

66th Meeting of EFSA's Management Board

Minutes of the Public Session

Parma, 1 October 2015 – 9:00-14:30

Members of the Management Board Present	
Sue Davies (Chair)	Radu Roatiş Cheţan
Jaana Husu-Kallio (Vice-Chair)	Jiri Ruprich
Piergiuseppe Facelli (Vice-Chair)	András Székács
Iñaki Eguileor	Robert van Gorcom
Stella Michaelidou-Canna	Robert Vanhoorde
Jan Mousing	Tadeusz Wijaszka
Raymond O'Rourke	Michael Winter

Apologies: Piet Vanthemsche

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority	
Bernhard Url (Executive Director)	Marta Hugas
Gian Luca Bonduri	Juliane Kleiner
Hubert Deluyker	Alberto Spagnolli
Peter De Pauw	Alessia Vecchio
Dirk Detken	

Also attending:

Diane Benford, Vice-Chair of EFSA's Scientific Committee

Table of Contents

Summary of decisions	3
Welcome by the Chair	4
Adoption of the agenda	4
Board members' Declaration of Interests	4
EFSA progress report	4
EFSA Strategy 2020	7
Engagement of Stakeholders in EFSA's scientific activities	9
Scientific Cooperation Roadmap implementation	10
Amendment to the EFSA budget 2015	12
2015 Budget execution and transfers	12
Feedback from the Audit Committee	12
Amendments to the Art. 36 list of organisations	12
Any other business	13
Actions arising	13

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

The Management Board confirmed the Executive Director assessment of the interests declared by the members of the Board (Art. 13(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the Management Board).

The Management Board adopted:

- The amendment to the EFSA budget 2015 with the incorporation of the funds received from DG NEAR for the implementation of cooperation activities with the Candidate Countries in the framework of the EU Pre-accession programme.
- The amendments to the Art. 36 list of organisations (14 new entries) which are entitled to assist EFSA with its mission via the grant and procurement programme.

The Management Board discussed and exchanged views on:

- The EFSA Strategy 2020. The Board congratulated EFSA for the very good and clear document and made suggestions for some revisions before launching the public consultation.
- A new approach to enhance the engagement of stakeholders in EFSA's activities. The Board welcomed the overall approach and supported the work that is being carried out with the Stakeholders Consultative Platform on the review of its way of working. The Board also reiterated its strong support for the project on Transparency and Engagement in Risk Assessment (TERA) and encouraged EFSA to advance with the implementation of the identified actions.
- The mid-term report on the Scientific Cooperation Roadmap. The Board congratulated EFSA for the progress in implementing the various initiatives and encouraged EFSA to continue investing in scientific cooperation activities with Member States, third Countries and international organisations.
- EFSA's progress report covering the period from the 1st of June to the 15th of September, 2015. The Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee, Diane Benford, complemented EFSA's report updating the Board on the on-going activities of the Committee. The Board congratulated EFSA's staff and experts for the substantial work performed during the period.

The Management Board noted:

- The feedback from the Chair of the Audit Committee.
- EFSA's 2015 budget execution and transfers. The Board welcomed the confirmation of EFSA's capacity to meet its financial targets.

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The Chair opened the public session of the 66th Management Board meeting by welcoming the Board members, Executive Director (ED), Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee, EFSA Management Team and staff members.
2. The Chair invited the Board members to declare possible interests in addition to those already declared with their Annual Declaration of Interests. No new interest was declared.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

3. The agenda was adopted with the addition of an item under Any Other Business: EFSA Expert Database.

Item 3: Board members' Declaration of Interests (ADoI)

4. In accordance with Art.13 of the Management Board Rules of Procedure adopted on 27 June 2013, the Board took note of the ED assessment of the Declarations of Interests submitted by two of its members and confirmed it.

