

## Scientific Network on Chemical Occurrence data Minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting: Technical meeting on data submission

**Held on 12-13/11/2015, Parma**

**Meeting room: M08/09 Time: 9:00-first day – 13:00 last day  
(Agreed on xxxx 2016)**

### Participants

- Network Representatives of Member States (including EFTA Countries):

Country	Name
Austria	Josef WOLF
Belgium	Kathy BRISON
Bulgaria	Emil SIMEONOV
Cyprus	Eleni IOANNOU KAKOURI Eftychia CHRISTOU PAPACHRYSTOSOMO
Croatia	Sandra BASIC
Czech Republic	Irena REHURKOVA
Denmark	Jens Hinge ANDERSEN Louise Grønhøj Hørbye JENSEN
Estonia	Kadi PADUR
Finland	Niina PAJALIN-MYLLYNEN
France	Jean-Cédric RENINGER
Germany	Apologies
Greece	Leonidas PALILIS
Hungary	Krisztián VARGA
Ireland	Eileen O'DEA
Italy	Michele DE MARTINO Augusto PASTORELLI
Latvia	Dzintars ZACS
Lithuania	Agnietė GRUŠAUSKIENĖ
Luxembourg	Elisa BARILOZZI
Malta	Apologies
Netherlands	Rob THEELEN
Poland	Andrzej STARSKI
Portugal	Luisa OLIVEIRA
Romania	Ioana Madalina GEORGESCU
Slovakia	Angela SVETLIKOVA
Slovenia	Marko LUCI
Spain	Victoria MARCOS (by tele-conference)
Sweden	Petra FOHGELBERG David FOSTER
United Kingdom	Azmi SBAITI
Norway	Inger HALLE SKAGEN

■ EFSA:

DATA Unit: Francesco VERNAZZA (Chair), Mary GILSENAN (HoU)\*, Valentina BOCCA\*, Stefano CAPPE\*, Alessandro CARLETTI\*, LLOYD Isabelle\*, Simona FUSAR POLI\*, Mario MONGUIDI\*, Davide GIBIN\*, Enikő VARGA, LRA Unit: Luisa VENIER\*

(\* attended for specific agenda items)

## 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies for absence were received from Günter SOMMERFELD (Germany) and Ingrid BUSUTTIL (Malta).

## 2. Adoption of agenda and administrative notes

The agenda was adopted without changes.

The administrative aspects of the meeting were presented by Simona Fusar Poli.

## 3. Topics for discussion

### 3.1. General presentation on Standard Sample Description 2 (SSD2) usage and FoodEx2 reporting

Enikő Varga summarised the main differences between the new data collection standard (SSD2) and the current one (SSD1) with regard to contaminant occurrence data reporting from Member States to EFSA. Francesco Vernazza gave a presentation about FoodEx2 food classification and description system; he presented the major features of the system and the tools developed to facilitate the use and the quality control of the coding process. He also presented the Technical report on FoodEx2 revision 2<sup>1</sup> published in April 2015 which is based on the outcome of the FoodEx2 pilot studies with Member States and represents a comprehensive reference for FoodEx2. Finally, he outlined the importance of following the coding rules developed by EFSA and the Member States during the pilot phase in order to guarantee a harmonised coding.

Croatia commented that the SSD2 doesn't fully cover food contact materials. Francesco Vernazza confirmed that FoodEx2 included food simulants for migration testing, however all the different chemicals listed as food contact materials are presently out of the scope of FoodEx2.

Italy raised the question of reporting the presence of allergenic food, which may be present as ingredients in other food, such as nuts in chocolate. EFSA agreed to develop a proposal advising how to report food as a contaminant (source of allergens). Denmark requested EFSA to share the validation rules for FoodEx2, in order to introduce them in their national system. It was also requested by Denmark to implement the FoodEx2 validation rules in the SSD2 business rules and make them available to the data providers. EFSA clarified that this work is currently on-going; some more time is required to finalise it, but finally the validation rules will be shared with the Member States.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/assets/804e.pdf>

### **3.2. Reporting results of pilot on SSD2**

Alessandro Carletti presented the scientific cooperation activities with the MSs regarding the testing and implementation of the Standard Sample Description version 2 (SSD2) the aim of which is to have one common data model to submit data electronically to EFSA. Ireland suggested making a comparison between the interpretations of FoodEx2 codes by food classes by different data providers.

