>
ECPA – European Crop Protection Association	<i>Euros Jones,</i>	EFAD – European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians	<i>Michael Gore</i>
EEB – European Environmental Bureau	<i>Martin Dermine</i>	FoodDrinkEurope	<i>Beate Kettlitz</i>
ELC – Federation of European Specialty Ingredients	<i>Petr Minsk,</i>	PFP – Primary Food Processors Association	<i>Kalila Hajjar</i>

**APOLOGIES**

*Jeannie Vergnettes, DG Santé, European Commission*

*Els Bedert, Eurocommerce*

*Birte Day, UEAMPE*

*Hubertus Cranz, AESGP*

## **OBSERVERS**

AIBI	<i>Susanne Doring</i>	EU Food Policy	<i>Kate Trollope</i>
EAS	<i>Stefanie Geiser</i>		

## **REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY**

**Stakeholder Consultative Platform Secretariat:** *Lucia de Luca, Erika Cavalli*

<i>Bernhard Url</i>	<i>Ana Afonso</i>
<i>Tony Hardy</i>	<i>Alberto Spagnolli</i>
<i>Victoria Villamar</i>	<i>Marta Hugas</i>
<i>Juliane Kleiner</i>	<i>Tobin Robinson</i>
<i>Jacopo Alabiso</i>	<i>Mary Gilsenan</i>
	<i>Claudia Timanti</i>

## **MONDAY 15 JUNE 2015**

### **1 WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE MEETING**

The Chair, Andreas Varlamos, welcomed members and observers to the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Platform and noted that apologies were received from DG SANTE, ESA, Eurocommerce, IFAH Europe, and UEAMPE.

### **2 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

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With no further points raised for discussion, the Chair adopted the agenda.

#### **2.1 Follow-up actions from the previous meeting**

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Doc SHP 15 06 15 – 3

The Chair went through the pending actions from the previous meeting and noted that only Action point 1 “*Members to send to EFSA suggestions regarding topics to be discussed in 2015 and topics to be discussed in a possible Annual conference*” remained open. In light of the

important role members can play in shaping the agendas of the meetings of the Platform and of EFSA's future discussions with stakeholders, the Chair invited members to share ideas and suggestions by 30 September 2015.

*Action 1: Members to send to EFSA suggestions regarding topics to be discussed in 2015 and topics to be discussed in a possible Annual conference, by 30 September 2015.*

### **3 STANDING ITEMS**

#### **3.1 Report back from EFSA on topics relevant to stakeholders**

Power point presentation – 1

The Chair gave the floor to Bernhard Url for the highlights of EFSA's latest activities. Bernhard highlighted that the European Parliament granted the discharge of the 2013's budget, that the European Ombudsman congratulated EFSA for its progress in the area of openness and transparency, and explained the health-check exercise the Advisory Forum is running aiming at improving its advising function to EFSA's risk assessment work. Bernhard also thanked stakeholders for their contribution to the 15 public consultations run so far which helped increasing the quality of EFSA's opinion and mentioned how the pre-notifications with selected stakeholders of the opinions on caffeine and acrylamide helped in contextualising EFSA's work with food business operators and the public at large. Bernhard also invited members to share their ideas as well as concerns on the occasion of technical meetings as this can improve the Agency's scientific risk assessment.

The Chair asked it if was possible to share with the group the reflections of the EFSA Advisory Forum on its future work - which could be useful for the Platform - and inquired regarding a possible overlapping of the work of the High-Level Group of Independent Scientists proposed by the European Commission with EFSA's work and role. Bernhard expressed EFSA's will to support - together with the other EU agencies - the work of the Group.

The Chair gave the floor to Mary Gilsenan, Head of the Evidence Management (DATA Unit) at EFSA who provided members with an overview of a data roadmap which EFSA is currently working on. The initiative started in 2014 following a reorganisation in the RASA department and formation of the DATA unit which is responsible for the collection and management of structured data in EFSA. Since then, EFSA has evolved into a central hub of European risk assessment data and information which includes both structured data (e.g. spread sheets) and unstructured data (e.g. PDF documents, dossiers). The overarching aim of the roadmap is to make data more accessible, exchangeable and reusable by third parties and to promote innovative applications to re-use such scientific data. Mary explained that EFSA wishes to make its unstructured data (which includes regulated product dossiers) more structured and harmonised to facilitate efficient use in risk assessments. She explained that the operational objectives of the data roadmap process are ambitious and will feed into the EFSA draft strategy which is currently under preparation. Although the roadmap has a five year time-frame, the Agency hopes to make some inroad into its main objectives during this period.

