EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATE

64th Meeting of EFSA's Management Board

Minutes of the Public Session

Parma, 19 March 2014 – 9:00-16:00

Members of the Management Board Present	
Sue Davies (Chair)	Jiri Ruprich
Piergiuseppe Facelli (Vice-Chair)	András Székács
Iñaki Eguileor	Robert van Gorcom
Stella Michaelidou-Canna	Robert Vanhoorde
Jan Mousing	Piet Vanthemsche
Raymond O'Rourke	Tadeusz Wijaszka
Radu Roatiş Cheţan	

Apologies: Jaana Husu-Kallio

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority	
Bernhard Url (Executive Director)	Juliane Kleiner
Gian Luca Bonduri	Tobin Robinson
Peter De Pauw	Alberto Spagnolli
Dirk Detken	Alessia Vecchio
Marta Hugas	

Also attending:

Anthony Hardy, Chair of EFSA's Scientific Committee

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SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

The Board adopted:

- EFSA's Activity Report 2014, subject to some changes in accordance with the comments provided. In addition, in accordance with Art. 47 of the Financial Regulation, the Board adopted its assessment of the Activity Report 2014.
- EFSA's Preliminary Annual Management Plan 2016, subject to some changes in accordance with the comments provided.
- The decision appointing the new members of the Scientific Committee and eight Scientific Panels and placement of suitable candidates in the reserve list.
- EFSA's Anti-fraud strategy.
- The decision to extend the mandate of the current Stakeholder Consultative Platform until the 30th of June 2016.
- An amended list of Art. 36 organisations.
- The decision delegating to the EFSA Head of the RESU Department the power to validate the missions and trainings to be undergone by the Executive Director.

The Board exchanged views on the principles of the '**Open EFSA**' and commented its initial implementation plan, which followed up on the results of the public consultation on the discussion paper 'Transformation to an Open EFSA'.

In parallel, in depth discussion was carried out around the plan leading to the adoption of the **EFSA Strategy 2020**. The Board had an initial exchange of views on the vision, mission, values and strategic objectives that will drive EFSA's work in the coming years and provided guidance for the refinement of the overall approach, which will be further discussed in occasion of a workshop in June.

In addition, the Board noted:

- EFSA's progress report, which provided information on the activities carried out from the 1st of December 2014 to the 28th of February 2015.
- The feedback from the Chair of the Audit Committee.
- EFSA's 2015 budget execution and transfers.

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The Chair opened the public session of the 64th Management Board meeting by welcoming the Board members, Executive Director, Chair of the Scientific Committee, EFSA Management Team and staff members. The Chair welcomed Robert Vanhoorde, who had been recently appointed as the alternate representative of the European Commission at the Management Board.
2. The Chair invited the Board members to declare possible interests in addition to those already declared with their Annual Declaration of Interests. The Chair of the Scientific Committee informed the Board that he will leave the meeting when discussion is held on the appointment of the members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels, since his name could be among those proposed for appointment. Robert van Gorcom said that among the candidates for posts in the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels there were experts from his institute. Hence he will refrain from making any comments with regards to those experts.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

3. The agenda was adopted with the addition of an item under Any Other Business: "Decision on the delegation of powers conferred to the Management Board regarding staff matters related to the Executive Director". In addition, the Chair suggested including an update on comments received from some NGOs with regards to the work carried out in the field of Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC).
4. The Chair invited the Board and the audience present at the meeting to watch a video published on the previous days, which explains the role and activities of the Management Board. The video is available online at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPm9AFZKets.

Item 3: EFSA progress report

5. The Executive Director (ED) gave an overview of the activities carried out from the 1st of December 2014 to the 28th of February 2015. In particular, he highlighted: the work carried out in the field of antimicrobial resistance, the publication of the 2013 EU summary report on zoonoses (in collaboration with the ECDC), the adoption of the opinions on consumption of raw milk and risks and benefits of fish consumption, the urgent request on Xylella fastidiosa, and the report on the introduction of the avian influenza virus H5N8 in the EU territory, which was drafted in collaboration with the Member States and the EU reference laboratories. Juliane Kleiner (*ad interim* Head of the REPRO Department) gave an update on the implementation of the scientific activities aimed at the adoption of the opinion on the safety of caffeine, which is foreseen by the end of April 2015. The ED underlined the launch of the micro-site for EFSA's Second Scientific Conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together", which will be held in Milan from the 14th to 16th of October 2015 in the context of EXPO 2015. Online registrations are welcome until the 15th of May 2015 via the following web-address www.efsaexpo2015.eu. In the area of institutional engagement and stakeholder relations, the ED briefly reported on the public hearing on the TTC approach, stakeholder event on caffeine, debate on pesticides epidemiological studies and the meetings held with the Cabinet of the Commissioner Andriukaitis, the ENVI Committee of the European Parliament and the European Commission services (DGs SANTE, CNECT, DIGIT, ENV and GROW). A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.
6. The Chair of the Scientific Committee complemented EFSA's report presenting the scientific work that is being carried out in the areas of cross-cutting science and environmental risk assessment. He also anticipated the forthcoming publication of

