



Final Minutes

71ST MEETING OF THE EFSA ADVISORY FORUM

Meeting details

Date: 03-04 April 2019

Venue: Sheraton Hotel Bucharest

Meeting hours: 09:00 – 18:00 (03.04.2019)

09:00 – 12:30 (04.04.2019)

Members	
Austria	<i>Klemens Fuchs</i>
Belgium	<i>Benoit Horion</i>
Bulgaria	<i>Georgi Georgiev</i>
Croatia	<i>Darja Sokolić</i>
Cyprus	<i>Stelios Yiannopoulos</i>
Czech Republic	<i>Jitka Götzová</i>
Denmark	<i>Flemming Bager</i>
Estonia	<i>Martin Minjajev</i>
Finland	<i>Pirkko Tuominen</i>
France	<i>Salma Elreedy</i>
Germany	<i>Nicole Gollnick</i>
Greece	<i>Eirini Tsigarida</i>
Hungary	<i>Ákos Józwiak</i>
Ireland	<i>Pamela Byrne</i>
Italy	<i>Alessandra Perrella</i>
Lithuania	<i>Jurgita Bakasėnienė</i>
Malta	<i>Ingrid Borg</i>
Netherlands	<i>Antoon Opperhuizen</i>
Norway	<i>Danica Grahek-Ogden</i>
Poland	<i>Jacek Postupolski</i>
Portugal	<i>Pedro Portugal Gaspar</i>
Romania	<i>Cristian Duicu & Monica Neagu</i>
Slovenia	<i>Urška Blaznik</i>
Slovak Republic	<i>Marica Kuzmiak Theiszová</i>
Spain	<i>Ana Canals Caballero</i>
Sweden	<i>Per Bergman</i>
United Kingdom	<i>Jesus Alvarez-Pinera</i>



Observers	
Albania	<i>Pamela Radovani</i>
Montenegro	<i>Ana Velimirovic</i>
FYR of Macedonia	<i>Zoran Atanasov</i>
Serbia	<i>Tamara Bošković</i>
Switzerland	<i>Michael Beer</i>
Turkey	<i>Serap Hanci</i>
European Commission	<i>Luis Vivas-Alegre</i>

EFSA Representatives	
<i>Advisory Forum Secretariat: Sérgio Potier Rodeia, Deimante Bikneryte</i>	
<i>Bernhard URL</i>	<i>Nikolaus Kriz</i>
<i>Barbara Gallani</i>	<i>Dirk Detken</i>
<i>Juliane Kleiner</i>	<i>Ilias Papatryfon</i>
<i>Guilhem de Seze</i>	<i>Didier Verloo</i>
<i>Marta Hugas</i>	

1. Opening of the meeting

Bernhard Url, Chair of the meeting welcomed participants to the 71st AF meeting. Apologies were noted from Latvia, Iceland, Luxembourg, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Kosovo. The Chair welcomed dr. Geronimo Răducu Brănescu, State-Secretary, President of the Romanian National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (NSVFSA) and EFSA Management Board member; and Michael Beer from Switzerland as a new AF Observer Alternate.

2. Welcome address from the Romanian EU Presidency

The floor was given to dr. Geronimo Răducu Brănescu as representative of the Romanian Presidency, who welcomed participants to the meeting and to Bucharest, Romania.

3. Adoption of Agenda and action points from last meeting

The Chair tabled the draft Agenda for adoption, opening for any additional items to be included under AOB. BE asked to bring back to the AF plenary discussion the EU-MENU topic as it requires a broader discussion. IE asked the floor for delivering a short debrief on the International Conference "The Science of Food Safety – What's our Future". DE expressed the wish to report on the Latin American Risk Assessment Symposium on Food Safety. Marta Hugas expressed the intention to report on the Global Summit on Regulatory Science 2019.

The Chair noted that the EU-MENU topic will be brought to the AF Agenda in July 2019; and that all remaining items were included under AOB. The Chair further informed that 6 out of 8 action points from last meeting were implemented and that two are ongoing, further mentioning that the minutes of the 70th Advisory Forum meeting were published on EFSA's website on 21.12.2018.

Action Point 1: EFSA to bring back to the AF plenary the EU-MENU topic for broader discussion in July 2019.