In response to a question from Croatia regarding the correct EFSA contact person in case of FoodEx2 coding difficulties; data providers were informed that in case of FoodEx2 coding problems [data.catalogues@efsa.europa.eu](mailto:data.catalogues@efsa.europa.eu) should be contacted.

Croatia asked a question about the possible starting date of the SSD2 data submission on residues of Veterinary Medical Products. Alessandro Carletti replied that the SSD2 project participants will be informed as soon it will be technically possible.

### **3.3. Sharing of experience by the participants of the pilot**

Five participants (Denmark, Cyprus, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal) of the SSD2 pilot project presented their national data collection and reporting systems, and summarised their experience implementing SSD2 reporting requirements in their national systems.

Sweden asked for clarification about changes in FoodEx2 codes. France also noted changes in food codes between FoodEx2 revision 1 and 2. Francesco Vernazza clarified that during the FoodEx2 revision some food codes needed to be changed because of e.g. duplicate codes for the same term. EFSA reassured that given the comprehensive revision of FoodEx2 that has just taken place<sup>2</sup> no further changes in the classification requiring re-coding are foreseen.

Denmark requested to report the data in 2016 in SSD2 format only, and highlighted the difficulties and resource demand to maintain two parallel systems. Mario Monguidi replied that some technical work is still needed to configure the Data collection framework (DCF) for accepting and validating data in SSD2 format.

Ireland requested the possibility to report in SSD1 but using FoodEx2 for the food code.

Francesco Vernazza clarified that according to the current procedure SSD2 data can be reported inside the SSD1 format, entering the FoodEx2 codes in the field of "Product comment (S.21)" but the product must be also classified according to FoodEx1.

### **3.4. Catalogue management process**

Mario Monguidi presented an update on the management of the catalogues including the coding scheme used. He advised the meeting participants that the catalogues will be updated in early 2016 and that a new mailbox

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<sup>2</sup> Technical report on 'The food classification and description system FoodEx2 (revision 2)' accessible at <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/assets/804e.pdf>

data.catalogues@efsa.europa.eu should be used when making requests related to catalogues.

### **3.5. Web Services and catalogue management, and new workflow for data acceptance**

Davide Gibin informed the participants about the new functionalities of the Data Collection Framework (DCF) web interface for transmission of data to EFSA, like partial replacement and partial deletion.

He also presented Web Services, for catalogues, for data uploading and for retrieving information from DCF. A live demo was performed including the operations of downloading an entire catalogue or a predefined hierarchy, uploading a dataset and retrieving acknowledgement message related to a selected message ID.

Italy requested clarification about the criteria for file rejection in the DCF. Stefano Cappé explained that a file will be rejected in the DCF even if it contains only one incorrect record; however the new feature of “partial replacement” will allow the data provider replacing the incorrect record only, instead of replacing the whole file.

Denmark asked whether it is necessary to keep in the DCF the current classification of the occurrence groups (Occurrence group 1-5) or would it be possible to remove them and have only one folder for chemical occurrence data in every year as in the pesticide data collection. EFSA agreed to consider this proposal during further development of the DCF system.

Denmark welcomed the improvement of the notification e-mails automatically generated by DCF and also suggested inserting the text of the acknowledgement message in the body of the notification e-mail, instead of attaching it to the e-mail. EFSA agreed to consider this in further development of the DCF system. Portugal asked to receive PowerPoint slides which describe the steps shown in the live web services demonstration. EFSA agreed to provide these.

Austria questioned whether the current web service for file upload is a new system or an updated version of the old one. Mario Monguidi confirmed that it is a completely new system. The new web system was developed to receive data in SSD2 format.

### **3.6. Validation rules**

Valentina Bocca presented the validation rules for incoming contaminant occurrence data in the Guidance on data exchange version 2 (GDE2)<sup>3</sup>. She explained that the business rules are implemented in XML format; an example of XML file was given to clarify the new syntax. She pointed out that these files are not directly executable and that EFSA implementation is based on SAS program. The output of the validation process was also shown.

