

Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards

Minutes of the 122th Plenary meeting

Held on 26-27 September 2018, Parma (Italy)

(Agreed on 11 October 2018)

Participants

■ Panel Members:

Ana Allende, Avelino Alvarez-Ordóñez, Declan Bolton, Sara Bover-Cid, Marianne Chemaly, Robert Davies, Lieve Herman, Friederike Hilbert, Konstantinos Koutsoumanis, Roland Lindqvist, Maarten Nauta, Luisa Peixe, Giuseppe Ru, Marion Simmons, Panagiotis Skandamis, Elisabetta Suffredini.

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Anne-Laure Gassin, Kris de Smet (video-conference item 5.1); Sara Perucho-Martinez (Thursday 27 September).

■ EFSA:

BIOCONTAM Unit: Giusi Amore, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felício, Michaela Hempen, Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Angel Ortiz Pelaez, Eleonora Sarno, Pietro Stella.

SCER Unit: Caroline Merten, Raquel Garcia-Matas (for item 11).

■ Observers: (In application of the guidelines for Observers¹)

Not applicable

■ Others:

Lucy Robertson (Hearing Expert), Member of EFSA BIOHAZ Working Group on Public health risks associated with food-borne parasites.

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

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

No apologies were received. The Panel Chair informed the Panel on the recent nomination of Alessandra De Cesare as additional Member of the BIOHAZ Panel, as of 1 October 2018.

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 Processes² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³, EFSA screened the Annual 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 121th Plenary meeting held on 4 and 5 July 2018, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 121th Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 19 July 2018.⁴

5. Scientific outputs submitted for possible adoption

5.1. Scientific opinion on hazard analysis approaches for certain small retail establishments and food donations⁵

The WG chair presented the draft opinion and highlighted the changes implemented since the July plenary meeting. The comments raised during the last panel meeting have been addressed and the opinion was adopted. This opinion is a continuation of a previous opinion of the BIOHAZ panel, adopted last year, expanding the proposed simplified food safety management system for small retailers to distribution centres, supermarkets, catering, restaurants, pubs and includes food donations. The panel suggests four new pre-requisite programmes specifically for

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

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

⁴<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180704-2>

⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00565>

food donations to ensure food safety of food that approaches the end of shelf life.

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1. Scientific opinion on public health risks associated with foodborne parasites⁶

The last WG meeting was held on 24 August 2018. The panel appreciated the changes to the document since the last panel meeting, in particular in relation to the sections on the relative importance of food-borne pathways. Some inconsistencies were highlighted between these chapters and the related appendix which the WG will address before the next panel meeting. The draft opinion will also contain life cycle figures which are being developed. The figures were briefly presented to the panel but need further refinement. The last WG meeting will be on 2 October 2018. The deadline for adoption of this scientific opinion is October 2018.

6.2. Scientific opinion on *Salmonella* control in poultry flocks and its public health impact⁷

The last WG meetings were held on 6 July and 14 September 2018 by web-conference. The WG chair presented the draft opinion to the BIOHAZ panel and a discussion took place. He informed that specific data requests were sent to Member States on the distribution of *Salmonella* serovars in various food animal populations (poultry populations, fattening pigs and cattle) when these data were found incompletely reported through the annual monitoring and collection of information on zoonoses based on the Zoonoses Directive 2003/99/EC. The data collection is nearly complete and would be used for answering ToR 1 and/or 2. At the next WG meeting it would be decided whether these data would allow applying an EU-wide source attribution modelling for answering to ToR2. For ToR 3-5, the data collection through the Microbial Risk Assessment Network will shortly be finalised. The Panel suggested shortening the opinion. The next meeting of the WG will take place on 11 October 2018 by web-conference. The deadline for adoption of this scientific opinion is 31 January 2019.