4. Recent EFSA activities

■ 4a – EFSA visit to WHO

Marta Hugas provided an oral debrief on the recent EFSA visit to WHO, which occurred on 18.01.2019. Key items discussed included coordination of work programmes (e.g. WHO and IARC have put in place a Standard Operating Procedure to avoid duplication of assessments with other WHO bodies on regulated products), harmonization of methodologies and environmental risk assessment. It was also mentioned that IARC invited EFSA's Executive Director to meet its new Director. The Chair further noted the importance of cooperation with WHO and raised the question on whether MSs have bilateral initiatives with WHO to which EFSA could also contribute. DK acknowledged the importance of this collaboration, especially in areas such as whole genome sequencing, which helps to prevent duplication of activities. BG noted the EVIPNet¹ initiative from the WHO Regional Office for Europe, which aims to develop evidence-informed policy on AMR at national level.

Juliane informed about a FAO/WHO meeting held in Geneva on 25-29.03.2019, which brought together modellers from all over the world for discussing a common view on how to perform dose/response assessment/modelling, thus contributing to a more harmonised use of the BMD approach in risk assessment.

■ 4b - EFSA visit to JRC

Marta Hugas provided an oral debrief on EFSA's recent visit to JRC, which occurred on 27.02.2019. The Chair noted that JRC is an important partner with whom EFSA would like to set up a long-standing cooperation, namely on chemical risk assessment, pesticides and plant health, and the importance of knowledge exchange/transfer between JRC-EFSA-ECHA and MSs. IE and SE suggested the implementation of pilot cooperation schemes that may evolve onto to a wider collaborative framework, an initiative that FR also encouraged. Luis Vivas-Alegre (EC) mentioned the need for involving risk managers on such discussions and the use risk communication as a tool. IE mentioned the example of ongoing collaborations between ECHA and JRC on health technology assessments developing approaches, a possible model to look at. Guilhem de Seze informed about a series of workshops being organised with JRC in the area of pesticides (ecosystem services). NL stressed that a common strategy is still missing at EU level for an efficient interaction to occur, suggesting the inclusion of a link/mandate under the new EFSA strategy 2021-2027.

■ 4c - International Conference on Uncertainty in Risk Analysis

DE shortly briefed AF members on the international conference on Uncertainty in Risk Analysis, held in Berlin on 21-22.02.2019. The two-day conference with preconference workshops brought together about 300 risk assessors, managers, communicators and social scientists, coming from 37 countries. DE will share documentation from the event and as well the respective final report. AT complimented the very well-structured agenda and excellent level of organization, questioning whether society wishes to hear about uncertainty. Barbara Gallani mentioned that the Conference was a positive example of integration of social sciences in risk analysis, highlighting its contribution to a harmonised communication strategy on uncertainty and to the implementation of guidance on how to best communicate uncertainty to scientists and lay persons.

Action 2: DE to share available documentation and the final report on the International Conference on Uncertainty in Risk Analysis.

■ 4d - FAO/WHO/AU conference

Barbara Gallani provided an oral debrief on her recent attendance of the FAO/WHO/AU conference, held on 12-13.02.2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where she participated as a speaker under the Panel Discussion on "Empowering consumers to establish healthy food behaviours and support

¹ <http://www.euro.who.int/en/data-and-evidence/evidence-informed-policy-making/evidence-informed-policy-network-evipnet>



sustainable food system". Barbara Gallani highlighted the importance of supporting these initiatives of WHO and FAO, and of further strengthening cooperation with these international organisations.

ES debriefed on the topic from a MS perspective, highlighting that sustainability of food safety systems is paramount for many of the participants, thus the need for further investment not only in developing countries but also in Europe. IE enquired about available documentation and additional information on the FAO/WHO/AU conference, which is available on the WHO website ^{2,3}.

■ 4e - Feedback on ED meeting with EU Sister Agencies

The Chair provided an oral debrief on main outcomes of the Heads of ENVI Agencies (ECDC, ECHA, EEA and EMA) meeting held on 12.02.2019, highlighting the need to work more closely together. The benefits of such an approach include intelligent use of resources, minimising duplication of efforts, strengthening scientific outputs and help to prevent scientific divergences or inconsistencies in communication. This first discussion between the Heads of ENVI Agencies confirmed a willingness to collaborate more closely at strategic and/or operational level. FR, BE and SI complimented this initiative, noting possible areas for future exchange of information/collaboration such as on approaches to capacity building (e.g. learning from ECDC's implementation of its fellowship programme) or joint evaluation of chemicals (e.g. Bisphenols with ECHA).