France welcomed the idea to share the business rules with the data providers also in SAS format and asked about the timing. EFSA explained that the revision

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<sup>3</sup> Guidance on Data Exchange version 2.0 available at [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/scientific\\_output/files/main\\_documents/3945.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/scientific_output/files/main_documents/3945.pdf)

of the business rules will be finalised by beginning of 2016 and they could be shared with interested data providers in SAS format thereafter.

Spain asked whether the business rules contain the specific reporting requirements for contaminant occurrence data<sup>4</sup>. Mario Monguidi replied that currently the specific reporting requirements are not included in the business rules, but they will be included in the future.

Portugal asked whether the new business rules apply to data in SSD2 format only or also to data reported in SSD1. Portugal added that data providers need a clear set of business rules, in an easy-to-implement format, to validate the data submission models in use – both SSD1 and SSD2. EFSA confirmed that business rules cover both SSD1 and SSD2 data model.

### **3.7. Data quality and defined Key Performance Indicators**

Alessandro Carletti presented the key performance indicators (KPIs) proposed to assess the quality of incoming occurrence data and described the main issues, which EFSA has to face during the quality check of the contaminant occurrence database. Alessandro informed the members of the network that a list of KPIs will be circulated to the network, after internal consultation between different units inside EFSA.

Ireland welcomed the list of KPIs and expressed interest in participating in the work of developing KPIs.

As a response to a question raised by Cyprus about KPI evaluation, Alessandro explained that the KPIs will be assessed automatically and linked with the data in the Data Warehouse (DWH). Alessandro highlighted that main goal of this project is to improve the quality of the data for dietary exposure.

Portugal also welcomed the new approach to assessing data quality and suggested sharing the “scores” based on the KPI calculation with other Member States. Alessandro agreed to consider this proposal.

### **3.8. Update on FoodEx2 use – discussion**

Francesco Vernazza summarised the main rules to be applied during FoodEx2 coding, focusing on a clear distinction between raw commodities, derivatives/ingredients and composite food. He also introduced the updated “FoodEx2-interpreting and checking tool”<sup>5</sup>.

Portugal commented that there is the need to include in the next FoodEx2 maintenance some food groups currently not covered by FoodEx2, for example, bread-based composite dishes. The Netherlands asked about the possibility to develop an online tool to support FoodEx2 coding. Francesco Vernazza confirmed that this is also EFSA’s wish and the feasibility of introducing this type of tool will be considered further.

Francesco also informed the members of the network that an algorithm is being developed by France trying to reach automatic FoodEx2 coding. Ireland informed that a system for simplifying the coding activities has also been developed in Ireland. In this context, experiences and suggestions will be shared with other

<sup>4</sup> Available at: [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/scientific\\_output/files/main\\_documents/833e.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/scientific_output/files/main_documents/833e.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Available at: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/data/data-standardisation>

members of the network. The Netherlands mentioned that a project on developing an automatic FoodEx2 coding system is on-going also in the Netherlands and the network will be informed as soon as the project will be terminated.

### **3.9. Update on public access to documents**

Luisa Venier of the EFSA LRA Unit - in charge of the EFSA centralized handling of public access requests - presented the Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001<sup>6</sup>, which describes the right of public to access documents held by institutions and lays down the general principles and exceptions. It was explained that the Regulation also applies to data owned by EFSA when falling under the conditions detailed in the European Union case law relating to the accessibility of databases. The participants were informed that EFSA received from an NGO a public access request on the control programme monitoring data on chemical substances and microbiological agents submitted by Member States to EFSA as part of the multiannual EU coordinated control programme from 2011 to 2014 and that a consultation process foreseen by the Regulation will be triggered with the Member States with regards to this request.

A round table discussion followed. Several Member States (NL, IR, CY, PT) asked clarifications on the pending request for data, as well as on the applicability of the Regulation and on the extent of the exceptions to disclosure set out by the Regulation which include, among others, protection to be granted to personal data as well as to commercial interests. Finally HR and DK asked clarifications on EFSA's replies to access requests, on whether EFSA contextualizes them and accompanies disclosure with information with a view of avoiding any misunderstanding of the documents/data disclosed.