an editorial on the interconnections between the Prometheus project and the work of the Scientific Committee working groups on 'Uncertainty', 'Weight of evidence' and 'Biological relevance'.

7. Questions and comments were received on:
    - The period of time elapsing from the adoption of guidance documents and their review.
        - The Chair of the Scientific Committee said that the review of guidance documents should in principle be carried out every three years on average, but if new scientific literature becomes available ahead of the planned period, the review process should be triggered without delays.
    - The importance of involving the national reference laboratories in the scientific cooperation activities promoted by EFSA.
        - EFSA already entertains collaboration relations with the reference laboratories in the Member States, which however could be further enhanced with the promotion of a more systematic approach, possibly with the involvement and support of the European Commission.
    - If and how the new toolbox to rank risks will support assessors in prioritising their scientific work.
        - The tool had been developed to categorize and prioritise risks within food commodities and it aims at harmonising and increasing consistency in the approach to prioritise risks.
    - EFSA's position with regards to the European Ombudsman's comments on the need for EFSA to enhance the scrutiny level for the detection of possible conflicts of interest of experts employed in academic institutions.
        - EFSA had planned a meeting with the European Ombudsman to discuss this issue, which raises considerations related to the complex evolution of the European universities and the fact that nowadays they are set-up with private-public partnership, spin-off models, endowments, etc. EFSA will respond to the Ombudsman following that meeting.
    - How EFSA will respond to the criticisms of certain NGOs, which say that the Authority did not make use of all available evidence/data on TTC, or that EFSA only involves experts who have a particular approach towards TTC.
        - In the field of TTC, EFSA closely collaborated with other EU and international institutions (among others, the FDA, WHO, EMA and ECHA) and pursued the dialogue with stakeholders with the organisation of an event held in parallel with the public consultation. EFSA appreciates that certain stakeholders could have different views, but the Authority needs to strictly base its work on scientific evidence.
    - The scope of the high-level event that EFSA plans to organise jointly with FAO.
        - The event will provide the opportunity to strengthen the scientific cooperation between the two institutions and also trigger discussion on how food safety can contribute to food security, biodiversity and sustainable agriculture.
8. The Board noted EFSA's progress report and asked the ED to convey their gratitude to EFSA's scientific experts and staff for the excellent work they performed in the reporting period.

Item 4: Activity Report 2014

9. The ED highlighted that 2014 was a year of changes: a new EU institutional landscape, the appointment of a new Executive Director, renewal of some Scientific Panels, organisational changes within the Authority and the launch of transformational projects. Alberto Spagnolli (ED Office and *ad interim* Head of Communications Department) gave an overview of the activities that EFSA carried out in the fields of scientific advice and risk assessment, assessment of regulated products, data collection and scientific cooperation, as well as communications. In terms of outputs, whilst the number of publications resulted sensibly higher than initially planned, the number of scientific outputs was lower, mainly due to the aggregation of a plurality of questions in single outputs and the receipt of a lower number of questions overall. The dossiers in 'stop-the-clock' status increased slightly, especially in the fields of food enzymes and re-evaluation of flavourings. Activities are being carried out to decrease the number of dossier in 'stop-the-clock' via clearer and more exhaustive application guidance documents. The number of questions in the 'backlog', which mostly include dossiers in the area of MRL, has decreased by more than 200 questions. The number of dossier in the backlog has negatively impacted on the timeliness indicator. However, EFSA is putting in place strategies aimed at gradually reduce the backlog until its full absorption in the coming years. In the field of risk communication, all targets were exceeded. Among the main outcomes in this area, Alberto Spagnolli highlighted the new communication approach aimed at developing more thematic areas, shorter and clearer news and a more user-friendly website. In addition, he outlined the activities carried out in 2014 for the implementation of the multiannual transformational initiatives (e.g. the PaRMa and MATRIX projects, data warehouse, talent management, STEP 2018, etc.). Concluding, he gave an overview of the resource consumption and drew the attention of the Board to the efficiency savings obtained in the IT area and for the organisation of meetings, which allowed a higher investment in scientific cooperation. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.
10. The Chair invited the Chair of the Audit Committee to comment on the overall achievement level of the 2014 work-plan. He said that the Audit Committee had discussed it on the previous day and that it found the report exhaustive, well structured and indicating a high degree of achievement of the 2014 work-plan. Hence, the Committee suggested to the Board to adopt EFSA's Annual Report 2014 with the comments proposed in the 'Management Board assessment'.
11. Questions and comments were received on:
    - The different wording in the abstract and conclusion of the opinion on bisphenol A, which was also reflected in the press release published on this subject.
        - EFSA will have a closer look at the BPA opinion and respond to the comment in the following days.
    - The functioning of the reputation barometer.
        - The activities for the development of this tool are being carried out with the support of an external consultant. The tool is not yet functioning, but EFSA and the consultant are looking closely to examples from other agencies and national institutions to get inspiration and promote a harmonised approach. The members of the Advisory Forum Communications Working Group are engaged in the activities around this project.
    - The amount of time needed by EFSA to assess regulated products.
        - EFSA's work in the area of regulated products shall follow the rules embedded in the regulatory framework, which in terms of deadlines