5. Provisional agreement on the amendment of the GFL

Luis Vivas-Alegre (EC) provided an overview of the current state-of-play on the provisional agreement on the amendment of the GFL. The EC was thankful to EFSA for the support provided all throughout, and to the Austrian and Romanian Presidencies of the Council for their dedication to the file. Members were informed about the future role of EFSA's Management Board (MB) and developments linked to the implementation of transparency rules. The Chair complimented the achievements reached during the Austrian and Romanian Presidencies within such a short timeline, highlighting that EFSA is already working on a plan for best implementing the new rules. FR and ES highlighted that since MS will be represented in EFSA's future Management Board, though the future roles of AF and MB representatives are already clearly defined, it would be important to start thinking on the right high-profile national representatives that will be represented in both bodies. The Chair added that AF representatives will be required to focus in delivering scientific advice while MB members should detain a background and skills in management of food safety systems.

6. Brexit update

Dirk Detken informed participants on latest developments concerning BREXIT and measures being implemented under EFSA's UK withdrawal Action Plan, prepared under the advice of the EC.

7. Main outcomes of DG-RTD workshop "A robust science and innovation environment for food safety"

Marta Hugas provided participants with an update on recent research coordination activities (background on workshop, research needs paper, Concerted Support Action (CSA), interagency co-creation) and developments that led to the DG-RTD workshop "A robust science and innovation environment for food safety", held in Brussels on 17.01.2019.

IE, who was the overall rapporteur of the DG-RTD workshop, also reported back and presented a short overview of the key policies and initiatives that are driving the need to identify food safety research systems for the future and as well a perspective on the way forward. A draft report entitled "Food Safety Systems for the Future" was shared with AF members for comments.

² <https://www.who.int/food-safety/international-food-safety-conference/>

³ https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/resources/chairpersons-summary-addis-ababa-en.pdf?sfvrsn=865efacf_6



Luis Vivas-Alegre (EC) highlighted that any comments on Horizon 2020 or on Horizon Europe may be directly provided to the H2020 / Horizon Europe Programme Committees and/or National Contact Points⁴. ES reminded about the ongoing update of the Art36 organisations list and that feedback on research priorities is of high importance for them. In this context, ES shared the intention to organise a workshop at national level at the end of 2019. The Chair concluded discussions emphasising that it would be useful for AF members and FPs to liaise with their national research contact points / country representative on the DG-RTD Committee.

Action 3: *AF members to provide any comments on the draft document "Food Safety Systems for the Future"⁵ directly to Pamela Byrne (pambyrne@fsai.ie) as soon as possible.*

8. EFSA's Work Planning and Strategy

Ilias Papatryfon and Sérgio Potier Rodeia presented the results of the consultation on the draft 2019 work programme (WP) and the plan for AF consultation on the draft 2020 work programme. Ilias Papatryfon further provided input on the current status of the environment scan and the new strategy development timeline, which will include the involvement of the AF.

The Chair noted the legal framework of this consultation exercise, highlighting that the main aim is to avoid duplication of work. IT noted that further consultations will be conducted at national level and that comments will be provided via written procedure. SE asked whether the characterisation criteria for ranking common work priorities have a negative or positive impact, which Ilias Papatryfon clarified was a positive one in principle, and where the "voting" on the various criteria will enable identifying the possible type of follow-up e.g. a topic with high relevance but no gaps, could be selected for discussion in a future AF meeting, while a topic of both high relevance and important data gaps could require also a joint project. ES and DK stressed the importance of the current prior consultation with selected MSs on the characterisation criteria given that, on a first look, aspects such as impact on public health and the environment do not seem to be captured in the current criteria. IE advised to consider the inclusion of criteria linked to political impact very carefully given the sensitivities this may raise. Sérgio Potier Rodeia further clarified that MS consultation is already being carried out for supporting the design of the survey (DE, IT and PT FPs) and that, before the launch of the survey, a final consultation will be done also with selected AF members. DE highlighted the importance of using the above-mentioned FPs also for the testing of the survey before its full launch. FR advised removing the numbering from ranking criteria in order to avoid any misinterpretation on their weight. The Chair added that the current design of the consultation process is intended to deliver an improved solution and further streamline the process; and that a period of 15 days will be given for submission of replies to the finalised survey.