Mary clarified that the project foresees exchanges of data with other EU agencies and member states – also in terms of terminology used –, harmonised data management practices also within EFSA's scientific panels, and to look at the challenge of having to deal with data which are constantly updated.

The Chair gave the floor to Marta Hugas, acting Head of RASA, who illustrated the project Prometheus aiming at further developing the methods for dealing with evidence in EFSA scientific assessments as well as their consistency. This project, endorsed by EFSA Scientific Committee, is one of the key approaches to increase the transparency, openness and stakeholders' engagement of EFSA scientific work, including the way scientific evidence is weighted in the risk assessment process. Marta clarified how the process addresses possible tension between increased openness and responsiveness of EFSA's scientific work which is of paramount importance for EU risk assessors. The final

result should ensure that scientific outputs are fit for purpose and serve the needs of EU risk managers.

Marta clarified that although the methodology applied by Prometheus for dealing with evidence and data foresees different checks and balance along the process, expert judgement remains paramount.

To complete the series of updates from EFSA, the Chair gave the floor to Alberto Spagnolli, acting Head of the Communications Department at EFSA, who provided an overview of the upcoming plans in terms of communications, the announcements in July of the inaugural meetings of the Panels and Scientific Committee and the appointment of the respective chairs, and an update on participants at the 2<sup>nd</sup> EFSA Scientific Conference scheduled in October 2015.

The Chair gave then the floor to Jacopo Alabiso, leader of the EFSA web team to share plans for EFSA's updated navigation structure of the EFSA website. Jacopo clarified that the purpose of this exercise (AGORA) is to: i) increase the transparency and accessibility on the website of EFSA processes and information; ii) enhance the engagement of the audience through mobile and improved multimedia functionalities, and iii) to provide users with quicker and easier access to clear and timely information tailored to their needs. Jacopo also sought specific feedback from the members on the pages "engage", "news" and "multimedia". This feedback, mainly wishing for an increased visibility of information regarding on-going and upcoming EFSA's work, coupled with the one received so far through two tailored surveys, will help EFSA to better structure the information available on the website to ensure they respond to stakeholders' needs. The new technically-enhanced platform will be live in July 2015 while the new design will be implemented later in October of the same year.

*Action 2: EFSA to share with the Platform the reflections of the Advisory Forum on the improvement of its contribution to EFSA's work.*

*Action 3: Members to discuss the role of the High-Level Group of Independent Scientists proposed by the European Commission.*

*Action 4: EFSA to provide information on similarities/difference with Food Standards Australia & New Zealand in the area of health claims evaluation.*

### **3.2 Update on the work of the SHP Discussion Groups**

Doc SHP 15 06 15 – 4

The Chair gave to the floor to Lucia de Luca who referred to the written update on the work of the Discussion Groups of the Platform shared ahead of the meeting. Lucia presented in particular the pilot project of a Focus Group, set up as a Discussion Group of the Platform, to explore whether early involvement of stakeholders in the definition of a guidance document can improve the quality of such guidance while safeguarding the transparency of the exercise. Lucia thanked members for the quick feedback and response to the proposal which helped EFSA in finalising the Terms of Reference and appoint stakeholders as members of the group together with representatives of member states agencies. Lucia said that membership remains open and that future proposals for candidates with the requested background will be looked at by EFSA. FoodDrinkEurope expressed an interest and will send the CV of a candidate.

The Chair gave the floor to Tobin Robinson who highlighted how the work of the Discussion Group on emerging risks is an integrated part of EFSA's work in this area and how the group has been playing a pivotal role in identifying possible emerging risks to be further looked at by EFSA and its Scientific Committee. In light of the important work carried out so far, which results in the various reports published, Tobin asked the Platform to renew the mandate of the group due to expire in February 2016. The group agreed on the proposal and will look at the revised Terms of References ahead of the November meeting of the Platform.