Item 4: EFSA progress report

5. The ED gave an overview of the activities carried out from the 1st of June to the 15th of September 2015. In particular, he highlighted the draft guidance document on uncertainty in risk assessment and the scientific opinions on Neonicotinoids in foliar treatment, Hot water treatment of *Xylella fastidiosa*, Zoonoses potential on scrapie and African swine fever. The website of EFSA's second Scientific Conference received the International Euromediterraneo Award, a prestigious prize intended to reward communication projects that enhance partnerships between institutions and the public. The ED reported on his meetings with the Commissioner for health and food safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis, the visit of a delegation of Dutch MPs and the exchange with a delegation of the EU Parliament's ENVI Committee. On the latter, the Chair added that it was a fruitful and constructive meeting, which gave the opportunity to further strengthen the relations between EFSA and the ENVI Committee. The ED gave an overview of the activities carried out in the field of scientific cooperation underlying, in particular, the meeting with the Advisory Forum, the high level meeting held with the French ANSES, the technical meeting with the German BfR, and his visits to the Baltic Countries and Cyprus, which resulted in the engagement of EFSA and the Member States in projects around 'African swine fever', 'Crisis preparedness' and 'Ciguatoxin'. Concluding, he described the activities carried out with EFSA's stakeholders mentioning, among others, the implementation of the project on Transparency and Engagement in Risk Assessment (TERA), the meeting with an industry association, and the activities with the Stakeholders Consultative Platform. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available [online](#) for a detailed description.
6. The Chair invited the Vice-Chair of the Scientific Committee (SC), Diane Benford, to update the Board on the latest Committee activities. She said that through the public consultation EFSA received more than 300 comments on the draft guidance on 'Uncertainty in risk assessment'. These comments are being reviewed and the SC estimates that the opinion will be adopted in the first quarter of 2016. The SC worked around the draft opinions on 'Endangered species as non-target organisms', 'Temporal and spatial recovery of non-target organisms', and the draft guidance on 'Biodiversity and eco-system services to define protection goals'. These opinions are planned for adoption in November 2015. As well, the SC is finalising the opinion on the 'Use of insects as food and feed', which is planned to be published in the following weeks. It was anticipated that the

opinion will highlight the need for additional research and data. At the away day organised in conjunction with the inaugural meeting of the SC, the Committee reviewed its multiannual work-plan and considered the need to include activities in the areas of nano-materials, chemical mixtures and new methods for chemical risk assessment.

7. The Chair complemented Prof. Benford's presentation by saying that she and Piergiuseppe Facelli, Vice-Chair of the Management Board, met the renewed SC in September and had the opportunity to discuss, among others, around the renewal of the Scientific Panels, the composition of the SC and the length of the mandate as SC and Panel member (i.e. three years), which some the SC members considered too short.
8. Questions and comments were received on:
 - The effects of the judgement of the Court of Justice of the EU in the Case ClientEarth & PAN Europe v EFSA (C-165/13P).
 - Dirk Detken (Legal and Regulatory Affairs) summarised the case highlighting that the Court of Justice annulled a previous judgement of the General Court which had initially ruled in favour of EFSA. In doing so the Court also annulled EFSA's decision. The Court concluded that it is sufficient for the requestors to question in a general manner the impartiality of experts in carrying out their tasks as scientists for EFSA in order to prove the necessity to receive personal data of the experts. The Court accepts that there was a need for the appellants to receive the missing link between comments and names in order to check on their suspicion of conflicts of interest. The Court highlighted in this regard that the transparency of the process followed by a public authority for the adoption of a measure likely to have an impact on economic operators contributes to that authority acquiring greater legitimacy in the eyes of the persons to whom that measure is addressed, increases confidence in that authority and ensures that the authority is more accountable to citizens in a democratic system. The ED underlined that EFSA will give full effect to the ruling and implement the respective follow-up measures.
 - The cooperation agreement between the US Environmental Protection Agency and EFSA.
 - The US EPA is a governmental institution investing considerable resources in the assessment and research on pesticides. EFSA is promoting the collaboration with this institution in the areas of data collection and scientific methodological approaches.
 - The evolutions in EFSA's quality management system.
 - The ED said that EFSA's quality management system will be ready for ISO certification by the end of 2016. EFSA is currently working on the development of a system that will comply with the requirements of both the ISO and the Commission's Internal Control Standards. The Chair suggested to include in the agenda of a future meeting an update to the Board on EFSA's quality management system.
 - The Advisory Forum 'Recommended Good Practice' to deal with substantive divergence over scientific issues (Article 30(4) of the Founding Regulation).
 - The ED explained that the document had been developed by EFSA and the Member States in close collaboration. The 'Recommended Good Practice' had already been applied in recent cases of diverging scientific opinions on bisphenol A, and it proved being an

excellent tool to rightly frame the context for discussion, exchange and mutual understanding.