Action 4: *EFSA to finalise the draft survey for consultation on the draft 2020 work programme and share with selected MSs the respective template for testing of characterisation criteria and overall design of the survey.*

Action 5: *In the context of the consultation on the draft 2020 work programme, AF members to provide input to the final survey for ranking common priorities of work within 15 days after launch.*

9. Update of the Advisory Forum Task Force on Independence

Dirk Detken provided a brief summary of the background leading to the development of the MoU identifying common principles to ensure independence of MS representatives, highlighting the EC support to this initiative as discussed within the DG-SANTE TF on DoIs/CoIs. It was noted that the document continued to evolve until a week before the AF meeting and that the latest version was meanwhile shared with AF members via DMS.

⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/ncp>

⁵ <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21237124>



IT noted that the document will be further evaluated at national level and feedback will be provided via written procedure. ES mentioned that a pre-final version of the document needs to be received well ahead of the 72nd AF meeting, for the purpose of collection of input and before any possible endorsement. ES further explained that such time requirements derive from the formal designation of the document as a “MoU”, and that a less formal procedure would not be required if the document would be renamed e.g. as AF an “Declaration of Commitment”. BE asked who is supposed to sign the document and GR expressed to concur with the views of ES since the same formal procedures apply at national level (i.e. obligation to consult with other national bodies). The Chair indicated that the ES proposal for renaming the document would be considered internally and that members are provided a period of two weeks for submission of written comments. The Chair further clarified that the document is to be signed by AF members and that the approach to be followed should not require endorsement by other national bodies.

Action 6: AF members to provide any comments on the updated draft of the MoU on Independence⁶ by Tuesday 23.04.2019 to EFSA (GianLuca.BONDURI@efsa.europa.eu).

10. Proposed way forward on the activities of the AF Discussion Group on Capacity Building

Barbara Gallani presented current “Capacity Building activities in EFSA”, with focus on the EU-FORA programme and partnering grants. Luis Vivas-Alegre (EC) provided an update on BTSF RA activities.

DE presented a proposal for development of specific activities towards strengthening risk assessment capacity building in the EU. The presentation started with a brief reference to the key objectives of the previous capacity building reflection paper and included a concrete two-year plan that aims to achieve five main objectives: further develop the EU-FORA programme; increase collaboration on capacity building with other EU Institutions / Agencies; map existing capacity building activities related to risk assessment for food safety in MSs; explore opportunities related to existing postgraduate training activities; and draft guidelines for an European Risk Assessment Label Programme.

The Chair acknowledged the work done to date by the current AFDGCB and asked members to express interest in participating in the activities of the re-scoped AFDGCB. In addition to current members (DE, FR, IE, NO, PT, ES, NL) several other MSs (IT, GR, DK, HU, SE, AT, HR, FI, UK) expressed interest in plenary to also join the DG, which will not be entitled to receive financial support for physical meetings from EFSA. HU requested the inclusion of data sciences in the scope of the capacity building risk assessment activities envisaged. SE stressed the relatively short timeline for conducting the ambitious work foreseen and DK added that the level of ambition should be constructively considered. BG highlighted possible duplication with already ongoing activities at academic level, such as the Veterinary Medicine Postgraduate Degree. DE noted their willingness to continue leading the DG. The Chair concluded that the proposal has the support from the plenary and that the DG should revise the current ToR for approval at the 72nd AF meeting. Members who have not yet expressed interest to join the DG, if meanwhile interested, should do so via written procedure.

Action 7: BfR to send to EFSA the draft revised ToR of the AFDGCB, for possible comments and endorsement at the 72nd AF meeting; and collect expressions of interest from all members interested in joining the AFDGCB.

11. Risk Assessment activities

■ 11a - EFSA Mandates

Guilhem de Seze and Juliane Kleiner updated AF members on the list of EFSA mandates shared for the period of 14.11.2018–14.03.2019. Special note was made to the new EC mandate addressed to

⁶ <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelihood.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21222125>



FIP aiming the prioritisation of the safety assessment of 450 substances now without a migration limit. EFSA will consult the MS on the list of substances in the coming weeks. The full list of EFSA current mandates is publicly available⁷.