The floor was then given to Mary Gilsenan who shared with the members the positive experience of the Group on data who has been looking at how to support EFSA needs in terms of more comprehensive data, both in the areas of food additives and contaminants, in the last two years. In light of EFSA's future needs in data collection in the area of food additives and contaminants, and the support stakeholders could provide to enhance EFSA's work in this field, Mary proposed to the Platform to extend the mandate and the membership of the Group – coming to an end in October 2015 – for at least another two years. The group agreed. These extensions will provide the opportunity to the members and EFSA to take stock of the experiences so far and adapt the scope and the memberships of the two groups if need be.

*Action 5: FoodDrinkEurope to suggest a name for a member of the pilot focus group on a guidance document on allergenicity (SHP DG GDA).*

*Action 6: Members to agree on the revised Terms of References of its Discussion Groups for Emerging risks and Data by November 2016.*

#### **4. STRATEGIC TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

##### **4.1 EFSA's Scientific Committee and the Risk Assessment Landscape**

Power point presentation – 2

The Chair gave the floor to Tony Hardy, Chair of the EFSA Scientific Committee, who illustrated how the Committee contributes with its work to EFSA's evolution to an open risk assessment organisation. Tony focused on the role of the Committee that is to provide scientific advice on multi-sectoral issues and to ensure consistency in the development of guidance documents (GDs). Tony presented the roadmap of the work on opinions - Carvone, Endocrine Disruptors, Insects as food and feed (due in Sept 2015), and the development of methodologies – e.g. Environmental risk assessment and Benchmark Dose. Tony also clarified that evidence-based scientific assessment demands scientific robustness using rigorous methodologies, together with transparent and open communication of processes and results, and pre-

sented an overview of the on-going on GDs on analysis of uncertainty, weight of evidence, biological relevance, opinion structure and content, and on guidance lifecycle. Tony stressed the important contribution stakeholders can have to the work of the Committee and invited the members to respond when all these GDs will be published for public consultation. After the exchange with the members, the Chair highlighted the importance for stakeholders to be regularly updated on the work EFSA's Scientific Committee carries out and thanked Tony for having accepted the invitation to present its work to the Platform.

*Action 7: EFSA to send written clarifications regarding the work of the EFSA Scientific Committee on botanicals.*

## **4.2 EFSA's Single Programming Document 2015-2017 & Preliminary Annual Plan 2016**

Power point presentation – 3

The Chair gave the floor to Ana Afonso, Corporate Business Control at EFSA, to present EFSA's work plan for the next five years.

Ana explained how the Single Programming Document, looking at the next three years of EFSA's work, was developed in light of the strategic planning of EFSA for the next five years. The Programming document is updated each year for the next 3 years and sees its annual implementation in the annual plans. Ana went through the priorities and key features of the EFSA Preliminary Annual Plan for 2016 and invited members to send comments which could help EFSA in developing its next Document 2016-2018.

In line with one of the key objectives of the Platform that is to comment on EFSA's work programme, the Chair reminded members that the presentation served as a consultation with stakeholders and members were invited to provide ideas and suggestions to be evaluated by EFSA when working on the next Document. Some members highlighted the importance for such plans to foresee a measurement of the reputation and its impact on stakeholders.

*Action 8: Members to respond to the public consultation on the EFSA Single Programming Document 2016-2018 by end September 2015.*

#### **4.3 Enhancement of the contribution of the Platform**

Doc SHP 15 06 15 – 5

The Chair referred to the discussion held at the March meeting on the opportunity to discuss how to improve the functioning of the platform and its relevance to EFSA's work and thanked members for the suggestions they sent which allowed the Chair and the Vice-Chair to prepare a document with aspects to be discussed in the break-out sessions.

Two break-out groups were suggested; one looking at the future structure of the Platform, and the other at how to improve its outputs. The Chair reminded participants that the idea is that each group will outline specific actions to be possibly implemented by the Platform, which will be reported back to the main session to be discussed by the whole group and for the benefit of the observers.