shows substantial differences depending on the kind of product. In fact, if in certain cases the deadlines are very stringent (months or even weeks), in other cases the assessment process can take a year or more. EFSA did its utmost to respect the legal deadlines and in the vast majority of cases it succeeded.

- The importance of the work carried out in the field of infectious diseases (e.g. African swine fever, Ebola, hepatitis A, etc.).
- The good structure of the report, which makes use of the harmonised template suggested to the EU agencies, provides complete and concise information and presents separate progress indicators for each activity. All this contributes to an enhancement in transparency terms.
- Some indicators for the multiannual activities might deserve some revision, since not all of them seem to be under the direct control of EFSA.
  - EFSA had carried out an overall revision of the multiannual indicators, which had been included in the Single Programming Document 2015-2017 adopted by the Board in December 2014.
- The need to further invest in methodological activities aimed at decreasing the number of dossier in 'stop-the-clock' status.
  - EFSA is working to review and improve the guidance documents with the aim to support applicants in preparing more complete dossiers, which would result in a limited use of the 'stop-the-clock' tool for the receipt of additional information and data.
- What are the main reasons for EFSA's under-performance in the area of regulated products in terms of outputs number, and what are the plans to reduce the backlog of questions?
  - The weak results shown by the key progress indicator (KPI) in the area of regulated products are mostly attributable to the backlog in the area of MRL, for which EFSA had planned the assessment of 135 questions in 2014 whilst the actual capacity showed to be limited to the approx. 80 questions. In order to gradually reduce the backlog, EFSA is planning to increase the resources allocated to the Pesticides Unit by eight staff members, with a view to absorb that backlog by the end of 2018.
- The need to highlight more prominently the importance of the activities carried out in self-tasking and those in the field of emerging risks.
  - EFSA will revise the Annual Report accordingly.
- The need to explain better the role of the Management Board in the development of the EFSA Strategy.
  - EFSA will revise the Annual Report accordingly.

12. The Management Board adopted EFSA's Activity Report 2014, subject to some changes in accordance with the comments provided. In addition, in accordance with Art. 47 of the Financial Regulation, the Board adopted its assessment of the Activity Report 2014.

Item 5: Open EFSA

13. The Url gave a short overview of the activities that EFSA had carried out over the years to enhance transparency. In particular, he highlighted the 'Transparency conference' held in 2013 and the discussion paper 'Transformation to an Open EFSA' published in 2014. The conference gave to EFSA the opportunity to reflect with stakeholders around openness and transparency and the ideas emerged in that context had been integrated in the discussion paper. While developing the

discussion paper EFSA wished to enlarge the dialogue with stakeholders including 'engagement' among the strategic options to be considered to pursue a higher level of openness. The discussion had been published for public consultation and EFSA received a substantial number of feedbacks from stakeholders. The comments received were analysed and a comprehensive report was published. EFSA had grouped the actions proposed by both the Authority and the stakeholders in categories. Among them: 'Actions already in place' (23% of the total n. of proposed actions), 'Actions planned to be delivered by 2017' (22%) and 'Actions to be submitted to cost/benefit analysis' (20%). The latter groups actions which deserve a deeper analysis ultimately aimed at giving an indication on whether it would be worthwhile to implement them. The analysis would be based on the assessment of the expected costs and benefits of the actions, who would bear the various types of costs in terms of resources and time needed for their implementation, and the impact they would have on the risk assessment processes. The ED stressed that the transformation of EFSA into a more open organisation will be one of the cornerstones of the EFSA Strategy 2020. Concluding, he noted that EFSA could potentially become a frontrunner in Europe entering new grounds of risk assessment openness and transparency. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