■ 11b - MS risk assessment plans

Guilhem de Seze and Juliane Kleiner noted key entries in the database on MS risk assessment plans for period between 14.11.2018–14.03.2019 and relevant to current EFSA's work. The Chair invited MSs to use R4EU database proactively and share their national risk assessment plans in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of work. ES informed about the intention to organise a webinar for risk assessors at national level in order to stimulate the sharing of information on MS risk assessment plans.

■ 11c - Upcoming public consultations

Guilhem de Seze debriefed the plenary on the upcoming public consultations for the draft scientific opinions on DRVs for chloride and sodium and on the appropriate age for the introduction of complementary feeding into an infant's diet. Juliane Kleiner informed the plenary that: as of 2019, all CONTAM opinions are subject to public consultations; public consultations on Perfluoroalkylated substances and Ochratoxin A and aflatoxins will be launched; the public consultation on the guidance on threshold of toxicological concern approach and the public consultation on the draft guidance on commodity risk assessment for the evaluation of high-risk plants dossiers (as announced at the 70th AF meeting) are already closed.

Information on open and upcoming EFSA's public consultations⁸ is available on EFSA's website. MSs are invited to provide comments and encouraged to forward information to other MS organisations.

12. Engagement & Communications update

Barbara Gallani provided an update on recent engagement and communication activities, including main outcomes of the recent Communication Experts Network (CEN) meeting, the EFSA 2019 campaign "#EUandMyFood", Dietary Reference Values (DRVs) analytics and the chemical mixtures (MixTox) interactive infographic. Barbara highlighted the importance of EFSA's new Social Science Roadmap in broadening the understanding of whom we deliver science to, how topics EFSA works on are perceived, and how to meet societal expectations on the EU food safety system.

NL advised to set up a greater level of collaboration for further developing the Social Science Roadmap and that a platform of MS experts could be created to conduct thorough discussions and obtain fruitful deliverables. The UK congratulated EFSA for the great work done so far, advising to build a section where lessons learned, best practices and success stories can be shared. FR briefed members on the role and place for social science activities at ANSES, with mention of the "Paris Risk Group", a network that brings together social scientists working for (or with) organisations involved in risk assessment and management⁹. Barbara Gallani acknowledged the work conducted by the Paris Risk Group and further clarified that social sciences, in the EFSA Roadmap context, go beyond risk communication. She noted that the CEN, although a very supportive starting point for the sharing of information and experiences on consumer insights, has communication experts as representatives rather than social scientists.

13. Cooperation activities

■ 13a - Proposal for the creation of a European Toxicology Programme

FR presented a proposal, developed jointly by ANSES and a number of partners in Europe, for the creation of a European Toxicology Programme (EU-TP), a standing and permanent programme to define priorities based on the needs of risk assessment bodies and finance the development and

⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/ListOfQuestionsNoLogin?0>

⁸ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/calls/consultations>

⁹ <https://parisriskgroup.anses.fr>



execution of toxicological research and studies for generation of data on agents of interest for public health. The general objective of the EU-TP is to act at the interface between public health and research by contributing to a better knowledge of the potential impact on human health of agents that already exist or for new products and innovations. The produced results and data, which would be publicly available, would then be considered in risk assessment and therefore serve subsequent risk management and public policies.

Luis Vivas-Alegre (EC) recommended that, because of the strong research and innovation policy context of the proposal, countries who find it relevant should communicate this as a research priority in Horizon Europe via their representatives in Shadow Programme Committee (i.e. the National Contact Points¹⁰). IE and NL expressed support to this initiative and willingness to sign the document. Finally, the Chair welcomed the proactiveness of MSs in influencing the future research agenda.

Action 8: AF members to look at the latest version of the French proposal for a European Toxicology Programme¹¹, after which, countries interested in supporting the proposal (even signing the letter - see example of signature page¹² provided by France) should inform on this as a research priority for Horizon Europe through the Shadow Programme Committee / National Contact Points¹⁰.