#### **4.4 Feedback from break-out sessions and discussion**

The Chair gave the floor to the rapporteur of Group 1: Future structure of the SHP, who reported that members thought that the Platform should rely on the participation of representatives of organisations working at European level representing interests of the food and feed chain and not too narrow in profile. Membership should not be too big to facilitate discussion and dialogue; members should have an active role in the meetings and stakeholders attending as observers should be allowed to contribute to the discussions in light of their interest in the work of EFSA. Members recommended reviewing the future role and status of journalists in meetings and defining specific rules. The future Platform should be aligned with experiences in other EU agencies to ensure it facilitates dialogue with civil society. Participation rules should be clear, attendance monitored and members excluded if they do not attend regularly. The frequency of the meeting could be reduced if light of the variety of other activities with stakeholders developed by EFSA.

The Chair gave the floor to the rapporteur of Group 2: Group Improving the SHP's output. The group agreed on the need for the Platform to provide high level coordinated feedback to EFSA on specific topic where a common view may be possible. In particular, when looking at future consultations, members should agree, whenever possible on joint positions in response to such consultations. To do this, the group called on EFSA to increase the visibility of forthcoming consultations. Joint view can be provided in writing, prepared through conference call among the members or by setting up specific discussion groups – particularly relevant for large consultations. Such ideas could be part of the updated Terms of Reference of the Platform which could also contemplate an annual review of achievements.

In the discussion which followed members discussed some proposals more in detail and agreed that some could be start to be implemented as from the next meeting. Participants decided to first seek the feedback of members who were not present at the meeting before start working on a proposal for a revision of the current Terms of Reference (ToR) of the group to be discussed at the next meeting of the Platform.

The Chair gave the floor to Alberto Spagnolli who referred to the recent approval by the EFSA's Management Board of the Authority's plan to enhance the engagement with its stakeholders as part of the EFSA plan to increase the transparency and engagement of EFSA's work (Transparency and Engagement Initiative).

Alberto welcomed the interesting proposals of the members and their future work on the ToR of the Platform and said it will fit perfectly with EFSA's reflections for the development of such plan due by mid-2016. Alberto showed a timeline with the different milestones of the plan and the crucial exchange with stakeholders in the development.

*Action 9: Members to comment on the suggestions on the enhancement of the contribution of the Platform expressed at the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting which will be reported in minutes of the meeting. End of July 2015.*

*Action 10: Members to decide on how to take forward the suggestions on the Platform's enhancement, November meeting.*

#### **4.5 Good Administrative Practices for regulated products. Consultation with stakeholders**

Power point presentation – 4

The Chair gave the floor to Juliane Kleiner Acting Head of REPRO Department at EFSA, who presented progress on the development of a draft Code of Good Administrative Practices for regulated products. This document was developed to support the evaluation of applications and has a goal to define transparent and fair principles in the way that they are managed. Juliane presented the key features of the document and asked members to comment in particular on the specific workflows outlined in Chapter 3. The initial feedback of the members of the Platform will help EFSA to finalise the draft document to be then shared with the European Commission and to be aligned with the legal constraints in the various sectorial legislations. EFSA also provided participants with an update on how it is implementing the initiatives outlined in its Catalogue of Services for applicants. In the discussion which followed members highlighted the importance for the practices to be aligned across EFSA's panels and for EFSA to ensure coherence between the services provided in the catalogues to applicants and this document.

#### **4.6 Upcoming public consultations at EFSA**

Doc SHP 15 06 15 – 6

The Chair gave the floor to Lucia to present a provisional planning of consultations at EFSA for the upcoming months and explain that EFSA is engaged in improving the way the Agency consults with its stakeholders and interested parties and is aware of the needs of its stakeholders to rely on such a plan to better structure the provision of their technical contributions.

The Chair gave the floor to Marta who explain how EFSA will be looking on how to improve public consultations in in the framework of the Transparency and Engagement initiative.

*Action 11: Members to send to Euros Jones, Vice-Chair, comments in response to the public consultation with the Platform on the Good Administrative Practices for regulated products.*

## **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair gave the floor to Lucia to present the Rolling Plan on EFSA's activities with its stakeholders.

With no further points added to the agenda, the Chair closed the meeting.

*ENDS---*