
Biological Hazards and Contaminants Unit (BIOCONTAM UNIT)

Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards
Minutes of the 100th Plenary meeting
Held on 21-22 October 2015, Parma (Italy)
(Agreed on 20 November 2015)

Participants

- **Panel Members:**

Ana Allende, Declan Bolton, Marianne Chemaly, Robert Davies, Pablo S. Fernandez-Escamez, Rosina Girones, Lieve Herman, Konstantinos Koutsoumanis, Roland Lindqvist, Birgit Nørrung, Antonia Ricci, Lucy Robertson, Giuseppe Ru, Moez Sanaa, Marion Simmons, Panagiotis Skandamis, Emma Snary, Niko Speybroeck, Benno Ter Kuile, John Threlfall, and Helene Wahlström.

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

- Aidan Cahill (for the items 5.3 and 8.2.1) Kris De Smet (for items 5.3, 7.1 and 8.2.1) (DG-SANTE)¹

- **EFSA:**

- BIOCONTAM Unit: Ernesto Liebana, Valentina Rizzi, Winy Messens, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felício, Beatriz Guerra, Michaela Hempen, Angel Ortiz Pelaez, Pietro Stella, Yves Van Der Stede (Scientific staff), Mirena Ivanova (trainee)
- AMU Unit: Fulvio Barizzzone (for items 8.2.2, 8.2.3, 8.2.4 and 9.3), Laura Martino (for item 8.1.2)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

No apologies were received.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

¹ Attended by web-meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel Members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³, 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 99th Plenary meeting held on 9-10 September 2015, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 99th Plenary meeting held on 9-10 September 2015 were agreed by written procedure on 12 October 2015⁴.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for possible adoption

5.1 Scientific Opinion on an update of the 2011 Scientific Opinion on hatchery waste as animal by-products⁵

The last meeting of the WG was held on 9 October 2015 via web-conference. Comments and suggestions received at the last BIOHAZ plenary meeting and from the AHAW Panel have been taken into account. As planned, the AHAW Panel during its plenary (22-23 September) discussed and endorsed the parts of the draft opinion linked to animal health. The draft Opinion was presented by the WG Chair and after a thorough discussion was adopted on 22 October 2015.

5.2 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)⁶

The last WG meeting took place on 5 October via web-conference. The draft Opinion was presented by the WG Chair. Suggestions from the BIOHAZ Panel members were taken into account. After a thorough discussion the opinion was adopted on 22 October 2015.

5.3 Scientific Opinion on the growth of spoilage bacteria during storage and transport of meat⁷

The last WG meeting was held on 22 September 2015 via web-conference. The WG Chair presented the draft opinion and explained how the suggestions received at the last BIOHAZ plenary meeting have been taken into account. Comments from the European Commission were discussed and it was agreed that the Commission will send an official request to expand the modelling to include additional baseline scenarios and chilling profiles. An extension of the deadline will be agreed with the Commission based on the additional work to be performed.

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/event/150909-m.pdf>

⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00902>

⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00118>

⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00163>

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1 Scientific Opinion on the update of the list of QPS recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA⁸

The last WG meeting took place on 25 September 2015 via web-conference. The WG Chair updated the Panel on the refinement of the extensive literature searches coordinated by the Assessment and Methodological Support (AMU) Unit and the follow up of these activities. The Scientific Opinion is to be finalised by December 2016.

6.2 Panel Statement on the update of the list of QPS recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA 3: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until September 2015⁹

The last WG meeting took place on 25 September via web-conference. Further to the taxonomic unit already included and evaluated, 3 new taxonomic units, recently notified to the EFSA units, have been included and evaluated in the Statement. The WG Chair led the thorough reading of the Scientific Opinion. The Panel Statement is to be finalised by December 2015.

6.3 Scientific Opinion on the public health risks associated with Enterococcal *Escherichia coli*¹⁰

The sixth WG meeting took place on 25 September 2015 via web-conference. The WG Chair led the thorough reading of the Scientific Opinion and the feedback from the BIOHAZ Panel was very positive. The draft opinion will be finalised at the last WG meeting on 12 to 13 November in Parma. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is end of December 2015.

6.4 Scientific Opinion on the evaluation of heat treatments, that could be applied to live bivalve molluscs in order to eliminate pathogenic micro-organisms¹¹

The fourth WG meeting was held on 25 September 2015 in Parma. The next WG meeting will take place on 23 October 2015 in Parma. The WG Chair led the thorough reading of the Scientific Opinion. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is end of December 2015.

6.5 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 safety¹²

The second WG meeting was held on 15 September 2015 in Parma jointly with the corresponding EMA WG. The next meeting will take place on 29 September via web-conference. The deadline to deliver the EFSA-EMA Joint 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 foodstuffs¹³

The second WG meeting took place on 29-30 September 2015 in Brussels. The Chair updated the Panel briefly on the approach agreed by the WG to answer the ToRs and future tasks. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 30 June 2016.

⁸ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00189>

⁹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00696>

¹⁰ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00536>

¹¹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00161>

¹² <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00216>

¹³ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00254>

6.7 Scientific Opinion on the safety of a method for processing animal fats intended for technical purposes with the aim to establish the end point in the manufacturing chain^{14,15}

None.

6.8 Request for a scientific opinion on the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of Listex P 100 for reduction of pathogens on different ready to eat (RTE) food¹⁶

The *ad hoc* WG helping with the preparatory work in the development of the Scientific Opinion has been established. The Panel was informed that missing information from the applicant was not yet received. The first WG meeting was tentatively scheduled by web-meeting on 6 November 2015. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 6 months following the receipt of a valid application.