■ 13b - Update on the RAKIP Project & inter-related activities

DK provided a brief update on the RAKIP (Risk Assessment Modelling and Knowledge Integration Platforms) joint project between DK (DTU-Food), DE (BfR) and FR (ANSES). Didier Verloo briefly presented an integrated overview of the EFSA/BfR model repository, the Knowledge Junction and the R4EU platform and its interconnections with the RAKIP project. The Chair thanked DK and partners for the presentation of the RAKIP project, suggesting that EFSA joins as partner the initiative; and acknowledged the importance of open-source platforms for sharing of evidence and their inter-connection.

■ 13c - Update on Artificial Intelligence (AI) activities

NO provided a short update on the current state-of-play of the pilot project "Watson to Sherlock", which aims to use artificial intelligence in order to further improve the automation process for an integrated approach to literature search and relevance screening. Set under the AF, the group now consists of DE, SE, PL, HU and NO, with EFSA as an Observer. NO noted that the group will soon share the most recent report on activities as soon as ready with AF members.

Didier Verloo presented the project "Joining forces at EU level on the implementation of Artificial Intelligence". SE asked whether discussions on this matter have already started with ENVI Agencies to find synergies. HU added that food (data) science is less trendy than other areas in food safety and the key investment ahead is to change such trend. NL noted that this topic is very technical, and thus the AF might not be the right forum to provide the best advice.

The Chair concluded that it will be important to progress further with both initiatives keeping a close look into possible synergies and avoid overlaps.

Action 9: NO to share with AF members the most recent report on the activities of the project "Watson to Sherlock".

14. Strategic Theme - Animal disease surveillance

■ 14a – Introduction

The Chair introduced the theme, noting that discussions held in November 2018 during the last AF meeting led to the decision to include in AF meetings a strategic discussion on a theme that would be of common priority for both EFSA and MSs. For this AF meeting the theme chosen was "animal

¹⁰ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/ncp>

¹¹ <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21268764>

¹² <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21268853>



disease surveillance". The Chair further informed that the theme was identified as a result of the analysis of the input provided by AF members to the EFSA 2018 draft work programme (as explained by Sérgio under Agenda item 8a) and that, despite not ranking on the top 5, the theme was chosen considering also the high priority it had under the current Romanian Presidency. Nikolaus Kriz then briefed participants on the sequence of topics to be discussed, highlighting the importance and key challenges ahead on animal disease surveillance under the wider context of animal health prevention and control.

■ 14b - Animal health priorities in Romania

Chesnoiu Teodora (RO) briefed AF members about current animal health priorities in Romania. The Chair highlighted that the control of African Swine Fever (ASF) in RO is tightly linked to the RO social system. Nikolaus Kriz emphasised the idea by mentioning that risk communication towards the right target audiences plays a vital role in the control of this disease. BG brought to attention of the plenary the rapid spread of ASF. Despite efforts to establish a 50 km buffer zone clear of wild boars next to the Romanian border, the disease still penetrated 150 km inside the country, with 7 cases of ASF already recorded. Backyard farming was highlighted as a major factor impacting on the spread of the disease, and while eliminating domestic pigs may prove useful in the control the disease, such measure will not lead to full eradication of ASF. PL informed that, due to the severity of the problem, the military services have been involved at national level for the purpose of eradication of the wild boar population. BE concurred that public awareness is one of the most important actions to be prioritised and that Belgium hunters were against EFSA's recommendation to decrease the number of wild boars per square kilometre. The Chair noted that ASF can be human mediated and that there is already a recorded case. EE noted that changing the minds of the people about ASF is the main challenge, highlighting that extensive wild boar hunting had a significant impact and that, at national level, they are satisfied with their ASF eradication methodologies, in fact a successes story in domestic pigs.

■ 14c - Sigma project: sharing data on animal health among MSs

Nikolaus Kriz presented EFSA's SIGMA project. MK raised the question on whether the SIGMA project might be overlapping with already existing projects in terms of objectives and activities. The Chair responded that EFSA is currently exploring how to ensure the use of data generated by such similar projects.