- The need to decrease as much as possible the number of applications in “stop-the-clock” status, especially in the areas of feed additives, food contact materials, GMO and pesticides. The Commission asked to receive the EFSA action plan to reduce the backlog in the area of MRLs.
 - The ED explained that EFSA had drafted a plan and timeline for the ‘absorption’ of the backlog in the area of MRL, which will be shared with the Commission. In this respect, EFSA is approaching the final stage of the recruitment procedure for contract agents that will be deployed to the Pesticide Unit with the mandate to address the backlog. With reference to the “stop-the-clock” mechanism, he said that EFSA has already made some progresses in minimising its use, but he also underlined that putting limits to the need for EFSA to receive additional information/clarifications from applicants might potentially lead to an increase of inconclusive opinions. He added that EFSA is committed to improve the application guidance documents and will continue to invest in communication activities addressed to applicants, so that applications submitted to EFSA might be of a higher quality and completeness.
 - The importance of the work carried out by EFSA in collaboration with the Member States for the release of the system Foodex2, which is a system for food classification and description.
 - The ED shared the comment of the Board member who addressed to the EU legislator the request to start using the Foodex2 nomenclature.
 - The constraints that EFSA is facing in pursuing its staff establishment plan.
 - Alessia Vecchio (Resources and Support) explained that on average the procedure for the recruitment of a staff member takes between four and six months. Recently, recruitment procedures suffered for some delays due to the need to align them to the new Staff Regulations. EFSA is attentively monitoring the issue and it is committed to achieve the occupancy rate of 95% in the coming months.
 - With reference to the project on Transparency and Engagement in Risk Assessment (TERA), the timeline for the implementation of the actions that will be subject to a cost-benefit assessment.
 - While referring to the numerous actions that EFSA has already put in place to enhance transparency and engagement in its risk assessment processes, the ED underlined that certain measures would need to go through a careful and independent cost-benefit analysis before being implemented. Although sharing the wish to see those actions implemented as soon as possible, he acknowledged that this kind of assessment needs technical time to be carried out. Hence, the reason for having provisionally planned the implementation of those actions in 2016. Nonetheless, EFSA will try to accelerate the cost-benefit procedure as much as possible.
9. The Board noted EFSA’s progress report and asked the ED to convey their gratitude to EFSA’s scientific experts and staff for the work they performed in the reporting period.