### **3.10. Access rights to the Data Warehouse**

Mary Gilsean presented a brief overview of the EFSA scientific data warehouse data access rules which were published as an EFSA technical report in February 2015<sup>7</sup>. Mary explained that the access rules underwent a series of consultation steps with the EFSA data networks as well as the relevant committees of the European Commission Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (PAFF) as well as DG SANTE. Mary also explained that the DWH access rules are not applicable to the current procedure for transmitting contaminant occurrence data from EFSA to the World Health Organisation (WHO) for use in JECFA (Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants) risk assessments, as agreed in 2010 by the former European Commission Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCFCAH)<sup>8</sup>. The Netherlands asked whether the data transmission between EFSA and the WHO works in two directions. Mary explained that European data are transmitted from EFSA to WHO only and that EFSA generally uses European data in its exposure assessments. In this context, Mary informed the group about the WHO FOSCOLLAB platform<sup>9</sup> (Global Platform for Food Safety Data and Information)

<sup>6</sup> Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/PDF/r1049\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/PDF/r1049_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Available at: [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/scientific\\_output/files/main\\_documents/768e.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/scientific_output/files/main_documents/768e.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/toxic/summary19052010\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/toxic/summary19052010_en.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/foscollab/en/>

which integrates and provides access to data from several sources including WHO Gems/Food database.

Cyprus asked whether raw contaminant data transmission from EFSA to WHO pertains solely to data which have already been used in an EFSA opinion. Mary informed the network that most of the data requests which EFSA receives from WHO pertain to contaminants already worked on by EFSA, but that this is not always the case.

Mary also informed members of the network that the former SCFCAH meeting agreement in 2010 does not specify that data transmitted from EFSA to WHO should only pertain to data already used in EFSA opinions.

The Netherlands sought clarification about the IPChem project which Mary alluded to during her presentation. Mary Gilsean explained that IPChem - Information Platform for Chemical Monitoring - is an on-going project to establish a single access point for discovering chemical monitoring data collections. It is designed as a decentralised system providing remote access to data sources and data providers. The project is funded by the European Commission DG Environment; the European Commission JRC (Joint Research Centre) is technical co-ordinator and several European data providers including EFSA have been invited to participate. As agreed during the meeting, a link providing more background information to the project is included<sup>10</sup>.

### **3.11. Contact details of Network members on the website**

Francesco Vernazza informed the participants that EFSA would like to amend the current list of members of the "*Scientific Network on Chemical Occurrence Data*" published on EFSA's website<sup>11</sup>, which includes only organisation names, by including also the names and e-mail addresses of network members. The participants agreed with this proposal.

### **3.12. Management of organisations and users identifier**

Mario Monguidi presented the future approach for managing data provider organisations and users in the DCF.

The Netherlands asked how a DCF data provider can be identified. Mario replied that EFSA has official contact points, and also a list of the registered data providers. However, this list is not available currently in the DCF but, if requested, may be made available in the future via DWH reports.

### **3.13. Enhancement and innovation: Member States' views**

Participants were invited to give constructive feedback on the network scope and meetings in a round table session. In general, participants were pleased about the close co-operation between EFSA and Member States and found the network meeting to be informative and comprehensive.

France and Poland were pleased to learn about the outcome of the SSD2 pilot study from the first wave of countries participating which they found to be

<sup>10</sup> <https://ipchem.jrc.ec.europa.eu/RDSIdiscovery/ipchem/index.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/networks/supportingunits>

valuable. Finland and Ireland suggested having more exchange of information and discussion about open data.

Ireland reiterated the appreciation for the on-going quality check (KPIs) on data and the wish of working together with EFSA on this topic.

Portugal suggested that if the FoodEx2 browser will be further developed, it should be considered to make it multi-lingual.

