

## Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards

### Minutes of the 119<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting

**Held on 18-19 April 2018, Parma (Italy)**

**(Agreed on 3 May 2018)**

#### **Participants**

■ Panel Members:

Ana Allende, Declan Bolton, Marianne Chemaly, Robert Davies, Pablo S. Fernández-Escámez, Rosina Gironés, Lieve Herman, Konstantinos Koutsoumanis, Roland Lindqvist, Birgit Nørrung, Antonia Ricci, Lucy Robertson, Giuseppe Ru, Moez Sanaa (for items 6.5, 6.6, 8.1.1, 9.2), Marion Simmons, Panagiotis Skandamis, Emma Snary, Benno Ter Kuile, John Threlfall, and Helene Wahlström.

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Matjaz Klemencic (for items 5.1, 9.1); Pamina Mika Suzuki (for item 7.1).

■ EFSA:

BIOCONTAM Unit: Pierre-Alexandre Beloeil, Frank Boelaert, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felício, Michaela Hempen, Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Angel Ortiz Pelaez, Eleonora Sarno, Pietro Stella, Daniel Thomas, Yves Van der Stede (Scientific staff).

LA Unit: Simone Gabbi (for item 9.4).

■ Observers: (In application of the guidelines for Observers<sup>1</sup>)

Not applicable

■ Others:

Not Applicable

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/stakeholders/observers.html>

## **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Moez Sanaa (for 18 April morning and 19 April) and from Niko Speybroeck.

## **2. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted without further changes.

## **3. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Committee/Scientific Panel/ Members**

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes<sup>2</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest<sup>3</sup>, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Panel Members invited for the present meeting.

No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process, or at the Oral Declaration of Interest at the beginning of this meeting.

## **4. Agreement of the minutes of the 118<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting held on 14-15 March 2018, Parma (Italy)**

The minutes of the 118<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 27 March 2018.<sup>4</sup>

## **5. Scientific outputs submitted for possible adoption**

### **5.1. Scientific opinion on an application received from the Dutch Competent Authority for evaluation of a new alternative processing method for animal by-products Category 3 material (ChainCraft BV)<sup>5</sup>**

The last WG meeting was held on 4 April by web/tele conference. The Panel was informed that evaluation of the confidentiality claim requested by the Applicant is almost finalised. The conclusions, recommendations, abstract and summary were thoroughly discussed and agreed. The final draft opinion was presented by the Chair and adopted by the Panel on 19 April.

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

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

<sup>4</sup><http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180314-0>

<sup>5</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00619>

## 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 EFSA<sup>6</sup>

The last web meeting was held on 26 February. ELS for references retrieved between June and December 2017 is to be finalised by May/June. The background of the QPS approach is still to be improved in the draft opinion. The next meeting will be held in Parma on 2 and 3 May. The deadline for the adoption of this opinion is scheduled for December 2019.

### 6.2. Statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA. 8: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until March 2018<sup>7</sup>

The last web meeting was held on 26 February. The ELS follow up was launched in February and is to be finalised by May/June. The summary of the results and possible safety concerns will be included in this document. Units updated the list of notifications received until the end of March. Only one new taxonomic unit was included in the current draft. Three taxonomic units are being evaluated for a possible QSP recommendation: *Paenibacillus lentus*, *Paracoccus carotinifaciens*, *Yarrowia lipolytica*. The next meeting will be held in Parma on 2 and 3 May. The possible adoption of this statement is scheduled for June 2018.

### 6.3. Scientific opinion on public health risks associated with foodborne parasites<sup>8</sup>

The last WG meeting was held on 17 April 2018 in Parma. The WG chair informed the Panel about the inclusion of life cycle diagrams for the selected parasites as requested by the Panel. The WG has agreed on a paragraph in the draft opinion that describes the uncertainty around estimates based on expert knowledge elicitation for the relative importance of foodborne transmission of *Echinococcus*. The WG also agreed to send a short questionnaire to the Networks on Microbiological Risk Assessment (MRA) and on Zoonosis Monitoring Data (ZMD) to obtain information on the notification system for the selected parasites in animals/food. The next WG meeting will be held on 12 June 2018 as web-meeting. The deadline for this mandate is October 2018.

### 6.4. Scientific opinion on hazard analysis approaches for certain small retail establishments and food donations<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00684>

<sup>7</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00829>

<sup>8</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00460>

The 4<sup>th</sup> WG meeting was held on 13 March 2018 in Parma. The WG chair updated the panel on the progress made so far. The flow diagrams for the retail establishments and food donations as well as the simplified food safety management tables are well developed but need to be checked for consistency. The CONTAM panel will discuss the parts relevant to chemical hazards during their panel meeting in June 2018. The next WG meeting will be held on 23 April 2018 as a web-meeting and the following meeting on 7/8 June 2018 in Parma. The deadline for this mandate is the end of September 2018.