Item 5: EFSA Strategy 2020

10. The ED introduced the item clarifying that the Strategy does not aim to provide an overview on EFSA's workload in the coming years, but it wants to provide the view on how EFSA will perform its risk assessment activities from a qualitative and methodological point of view. In fact, the overall context within which EFSA will have to work in the coming years appears characterised by the presence of numerous challenges (e.g. increasing complexity of the risk assessment activities, new and emerging risks, societal demand for higher engagement, etc.) which EFSA has to address transforming them in opportunities to pursue better risk assessment and higher protection of the consumers' health. Hence, the Strategy does not outline implementing measures. These will be described in the 'Strategy implementation plan' that EFSA will submit to the Board for possible adoption in March 2016, together with the Strategy. At the December meeting, EFSA will provide the Board with an initial presentation of the elements that will be included in the Strategy implementation plan.
11. Ilias Papatryfon (EFSA Strategy project manager) provided an update on the development of the Strategy document following the integration of the inputs received from the Board at the in-depth discussion held in June and via the written consultation held in July. He particularly focused on the definition of EFSA's vision, mission and values, the strategic objectives that EFSA aims to pursue, and the key challenges and opportunities that are expected to be faced in the coming years. Concluding, he said that the Strategy document will be further revised on the basis of the comments received from the Board and then published for public consultation for six weeks. At the December meeting EFSA will provide the Board with a preliminary assessment of the outcomes of the public consultation. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available [online](#) for a detailed description.
12. The Chair thanked for the presentation and acknowledged that significant improvements had been made since the document had been last discussed by the Board. The Chair invited the Board members to provide their feedback on general aspects first. Questions and comments were received on:
 - The level of ambition that EFSA wants to pursue in terms of achievement of the strategic objectives, which should perhaps be moderated by reflections on the actual capacity of EFSA to implement activities with the limited resources available.
 - The Strategy should contribute to the achievement of the strategic and political priorities of the European Commission, e.g. in the fields of growth, competition, innovation, climate change, antimicrobial resistance, etc.
 - The ED agreed that, although EFSA's contribution to the Commission's strategic priorities has to be seen within the limits of its mandate, the Strategy could better highlight the contribution to growth and competition objectives, especially with reference to the work carried out in the field of regulated products.
 - The Strategy could include reflections on EFSA's activities, challenges and opportunities beyond 2020.
 - The Strategy document should have a more catchy/attractive title. A Board member suggested that the EFSA vision could become the title of the document.
 - EFSA should further reflect on the actual need to include the Operational Objectives into the Strategy or move them into the 'Strategy implementation plan'.

13. The Chair invited comments from the Board members on the EFSA's vision. EFSA received the following comments:

- The Board members had different views on whether the concept of 'healthy food' should be embedded in EFSA's vision.
 - The ED shared some reserves too.
- The vision could include reference to EFSA's work in promoting the harmonisation of the risk assessment methodologies in Europe and beyond.
- The vision should be phrased in a manner to communicate EFSA proactivity in ensuring that European citizens access to safe and healthy food.
 - The ED said that EFSA will work on the strapline to address this comment. A member suggested "Safe food for a trusted food chain though independent scientific advice".
- Next to independence, the vision could add reference to the soundness of EFSA's scientific advice.
- The word 'citizens' could be replaced with 'consumers'.

14. The Chair opened the discussion around the EFSA values. The Board members gave the following comments:

- In a previous version of the Strategy the values were three, whilst in the latest version they had become five.
 - The Chair explained that following the in-depth discussion with the Board in June, a compromise was achieved with the members who expressed the need to reflect some of EFSA's "traditional" values, like scientific excellence and independence.
- Some members proposed to replace 'innovation' with 'proactivity'.
 - The ED said that brainstorming sessions had been carried out within EFSA's communications and scientific departments on whether 'innovation' could be replaced by other expressions like "pioneering, proactivity, foresight capacity, etc.", but that only 'innovation' was felt as being able to express EFSA's attitude towards trying new approaches and being prepared for future challenges.
- A member said that EFSA's values should reflect the concepts of transparency and engagement.
 - The ED clarified that those concepts are intended as embedded in the wider concept of openness. This will be made clearer in the document.
- The Strategy should better clarify that when promoting the engagement of the civil society, it actually does not open the risk assessment process to the participation of external actors, but rather calls these actors to support EFSA in gathering more data, more information and more expertise.
 - The ED agreed with the comment and said that this will be clarified.

15. The Board members shared additional comments on the following aspects:

- The mission should better reflect EFSA's proactive approach in anticipating the assessment of risks, for example in the field of emerging risks.
- The section on how and with whom EFSA works should perhaps be revised with a view to the future evolution of EFSA's work.
- The Strategy could better emphasise the future need for more self-tasking activities.

- The paragraph around 'demographic changes' could be combined with that on the 'impact of globalisation'.
- In relation to openness and transparency, EFSA should define clearly what information is considered confidential and what information can be made available. A Board member suggested referring to the experience in the area of patents to see if a manner exists to at least disclose part of the information presently defined confidential.
 - The ED reminded the Board that EFSA is bound to work in a framework defined by the legislator and that it is not up to EFSA to decide on what companies claim to be business confidential information.
- Emphasis should be given to EFSA's need to count on the relevant assessment capacity and knowledge. This is linked to the promotion of actions for the development of a knowledge community.
- The Strategy should better underline the objective of pursuing wider scientific cooperation with other EU agencies, as well as Member States and international organisations.