■ 14d G-RAID project: Generic Approaches for Risk Assessment of Infectious Disease Introduction

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Clazien de Vos, Senior Researcher on Veterinary Risk Analysis from the Wageningen Bioveterinary Research (belonging to the Wageningen University and Research), as representative from the consortium leader of the G-RAID project. The G-RAID project consists of a consortium of six European veterinary institutes (from NL, UK, SE, FI, DK, ES) working on risk assessment and co-funded by an EFSA Partnering Grant. Clazien the Vos presented the main objectives and results of the G-RAID project, namely how it will allow exploring opportunities for harmonization of generic risk assessment approaches through the exchange of expertise and experience among partners. Seven generic risk assessment tools developed in four countries are being compared with respect to objectives, inputs, algorithms and outputs.

■ 14e - Discussion

The Chair opened the floor for discussion, inviting participants to raise any additional questions to presenters and provide general comments on their experience with this thematic discussion. FR briefed AF members on a wide epidemiological surveillance system ongoing at national level – *Plateforme ESA* - available on a dedicated website¹³, which is a collaborative initiative between ten private and public sector partners. SE welcomed the initiative for this type of strategic discussions and suggested compiling and sharing the input prepared by members for this agenda item, including the one that might not have been expressed in plenary. NL also welcomed the thematic discussions

¹³ <https://www.plateforme-esa.fr/>



and raised the suggestion to link them with the mandates of the relevant EFSA's Scientific Networks. The Chair thanked the input and suggestions made, which will be followed up after the meeting, and finally confirmed the intention to address the more general recommendations in upcoming thematic discussions.

Action 10: EFSA to compile written feedback prepared by AF members for the thematic discussion on animal disease surveillance and share the respective summary after the AF meeting.

Action 11: In upcoming thematic discussions, EFSA to collect, compile and share ahead of AF meetings the input prepared by AF members, including, if relevant, requests to the respective EFSA Scientific Network.

15. Data collection activities

■ 15a - Metadata analysis of Cyprus EU-MENU project

Cyprus provided a brief overview of key activities carried out by the State General Laboratory, with focus on the EU-MENU project, highlighting that the project has been completed and that users need to convert data from FoodEx2 to FoodEx1. To this end, the State General Laboratory external collaborator developed two tools in order to address the above task, which have been shared with EFSA's Data Unit. Cyprus is willing to share the above tools with other MS.

■ 15b Update on Task Force (TF) on Data Collection and Data Modelling

HU briefed the plenary with a summary of main outcomes of the TF meeting, occurred the day before the AF (02.04.2019). The Chair highlighted that EFSA is spending significant resources on interpreting unstructured data and invited MSs towards a reduction on the number of existing data models. The Chair further mentioned that MSs should learn from EUROSTAT on how to best interact with national organisations delivering statistics and as well on the architectures of different data models across the EU, highlighting that EFSA will further engage with EUROSTAT through the EC and that, as of 2020, more resources will be allocated to these activities. Finally, the Chair acknowledge the good work of the TF, suggesting further consultations with MSs on how to best invest in data collection and modelling.

HU expressed gratitude for EFSA's support to the work of the TF work, mentioning that the current focus of one work stream is parallel computing. ES expressed desire for the establishment of more concrete short-term goals; highlighted that engagement with the EC is of high priority; and expressed the wish to be included in the TF.

16. AOB

■ 16a - Update on the EuroCigua Project

ES provided an update on the EuroCigua project. The presentation focused on the main objectives and results achieved to date. Marta Hugas raised the question on whether results from the

EuroCigua Project could be included in EFSA's annual report on zoonoses, since cases of human poisoning have been reported in FR and DE. ES clarified that Ciguatera poisoning is normally reported as a marine biotoxin and that including it in the EFSA zoonoses annual reports might create a panic reaction amongst the public, noting also that the way forward is to focus on the collection of data from imported fish. The UK noted that, so far, only some countries reported Ciguatera poisoning cases; raised the question on whether a wider spread can occur; and advised to focus on early indicators such as water salinity and temperature to find seasonal patterns. ES clarified that a possible spread might occur and that endemic cases should be investigated in the future since they are underreported. ES further clarified that early indicators are already being looked at, but greater focus should be placed on them.



■ 16b - Feedback on the Conference on “Foodborne pathogens & WGS”

FR briefly updated AF members on this recent conference¹⁴, held in Paris on 26-28.03 2019, and co-organised jointly by ANSES, BfR, DTU-Food and NIFDS (South Korea).