7. New Mandates

7.1 Request for a scientific opinion on hazard analysis approaches for certain small retail establishments in view of the application of their food safety management system¹⁷

The Panel Chair approved the appointment of D. Bolton as Chair person for this WG pending approval of annual and specific Dols. The newly appointed Chair presented the Terms of Reference of the mandate as revised based on the discussion with the European Commission. In answer to a query from a Panel member the Commission confirmed that the section of the Mandate applicable to grocers' establishments was restricted to those selling fresh fruit and vegetables, and not items such as cheese and cold meats.

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

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

8.1.1 Scientific Committee

None.

8.1.2 Scientific Committee Working Group on Uncertainty in Risk Assessment¹⁸

B. Nørrung gave a presentation on the Draft Guidance document on Uncertainty in Scientific Assessment for which a public consultation has been launched until 10 September¹⁹. The BIOHAZ Panel has to identify two opinions to be tested in the trial phase; further discussion will take place at the next plenary meeting. Training on uncertainty and variability for the Panel members has been postponed. Dates will be communicated when available.

8.1.3 Scientific Committee Working Group on production and consumption of insects as food and feed²⁰

None.

8.1.4 Scientific Committee Working Group on Weight of Evidence²¹

None.

¹⁴<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00351>

¹⁵<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00352>

¹⁶<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00428>

¹⁷<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00593>

¹⁸<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00738>

¹⁹<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/consultations/call/150618.htm>

²⁰<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00578>

²¹<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00007>

8.1.5 Scientific Committee Standing Working Group on Biological Relevance²²

None

8.2 EFSA including its Working Groups / Task Forces

8.2.1 Scientific Report on 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)²³

The draft Scientific Report was presented by the WG Chair and was endorsed on 22 October 2015.

8.2.2 Scientific Report to evaluate the application of Denmark to be recognised as having a negligible risk of classical scrapie²⁴

The third and fourth WG meetings were held on 10 September and 6-7 October 2015 in Parma. The methodological approach was described in detail. The draft Scientific Report was presented by the Scientific Officer of the WG. Comments and suggestions from the BIOHAZ Panel members were taken into account and after a thorough discussion the report was endorsed on 22 October 2015.

8.2.3 Scientific Report to evaluate the application of Finland to be recognised as having a negligible risk of classical scrapie²⁵

See agenda item 8.2.2.

8.2.4 Scientific Report to evaluate the application of Sweden to be recognised as having a negligible risk of classical scrapie²⁶

See agenda item 8.2.2.

8.2.5. Request for scientific and technical assistance concerning the revision of the BSE monitoring regime in Croatia²⁷

The first meeting of the WG was held on 16 September via web-conference. The next WG meeting will take place on 22-23 October in Parma. Preliminary results were received under the procurement contract with the developers of the C-TSEMM model. The deadline for endorsement is 31 January 2016.

8.2.6. Scientific Network on BSE-TSE and MRA

The annual BSE-TSE Network meeting took place on 7-8 October 2015 in Parma.

The next meeting of the MRA Network will take place on 27-28 October 2015 in Parma. The agenda of the meeting has been shared via DMS.

8.3. European Commission

None.

²²<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00748>

²³<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00162>

²⁴<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00240>

²⁵<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00261>

²⁶<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00262>

²⁷<http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2015-00350>

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1 Self-task mandates of the BIOHAZ Panel

A discussion took place for the self-task mandate for a Scientific Opinion on *L. monocytogenes* contamination of ready-to-eat foods and the risks for human health in the EU. The Panel Chair presented the Terms of Reference as revised based on the comments received from the ECDC and the European Commission. She informed the Panel that the EFSA internal procedure for the approval of this self-task mandate is on-going. Interested Panel members to be involved in this activity can express their interest.

The other self-task mandates will be discussed at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting.

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

The Panel was informed that all presentations given at the EFSA's second Scientific Conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together"²⁸ will be published online in November 2015. An article covering each session will be published in a special issue of the EFSA Journal.

9.3 Prometheus Project

The AMU Unit gave a presentation on EFSA's Prometheus Project (PROmoting METHods for Evidence Use in Scientific assessments). He explained the background and the deliverables. Deliverable 1 "Principles and process for dealing with data and evidence in scientific assessments" has already been published²⁹. Deliverable 2 is expected to be finalized at the end of 2016. B. Nørrung will be appointed as WG member, pending Dol approval.

10. Any other business

10.1 Upcoming mandates

A new mandate on a Request for an EFSA scientific opinion on the risk for the development of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) due to feeding calves with milk containing residues of antibiotics has been received from the European Commission. It will be further discussed at the next BIOHAZ Plenary meeting.

²⁸ <http://www.efsaexpo2015.eu/>

²⁹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4121>

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 her SDoI filled for the present meeting **Ms. EMMA SNARY** declared the following interest: *The C-TSEMM model was developed within the APHA Biomathematics & Risk Research workgroup (ES is the workgroup leader) within the Department of Epidemiological Sciences. EFSA have recently requested that the APHA provide expert assistance in updating the CTSEMM model for the scientific and technical assistance concerning the revision of the BSE monitoring regime in Croatia (Negotiated procedure reference: NP/EFSA/BIOCONTAM/2015/04). A proposal is currently being prepared. ES will not be part of this project team, but would like the panel to be aware of this potential conflict of interest.*

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes³⁰ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³¹, 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 7.2.5 by the concerned scientific group.

³⁰<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

³¹<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>