16. The Board noted the EFSA Strategy 2020 and agreed with the launch of the public consultation upon further revision of the document in accordance with the discussion held.

Item 6: Engagement of Stakeholders in EFSA's scientific activities

17. Continuing along the lines of the previous discussion with regard to 'openness and engagement', Alberto Spagnoli (Communications) updated the Board on the approach towards a wider engagement of stakeholders in EFSA's scientific activities. He clarified that by 'stakeholders' he meant organised groups like consumer associations, NGOs, industry, farmers, distributors and caterers. The approach did not include EFSA's relation with applicants. The approach, which is framed in the project on Transparency and Engagement in Risk Assessment (TERA), aims to promote new ways and opportunities to interact with stakeholders in view of the implementation of the Strategy 2020. Activities are already being carried out in close cooperation with the Stakeholders Consultative Platform to revise the Platform terms of reference and its way of working. However, the approach suggests an interaction with stakeholders that goes beyond the members of the Platform. Concluding, Alberto Spagnoli said that concrete actions for the implementation of the new approach will be discussed with the Stakeholders Consultative Platform at the November meeting. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available [online](#) for a detailed description.

18. Questions and comments were received on:

- The positive aspects of moving towards a system that pursues the engagement of stakeholders beyond the current members of the Platform. In this respect, a member made reference to the opportunity to engage with food lawyer associations.
- Could citizens be engaged in a collaboration dialogue with EFSA?
 - The ED clarified that EFSA's reflections around new ways to interact and engage with stakeholders had been carried out only focusing on organised entities able to represent the stakes in the food chain.
- The need to find the right balance between a wider engagement of stakeholders in EFSA's scientific activities and the preservation of EFSA's independence.

- The ED agreed that this is an important aspect to be closely monitored, which is also an element of attention of the TERA project.
 - The need to find mechanisms that guarantee the balanced participation of all different kinds of stakeholders.
 - The ED shared the comment and emphasised the need for EFSA to build trustful relations with the stakeholders.
 - The European Commission underlined that consultations with stakeholders might be possibly organised for EFSA's self-task mandates, whilst it would not be possible for the mandates that EFSA receives from the Commission, the European Parliament and the Member States. As well, similar consultations would not be admissible for mandates on the assessment of regulated products.
19. The Board noted the presentation on the new approach to engage stakeholders in EFSA's scientific activities. The Chair explained that the Board would come back to this issue following consultation with the Stakeholders Consultative Platform.

Item 7: Scientific Cooperation Roadmap implementation

20. Alberto Spagnoli (Communications) introduced the item recalling the objectives of the Scientific Cooperation Roadmap: (1) Scientific capacity building and intelligent use of resources, and (2) Coherent international voice. Reporting on the progresses achieved after one year from the Roadmap endorsement by the Board (June 2014), in particular he highlighted:
- The launch of the call for thematic grants, which resulted in the receipt of six proposals involving 36 organisations from 17 different countries. The next call for proposals will be launched in the first quarter of 2016.
 - The ED high level visits with the Member States' government authorities and the national food safety organisations. These visits aim to strengthen the scientific cooperation between EFSA and the Member States and promote the implementation of scientific projects in areas of common interests (e.g. foodborne viruses with the UK, bee health with France, African swine fever with the Baltic Countries, etc.).
 - The EU Risk Assessment Agenda. A study had been carried out for the identification of common priorities for EFSA and the Member States, which will be reviewed at the Advisory Forum meeting in December 2015 and possibly form the basis for the first EU Risk Assessment Agenda. The Agenda will pursue improvements in the use of the EU and national scientific resources and promote joint projects to address common priorities.
 - The operation of the Advisory Forum has been reviewed and recommendations will be implemented to strengthen the strategic role of the AF in steering the EU Risk Assessment Agenda.
 - Several training opportunities have become available to the EU scientific community through, among others, the Commission programme on 'Better Training for Safer Food', the Guest science exchange programme between EFSA and the Member States, and the opening to scientists in the Member States of risk assessment courses targeted to EFSA staff and experts.
 - In the area of communication, EFSA developed a glossary of scientific terminology used in risk assessment. In addition, it is closely working with the Advisory Forum Communications Working Group to promote coherence

and consistency in the area of food and feed risk communication around Europe.