Slovakia asked EFSA's opinion about late data submission. Mary Gilsean explained that it is important for data providers to respect the deadline for data submission (1st October each year) as failure to meet it affects EFSA's work planning and allocation of resources. Mary noted that changing the deadline for annual data submission (e.g. one month later) would be possible as long as the agreed deadline is respected. In the future, EFSA will exercise a more strict approach regarding acceptance of data submitted after the agreed submission deadline.

Slovenia and Sweden highlighted again the need for clear planning about the implementation of data transmission in SSD2, because maintaining two systems in parallel (i.e. SSD1 and SSD2) is not feasible.

UK welcomed the French approach using automatic coding in FoodEx2, and was also interested in the Irish method.

EFSA informed participants that requests already arrived from the WHO to transmit raw additive occurrence data in addition to contaminant occurrence data for use in JECFA assessments. This will be included as an agenda item at the next chemical occurrence network meeting in April 2015. In the interim, members are requested to discuss this issue (i.e. sharing of raw food additive occurrence data with WHO) at national level and to come prepared to the network meeting in April 2016.

### **3.14. Data warehouse (DWH) chemical dashboards/analytical reports**

Stefano Cappé gave a live demonstration of the scientific DWH.

The Netherlands asked whether data providers can add new chemicals for the PARAM catalogue if a term is not in the current list. Stefano Cappé clarified that it is not possible because the catalogues should be harmonised and controlled; this kind of requests should be sent to the EFSA functional mailbox of [data.catalogues@efsa.europa.eu](mailto:data.catalogues@efsa.europa.eu).

Denmark asked about the availability of the updated DWH user manual mentioned in Stefano's presentation. Stefano Cappé replied that it will be circulated at a later stage.

The participants agreed with a proposal from Stefano to make publicly available summary statistics (e.g. frequency distributions, percentiles) on contaminant occurrence levels by food group (e.g. up to foodex L4) using DWH dashboards at country level. Stefano invited members of the network to look at the DWH dashboards and to verify whether country specific data are correct before they will be published on EFSA's website by end of November 2015.

### 3.15. DWH validation reports

Alessandro Carletti summarised the scientific DWH validation rules. The existing procedure for data validation and feedback with data providers was described and a new one proposed according to the new workflow and the functionalities of the Data Warehouse.

The Netherlands asked whether validation reports will be sent only once, or after each step. It was clarified that the first (business rules) validation of the data will be generated by the DCF, which provides immediate validation and only valid data will enter the DWH. During the second validation, some standardisation will be also performed by EFSA and summary statistics will be generated on the data. The data provider will be contacted after this step for approving the data. Data will be available for analysis in scientific opinions and reports only if they are approved by the data provider.

Ireland asked whether rules for both validation steps will be available in .xml format. Stefano clarified that the vast majority of the business rules are already implemented in the new business rules, and integrating also the rules of the second validation/standardisation step is technically possible, but requires time and resources (e.g. strongly recommended fields for special chemicals in special matrices). Mary Gilsean informed the members of the network that even after successful validation of the data during both validation steps, it is plausible that during further analysis (i.e. estimation of dietary exposure) of the data for scientific opinions, ad hoc anomalies may be identified by scientific officers; in such cases, data providers may be contacted again to verify particular aspects of the data.

### 3.16. Conclusions and proposals for next meetings

#### Date for next meeting

The Chair proposed to have the next meeting of the Network on 7-8 April 2016.

#### 4. Closure of the meeting

The meeting was closed at 13:00, as foreseen in the agenda.

#### 5. Table with actions

WHO	WHAT	BY
EFSA	Advice how to report the presence of allergenic food, which may be present as ingredients in other food, such as nuts in chocolate	By next Network Meeting (NWM)
EFSA	Sharing the validation rules for FoodEx2 with MSs	By next NWM latest
EFSA	Sharing the business rules with MSs also in SAS format upon request	By next NWM latest
EFSA	Informing the NWMs about the opening of the Veterinary Medical Products Residues data collection in DCF	As soon as it will be available

EFSA	Circulating the updated DWH user manual to the Network on Chemical occurrence data	as soon as finalised
MSs	Members are requested to discuss the sharing of raw food additive occurrence data with WHO at national level and to come prepared to the network meeting in April 2016	By next NWM

### Document history

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Reviewed by	Name
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