#### **6.5. Scientific opinion on *Salmonella* control in poultry flocks and its public health impact<sup>10</sup>**

No WG meeting was held since the previous plenary meeting. The WG chair provided a short update to the panel on the progress made in the meantime. The BIOHAZ Panel suggested considering carefully the data gaps to perform the source attribution. There was a consensus to proceed with this approach but describe the data reliability and why the chosen “*Salmonella* attribution model” was selected. It was also suggested to consider the outcome from recent (European) research projects. The next (third) meeting of the WG will take place on 20 April 2018 in Parma. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 31 January 2019.

#### **6.6. Request for a scientific opinion on an updated Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) of the BSE risk posed by Processed Animal Proteins (PAP)<sup>11</sup>**

The WG chair informed the Panel that the two probabilistic models (PAP model and FEED model) were sent to four panel members, experts on modelling, for their review. The reviews were acknowledged and appreciated by the WG and some of the comments and suggestions had been taken on board in the version submitted to the plenary for thorough reading while the remaining will be dealt with after the plenary. The comments have contributed substantially to improve the models, especially the FEED one. The approaches adopted to address the ToRs were accepted by the Panel and no major objections were made to the use of the two models, apart from the encouragement to separate uncertainty and variability in the model parameters. The Chair reminded that the PAP model has not been modified, as previously agreed. The Chair focused on the presentation of the concluding remarks, results of the models and answers to the ToRS sections, pointing out that they are still provisional and will be adjusted when the final results of the models are available. Overall the opinion was well received and minor comments to improve the readability and clarity of the answers to the ToRs were received from panel members. The final version of the answers to ToRs, conclusions and recommendations will be reviewed during the next

<sup>9</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00565>

<sup>10</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00692>

<sup>11</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00705>

plenary meeting. The last WG meeting will take place on 26-27 April 2018 as a physical meeting in Parma. The draft of the scientific opinion will be submitted to the BIOHAZ Panel for adoption in the next plenary on 6-7 June 2018.

#### **6.7. Scientific Opinion on the application and use of next generation sequencing (including whole genome sequencing) for risk assessment for foodborne microorganisms<sup>12</sup>**

A brief update was provided on the progress of work of EFSA's ongoing procurement activities on whole genome sequencing (GenCamp, ENGAGE and INNUENDO). In particular, EFSA has already revised the ENGAGE final report and its Appendixes. Comments have been provided to the contractors and should be implemented as soon as possible in order to allow for the approval of the final deliverables by the end of May. It was highlighted that this project focused on WGS capacity building initiatives in national institutions. Some of the materials produced (e.g. benchmarking exercise for salmonella serotyping using WGs, some proof-of-concept projects) are more useful than others (e.g. SOPs, beginner's guide on the use of WGS for foodborne pathogens, online podcast tutorials) in the scope of the answers to the ToRs of the self-task mandate. The next-generation sequencing self-task mandate is still foreseen to start between July and November 2018, and end by November 2019.

### **7. New Mandates**

#### **7.1. Request for a scientific opinion on the pathogenicity assessment of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and the public health risk posed by contamination of food with STEC<sup>13</sup>**

On 13 April 2018, a new request for a Scientific Opinion on the pathogenicity assessment of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and the public health risk posed by contamination of food with STEC was received in EFSA from the European Commission. The background and Terms of References were presented to the BIOHAZ Panel. This new request asks EFSA to provide an update of previous EFSA scientific opinions STEC from 2007 and 2013 with regard to the aspects relevant to the following ToRs: 1) review the new body of knowledge available for pathogenicity assessment of STEC, and refine, if needed, the molecular approach for the categorisation of STEC strains proposed in the EFSA 2013 Opinion; 2) review the microbiological methods for the detection and characterisation of human pathogenic STEC in animals and food; 3) analyse the available data on human foodborne STEC cases in

<sup>12</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00397>

<sup>13</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00293>

the EU and rank different food commodities based on the public health risk; and (4) provide recommendations to fill the data gaps identified in the above assessment. EFSA will liaise with ECDC to ensure that all relevant human monitoring data are made available to support this mandate. Reference was made to a similar ongoing activity coordinated by JEMRA/FAO/WHO and EFSA will liaise with the coordinators of this activity to understand better the remit and progress of this work. The deadline for this mandate is end of September 2019 and Declan Bolton was nominated Chair of the ad hoc WG which will be established for this mandate (conditional to screening and approval of his declaration of interests).