6.3. 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 web meeting was held on 17 September 2018 by web conference. The extensive literature search (ELS) for references retrieved between January and June 2018 was launched in July, the screening phase is to be finalised in September and the summary is to be prepared by November to be incorporated in the Panel Statement part 9. A hearing

⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00460>

⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00692>

⁸ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00684>

expert on resistance to antimicrobials commonly used in human medicine was invited to participate during this meeting in order to support the WG experts to improve the current QPS qualification “Absence of resistance to antimicrobials used for medicinal treatment of yeast infections, in cases where viable cells are added to the food or feed chain”. This qualification applies specifically to the viable yeasts of *Saccharomyces bayanus*, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *Saccharomyces pastorianus* and *Wickerhamomyces*. The next meeting will be on 23 October in Parma. The deadline for adoption of this scientific opinion is December 2019.

6.4. Statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA. 9: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until September 2018⁹

The last web meeting was held on 17 September 2018 by web conference. Twenty-two notifications were received until now (18 from Feed and 4 from Nutrition). Three TU to be evaluated for a possible QPS status: *Pseudomonas fluorescens* (previously evaluated in 2016, but needs to be re-evaluated within this mandate), *Mycobacterium manrensis*, and *Komagataeibacter sucrofermentans*, evaluated for the first time. The ELS for references retrieved between January and June 2018 was launched in July (see item 6.3). The procedure to follow in cases of notifications received linked to the new regulation on novel foods was proposed and agreed with the Panel. The next meeting will be on 23 October in Parma. The deadline for adoption of this statement is December 2018.

6.5. Scientific opinion on the pathogenicity assessment of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and the public health risk posed by contamination of food with STEC¹⁰

The WG Chair updated the Panel on the WG composition and the progress of work made during the first web meeting on 4 September showing the preliminary table of contents of the draft opinion. The WG aims to answer the ToRs of this mandate using documents and relevant data from EFSA’s zoonoses database and ECDC’s TESSy database covering the period from 2012 to 2017. Due to major limitations from these databases, the WG needs to first check all the available relevant data and information before agreeing on a precise approach to answer the ToRs. ECDC and EFSA will provide the WG with an assessment of the completeness and quality of both datasets. EFSA will also liaise with FAO/WHO to explore access to the dataset and literature used for the ‘2018 STEC FAO/WHO MRA series report No. 31 on STEC and food: attribution, characterisation and monitoring’. The EC has been requested officially to extend the original

⁹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00830>

¹⁰ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00293>

deadline for this mandate (end of September 2019) as informally agreed before due to the arrival of an urgent request on scientific and technical assistance for *L. monocytogenes*.

6.6. Scientific Opinion on the application and use of next generation sequencing (including whole genome sequencing) for risk assessment for foodborne microorganisms¹¹

The WG Chair updated the Panel on the composition of the *ad hoc* WG established for this mandate and the relevant timelines. The first WG meeting will take place on 19 October in Parma. The deadline for this mandate is end of November 2019.

7. New Mandates

See also Item 11.2 of the minutes in relation to one additional new mandate received recently.

7.1. Request for a scientific opinion providing an update and review of control options for *Campylobacter* in broilers at primary production¹²

The Panel chair informed the Panel of the recent nomination, by written procedure, of Marianne Chemaly as Chair of the *ad hoc* WG which will be established for this mandate (conditional to screening and approval of her declaration of interests). The WG chair presented the background and terms of reference of this mandate and the expected timeline until adoption in January 2020.

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

8.1. Scientific Committee and other Scientific Panels

8.1.1. Scientific Committee

The 90th Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) took place in Parma on 17 September 2018. The Panel Chair informed the Panel of the election of the SC Chair and Vice-chairs. A brief summary of the points discussed at the SC meeting was given by the Panel Chair and the EFSA Secretariat.

8.1.2. 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 cuts¹³

¹¹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00397>

¹² <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00676>

¹³ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00666>

The CEP Panel WG “Evaluation of substances used to reduce microbial contamination from products of animal origin” was established. Alicja Mortensen was nominated by the CEP Panel as WG Chair, Panagiotis Skandamis is vice-chair of the WG. The first WG meeting of this WG was held on 12 September 2018 by web-conference. The vice-chair of the WG presented the draft opinion to the BIOHAZ panel, in particular the sections dealing with ToR 2 and 3 and a discussion took place. The deadline for adoption of the Scientific Opinion is 14 November 2018. The next WG meetings will be held on 3 October 2018 by web-conference.

8.1.3. 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 stock¹⁴

No update.