21. Concluding, Alberto Spagnolli reported on the scientific cooperation activities that EFSA had carried out at international level mentioning, among others, the support provided to the CODEX Alimentarius, the signature of cooperation agreements (e.g. with the US FDA, Health Canada, FSC Japan and WHO), the participation in international scientific initiatives (e.g. the International Food Chemical Safety Liaison Group, the International Microbiological Food Safety Liaison Group, and the Global Coalition for Regulatory Science Research) and the contribution to several scientific conferences and workshops organised by international organisations (e.g. WHO, FAO, OIE, EPPO, etc.).
22. The Roadmap will be integrated in the Strategy 2020. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available [online](#) for a detailed description.
23. Questions and comments were received on:
 - The importance of the scientific cooperation activities that EFSA carries out with national and international organisations. A member suggested to carry out a cost-benefit assessment of those activities, in order to assess the value for money that they bring in terms of efficient use of resources.
 - The ED noted that a cost-benefit assessment on EFSA's scientific cooperation activities might easily quantify the immediate costs, but less easily quantify the benefits, which perhaps should be assessed on a longer-term perspective. He also said that despite the fact that costs need to be proportionate, EFSA could not effort to work in isolation in the framework of a globalised context. Alberto Spagnolli added that EFSA published every year a comprehensive report on its cooperation activities, which is available online.
 - A member highlighted that the European Institute for Innovation and Technology will launch in 2016 a multi-million initiative aimed to promote the public-private partnership in the area of knowledge and innovation in the food sector. He recommended to EFSA and the Advisory Forum to follow the developments of this important initiative.
 - How joint projects between EFSA and the Member States are selected?
 - The ED explained that joint projects are selected on the basis of the priorities for risk assessment of both EFSA and the Member States, and that the approach is to possibly involve more than a Member State in each project.
 - The importance to strengthen the role of EFSA in the international scientific arena.
 - Marta Hugas (Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance), Juliane Kleiner (Scientific Evaluation of Regulated Products) and Hubert Deluyker (Scientific Adviser) updated the Board on some of the activities that EFSA is currently performing in collaboration with OIE, Codex Alimentarius, JRC, etc. The ED complemented their interventions stressing that EFSA is already playing an important role in contributing to the harmonisation of risk assessment procedures at a global level, but that EFSA has a capacity to invest in scientific programmes and projects that is much lower compared to that of many other national and international organisations.
 - Recalling the discussion in December 2014 with the Director of Nutrition at the WHO in Geneva, Dr Francesco Branca, the Chair asked what activities

EFSA is carrying out in collaboration with this international organisation in the field of nutrition.

- Juliane Kleiner said that EFSA closely collaborates with the WHO in a number of scientific areas including that of nutrition. For example, EFSA is a member of the WHO Network of Institutions for Scientific Advice on Nutrition. EFSA is following up the discussion held with Dr Branca last year, however bearing in mind that the two organisations have different mandates in field of nutrition.

24. The Board noted the update on the implementation of EFSA's Scientific Cooperation Roadmap, and the Chair asked EFSA to regularly update the Board on this matter.

Item 8: Amendment to the EFSA budget 2015

25. Alessia Vecchio (Resource and Support) introduced the proposal to amend the EFSA budget 2015 by incorporating € 600,000 received from DG NEAR. This amount will be used to implement scientific cooperation activities with the EU pre-accession Countries.