■ 16c – International conference “The Science of Food Safety – What’s our Future”

IE briefed the plenary on the upcoming FSAI Science Conference 2019¹⁵ which is being organised on the occasion of its 20th anniversary. The two-day event will focus on microbiological and chemical safety, featuring international and national keynote speakers, abstracts and student posters, and a social event, inviting members to register and disseminate information about the event.

■ 16d - Latin American Risk Assessment Symposium on Food Safety

DE informed the plenary about the Latin-American Risk Assessment Symposium on Food Safety¹⁶ that will take place from 27–29 August 2019, in Montevideo, Uruguay. The Symposium will be jointly organised by the Uruguayan Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (M.G.A.P) jointly with BfR, counting with the support of FAO and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

■ 16e - Global Summit on Regulatory Science 2019

Marta Hugas informed participants about the Global Summit on Regulatory Science 2019, that will focus this year on nanotechnology and take place on 24-26 September 2019 at Lago Maggiore, Italy. This annual forum enables regulators to discuss how research could be used more effectively as a tool for advancing regulatory science, food safety, medical technologies, and public health. More details on this event will be included in EFSA’s Scientific Cooperation Newsletter.

■ 16f - Upcoming AF meetings

Sérgio Potier Rodeia provided an overview to AF members on upcoming meetings in 2019 and plans for AF meetings in 2020.

End of meeting

DE asked the floor to provide a short feedback on EFSA’s EU-FORA programme, noting that contact is kept with EU-FORA’s *alumni*, that most *alumni* returned to their institutions while some joined academia and industry, and that the programme sparked new collaborations. The Chair appreciated the positive impact of the EU-FORA programme and expressed the desire to make it leaner.

The Chair thanked the Romanian Presidency, the Romanian AF member and other national representatives for all the preparatory work done for hosting the 71st AF meeting. The Chair further thanked the EC, invited speakers, and EFSA Colleagues for their input to fruitful discussions and support provided for the good running of the meeting.

¹⁴ <https://www.anses.fr/en/content/joint-scientific-conference-ansesbfrdtufoodnifds>

¹⁵ <http://foodsafety2019.com/#top>

¹⁶ <https://www.bfr-akademie.de/english/events/laras.html>



No.	Action Items
1	EFSA to bring back to the AF plenary the EU-MENU topic for broader discussion in July 2019
2	DE to share available documentation and the final report on the International Conference on Uncertainty in Risk Analysis
3	AF members to provide any comments on the draft document "Food Safety Systems for the Future" ¹⁷ directly to Pamela Byrne (pambyrne@fsai.ie) as soon as possible
4	EFSA to finalise the draft survey for consultation on the draft 2020 work programme and share with selected MSs the respective template for testing of characterisation criteria and overall design of the survey
5	In the context of the consultation on the draft 2020 work programme, AF members to provide input to the final survey for ranking common priorities of work within 15 days after launch
6	AF members to provide any comments on the updated draft of the MoU on Independence ¹⁸ by Tuesday 23.04.2019 to EFSA (GianLuca.BONDURI@efsa.europa.eu)
7	BfR to send to EFSA the draft revised ToR of the AFDGCB, for possible comments and endorsement at the 72 nd AF meeting; and collect expressions of interest from all AF members interested in joining the AFDGCB
8	AF members to look at the latest version of the French proposal for a European Toxicology Programme ¹⁹ , after which, countries interested in supporting the proposal (even signing the letter - see example of signature page ²⁰ provided by France) should inform on this as a research priority for Horizon Europe through the Shadow Programme Committee / National Contact Points
9	NO to share with AF members the most recent report on the activities of the project "Watson to Sherlock"
10	EFSA to compile written feedback prepared by AF members for the thematic discussion on animal disease surveillance and share the respective summary after the AF meeting
11	In upcoming thematic discussions, EFSA to collect, compile and share ahead of AF meetings the input prepared by AF members, including, if relevant, requests made to the respective EFSA Scientific Network

Document history

Document reference	Version 1.1
Prepared by	Deimante Bikneryte, Viktorija Krivova
Reviewed by	Sérgio Potier Rodeia
Last date modified	16.05.2019

¹⁷ <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21237124>

¹⁸ <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21222125>

¹⁹ <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21268764>

²⁰ <https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/livelink.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=21268853>