8.2. EFSA including its Working Groups and Networks

8.2.1. Assessment of low pathogenic avian influenza virus infection, establishment and spread via raw poultry meat and table eggs in animals and humans¹⁵

EFSA secretariat informed of the latest developments in the production of the scientific report. Due to the short deadline to submit the first draft to the EC, the AHAW and BIOHAZ Panel could only be consulted at the beginning of August. The reviews of external experts and comments of Panels members were taken on board in a new draft that was discussed with the WG EFSA secretariat thanked the Panel members that provided comments. The conclusions of the rapid qualitative assessment of the probability of transmission did not change with respect to the draft shared with the Panels members but the structure and risk pathways have been modified to make it clearer. The draft was submitted for internal approval and publication and will be shared with the BIOHAZ Panel members in due course.

8.2.2. Scientific Networks on BSE-TSE and MRA

EFSA Secretariat presented the terms of reference of both BSE-TSE and MRA networks and the forthcoming 13th annual meeting of the BSE-TSE Network that will take place on 15-16 October 2018 at EFSA headquarters in Parma, including the agenda, participants and speakers of the meeting.

8.2.3. Update on Rapid Outbreak Assessments and related activities

EFSA Secretariat updated the Panel on EFSA activities related to Rapid Outbreak Assessments (ROA), including the criteria for triggering a ROA, the data flow among Member States, EC, ECDC and EFSA, and an

¹⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00667>

¹⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00571>

overview on the ROAs published in 2017 and 2018. Update on ongoing ROAs will be given regularly to the Panel in future plenary meetings.

8.3. European Commission

The Panel indicated that it would be appreciated if, during one of the next plenary meetings, colleagues from the European Commission (EC) would join the plenary meeting to update the Panel on EC work related to the remit of the Panel, upcoming mandates for the Panel and follow-up of outputs produced by the Panel.

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1. EFSA activities on animal-by products

EFSA Secretariat addressed the Panel with a presentation in relation to the EFSA activities on animal-by products. The respective regulation was described (Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 of 25 February 2011 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009). The main definitions (ABP, ABPs risk categories materials) and principles linked to the evaluation of an alternative method for the use or disposal of ABP or derived products were explained to the Panel. As defined in Article 20 of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009, EFSA needs to assess applications for an alternative method for the use or disposal of ABP or derived products. Following receipt of a complete application, EFSA has 6 months to assess whether the method submitted ensures that risks to public or animal health are: *a) controlled in a manner which prevents their proliferation before disposal in accordance with this Regulation or the implementing measures thereof; or b) reduced to a degree which is at least equivalent, for the relevant category of animal by-products, to the processing methods laid down pursuant to point (b) of the first subparagraph of Article 15(1)*. EC may or not grant authorisation within 3 months following receipt of EFSA opinion. It was also described the content of an application for an alternative method according to the standard template. An overall view of the past EFSA's opinions related to ABP was presented as well, and in more detail the last 2 opinions.

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

The Panel Chair and EFSA Secretariat informed the Panel on the outcome of a discussion that took place with the former BIOHAZ Panel in relation to this topic. In particular, the former BIOHAZ Panel identified some

priorities for future consideration,¹⁶ like for example the role of environment in the spread of antimicrobial resistance, risks related to drinking water and to the use of water in processing of fruits and vegetables, and a review of options to control *Campylobacter*. The Panel Chair suggested this agenda item remains as a standing point for discussion during the future meetings, to exchange views on public health concerns in the area of biological hazards.

10. Plenary meeting dates 2018-2019

Dates for 2019 BIOHAZ plenaries were agreed and will be published soon on EFSA website.

11. Any other business

11.1. Request for an update of the scientific opinion on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in cervids

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate, received on September 24th 2018. The Panel chair nominated Marion Simmons as Chair of the *ad hoc* WG which will be established for this mandate (conditional to screening and approval of her declaration of interests).

EFSA Secretariat (Scientific Committee and Emerging Risks (SCER) Unit) presented the preliminary plan for a training to be delivered to the Panel on the implementation of the EFSA Guidelines on Uncertainty analysis in scientific assessments. The training is expected to take place in March 2019.

¹⁶ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180606-0>