## **8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission**

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

#### **8.1.1. Scientific Committee**

The 88<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) took place in Parma on 11-12 April 2018.<sup>14</sup> Kostas Koutsoumanis, BIOHAZ Panel vice-Chair, reported the discussions held at the SC, in particular as regards draft SC guidances, reports on the activities of the different Scientific Panels, and the request to the Scientific Panel Chairs to provide priorities for future research in the EU. The Panel discussed research priorities based on some proposals from Panel members, and agreed to collect further proposals and discuss them by e-mail exchange before providing to the SC the view of the BIOHAZ Panel by 11 May 2018 at the latest.

#### **8.1.2. Scientific opinion on the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of lactic acid to reduce microbiological surface contamination on carcasses from wild game and small stock<sup>15</sup>**

EFSA requested the applicant to provide the missing information on 25 October 2017, but this has not yet been submitted and therefore the application is not yet considered valid. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 9 months following the receipt of a valid application.

#### **8.1.3. Scientific opinion on the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of the organic acids lactic and acetic acid to reduce microbiological surface contamination on pork carcasses and pork cuts<sup>16</sup>**

As informed at the previous meeting, a letter requesting additional information was sent to the applicant on 22 January 2018. The additional

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180214>

<sup>15</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00667>

<sup>16</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00666>

information was submitted to EFSA on 27 March 2018. The deadline to deliver the Scientific Opinion is 9 months following the receipt of a valid application (i.e. 10 January 2018), extended with the duration of the additional information request(s). Therefore the current deadline for adoption of the Scientific Opinion is 11 November 2018. The last WG meetings were held on 17 April in Parma and on 18 April by teleconference.

## **8.2. EFSA including its Working Groups /Task Forces**

### **8.2.1. Scientific and technical assistance on harmonized monitoring of antimicrobial resistance in bacteria transmitted through food<sup>17</sup>**

EFSA Secretariat updated the Panel on this mandate received from the European Commission in December 2017, asking to update the technical specifications for harmonised monitoring of antimicrobial resistance in bacteria transmitted through food. The deadline for the delivery of the scientific report is March 2019. The BIOHAZ Panel will be kept informed on the progress of the mandate.

### **8.2.2. Scientific Networks on BSE-TSE and MRA**

No new meetings of the Scientific Networks on BSE-TSE and MRA have been held. The next meeting of the MRA Network will be held on 24-25 April 2018. The draft agenda was presented to the panel.

The next meeting of the BSE-TSE Network will be held on 15-16 October 2018. The Secretariat informed the Panel about the recent publication of a scientific article reporting the first cases of a novel transmissible spongiform encephalopathy in dromedary camels, called camel prion disease (CPD) in Algeria. One of the co-authors, network member, shared with the Network the information the same day the article was published.

### **8.2.3. Emerging Risks**

Nothing to report under this agenda item.

## **8.3. European Commission**

Nothing to report under this agenda item.

## **9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion**

### **9.1. Clarification of certain aspects of the scientific opinion on the evaluation of the Application for new alternative biodiesel production process for rendered fat of Cat 1 (BDI-RepCat process, AT)**

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<sup>17</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00051>



The draft reply which was prepared with the support from the previous WG experts and in consultation with the EC, has been presented to the Panel, who agreed with the draft text. EFSA Legal and Assurance Services (LAS) Unit are providing support on this subject. The deadline for sending the reply to the complaint is 2 May.

### **9.2. Topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards and possible priorities for BIOHAZ Panel self-tasking work in the future**

The Panel discussed a draft list of topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards and possible priorities for BIOHAZ Panel self-tasking work in the future. It was agreed that the Panel will further review the list of topics before the next plenary meeting and rediscuss it, with the aim of selecting the most important topics, prioritise them and pass them for consideration and further discussion to the future BIOHAZ Panel (2018-2021).

### **9.3. EU Summary Report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and indicator bacteria from humans, animals and food in 2016**

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel a summary of the findings of EU Summary Report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and indicator bacteria from humans, animals and food for year 2016, published in February 2018.<sup>18</sup>

### **9.4. Rules on competing interest management**

EFSA Secretariat (Legal and Assurance (LA) Unit) introduced to the Panel the EFSA's policy on independence adopted in June 2017 and its implementation as of 1 July 2018. The presentation was followed by a questions and answers session with Panel members on practical aspects of the implementation of the policy. Panel members were invited to contact the Secretariat for any additional question on this topic.

## **10. Any other business**

EFSA Secretariat informed the Panel on rules concerning presentation of EFSA outputs by experts, and related information to be indicated in declarations of interests in such occasions.

Roland Lindqvist reported to the Panel the intention by some experts, who participated to the EFSA Working Group on '*Listeria monocytogenes* contamination of ready-to-eat foods', to draft a scientific paper that uses and further develops the generic quantitative microbiological risk assessment (gQMRA) model developed in the scientific opinion adopted by the BIOHAZ Panel in December 2017. The paper is being drafted by the

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/5182>



experts on their private capacity, not linked to EFSA activities and the published opinion.