26. The Board adopted the amendment of the EFSA budget 2015.

Item 9: 2015 Budget execution and transfers

27. Alessia Vecchio (Resources and Support) informed the Board that, at mid-September, EFSA commitment and payment levels were respectively 3% and 5% below the target for this time of the year. Despite the delay, she said that the figures were not raising any particular concern, since they resulted in an overall improvement compared to the previous year. Hence, the annual targets were still considered adequate and achievable. With particular reference to the activities in the field of scientific cooperation, Alessia Vecchio noted that the commitment level exceeded the target by 24%. This excess in commitment was considered necessary to mitigate the risk of calls failure, as well as the effects linked to low budget offers compared to the calls ceiling.

28. The Board noted the presentation on EFSA's 2015 budget execution and transfers.

Item 10: Feedback from the Audit Committee

29. The Chair of the Audit Committee updated the Board on the outcomes of the meeting held on the 30th of September. He briefly reported on the discussion held around the Internal Audit Service (IAS) report on scientific support to risk assessment and evaluation. Objective of this audit was to assess the adequacy of the design and the efficiency and effectiveness of the management and control system put in place by EFSA for data collection and data analysis. Despite the recommendation to define and adopt a comprehensive data management framework, EFSA's overall process for data collection and analysis was considered adequate to support the scientific activities of risk assessment. In addition, the Audit Committee discussed the activities to follow up an IAS risk assessment made in 2013. The Committee received an update on the implementation of the IT Strategy and obtained clarifications on budgetary aspects linked to the procurement of services. As well, the Committee was updated on the achievements of the project 'Step 2018', which aims to improve efficiency and compliance of the transaction processes through the centralisation of functions in the area of finance. Finally, the Audit Committee provided EFSA with the elements for the organisation of a seminar on financial and budgetary issues.

30. The Board noted the feedback from the Audit Committee.

Item 11: Amendments to the Art. 36 list of organisations

31. Alberto Spagnolli (Communications) informed the meeting of EFSA's proposal to add 14 new organisations, based in Croatia (1), Germany (1), Greece (2), Poland (2), Portugal (3), Slovakia (1), Slovenia (1), Spain (2) and the United Kingdom (1) to the list of organisations capable of assisting the Authority in performing its tasks (Art. 36 of EFSA's Founding Regulation). He also drew the Board's attention to the technical changes adopted with the decision of the ED dated 12 August, 2015.
32. The Board adopted the amended Art. 36 list of organisations.

Item 12: Any other business

EFSA Expert Database

33. A member asked information on the reasons behind the phase-out of the database and how EFSA will search the experts to engage in its scientific activities. In particular, he noted that it might become more difficult to identify the experts contributing to the work of the national organisations if they are not active as researchers and authors of scientific publications. The ED acknowledged the concern expressed by the Board member and said that this aspect will be taken into consideration. He explained that the database was created almost a decade ago and it run on a platform that had become obsolete and scarcely used by the Member States. In the framework of the 'Expert management programme', EFSA is planning to adopt a new approach for the management of the experts' knowledge, which will be supported by a modern IT platform. In close collaboration with EFSA's scientific community, the Authority is exploring new ways to engage scientific expertise (e.g. exploiting the potentialities offered by the web) however always having care to guarantee the transparency of the procedures and independence of the risk assessment.
34. The Board noted the information on the phase-out of the EFSA Expert Database.

END

Actions Arising

Action reference	Action	Deadline	Status
Oct. 1, 2015 - 1	EFSA to update the Board on its quality system developments.	Dec. 2015 or March 2016	OPEN
Oct. 1, 2015 - 2	EFSA to provide the European Commission with the action plan to reduce the backlog in the area of MRLs.	ASAP	DONE
Oct. 1, 2015 - 3	EFSA to provide the Board with an initial presentation of the elements that will be included in the 'Strategy implementation plan'.	Dec. 2015	ON-GOING
Oct. 1, 2015 - 4	EFSA to provide the Board with a preliminary assessment of the outcomes of the public consultation on EFSA's Strategy 2020.	Dec. 2015	ON-GOING

Document history

Document reference	mb151001 - Minutes
Prepared by	Gian Luca Bonduri
Reviewed by	Management Board
Last date modified	18/11/2015