14. The Board addressed to the ED the following questions and comments:

- The scope and extent of Open EFSA would need a clearer definition.
- The actions clustered in the different categories should be further reviewed to verify if their implementation can be brought forward compared to the proposed timing.
- The Chair said that in previous occasions some members of the Board had expressed a sceptical view towards the idea of having pre-submission meetings with applicants. However, this measure was included among those to be assessed. A Board member stressed that on this subject the Board didn't establish a shared view, and that it would be worth assessing the costs and benefits of holding pre-submission meetings.
- EFSA should indicate more clearly what deliverables will be achieved by when.
- The comments received with the public consultation by the different categories of stakeholders sometimes suggest pursuing opposite directions. Hence, EFSA should adopt a careful and balanced approach in carrying out the assessment of the various options.
- EFSA should adopt a step-wise approach in implementing measures aimed at increasing public engagement and openness. A certain number of the proposed measures intrinsically imply higher costs in terms of time and resources, which could have an impact on EFSA's capacity to deliver on time.
- Among others, Open EFSA should aim at increasing public trust in EFSA's work.
- The level of participation in the public consultation shows that stakeholders are very much interested in the subjects of openness and engagement. For the implementation of the Open EFSA, the Authority can build on the results already achieved with previous initiatives pursuing a wider openness of the organisation. The integration in the process of reflections around public engagement put the Authority in a pioneering position with regards to the openness of public institutions.

15. The ED thanked the Board for the overall support to the initiative and the constructive remarks. He said to appreciate that at this stage the 'Open EFSA' could be perceived as not concrete enough. However, he highlighted several on-going activities (e.g. public consultations, stakeholder events, etc.) and developing projects (e.g. Prometheus, data warehouse, etc.), which already contribute to the initiative. Other actions are still in a conceptual phase and will be carried out on a project-by-project and step-wise approach, with pilot activities when suitable and cost-benefit analysis before their implementation. EFSA plans to have the outcomes of the cost-benefit analysis available by the end of 2016, meaning that by that date some activities will be implemented, whilst others are in a planning phase. EFSA will outline the initiative better and address it in the Strategy 2020, as well as in the Strategy execution plan. The ED underlined that the main goals of the initiative are the improvement of the overall quality and availability of information and data used for EFSA's outputs. These goals will be pursued respecting the legal framework and addressing societal expectations. He acknowledged that the initiative won't be implemented without costs, but that EFSA is carrying out a comprehensive efficiency gain programme to free up resources to be reallocated in the new approaches.

16. The Chair concluded saying that the Board supported the overall approach, but that the document submitted to their attention shall not be considered as final, since further reflections were needed on the actual categorisation of activities. The ED proposed to revise the document for the following Board meeting, when it could be integrated in the wider discussion around EFSA's Strategy 2020 in the framework of the planned Board workshop. The Board agreed with the proposal of the Executive Director.

Item 6: EFSA Strategy 2020

17. The ED introduced the item referring to the expectations that the Board expressed at the meeting in December 2014 with regard to the content and structure of the Strategy: Create coherent strategy from diverse functional roadmaps, secure EFSA focus on public health and envision EFSA beyond 2020. EFSA carried out an integrated analysis of the DG SANTE goals and food-related mission, EFSA's Founding Regulation, Single Programming Document 2015-2017, charters of EFSA's programmes and projects (e.g. Information programme, Methodology programme, Prometheus and Talent management), discussion paper on Open EFSA and the stakeholders' feedback from the public consultation, input of the European Parliament ENVI Committee to the ED and the G8 Open Government Partnership. Based on this, the Authority prepared two raw documents for discussion with the Board: a first document reflecting EFSA's ambitions in terms of transparency, openness and engagement with the public, and a second one outlining the rationale and the sources for EFSA's vision, mission, core values and strategic objectives. Following the discussion with the Board, EFSA will prepare a workshop on the EFSA Strategy 2020, which is planned in June in occasion of the Board meeting. Hence, the draft Strategy document will be published for public consultation. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

18. The Board made the following comments:

- The 'Highest scientific standards' and 'independence' should also be included among the core values.
  - EFSA's traditional values will continue driving the work of the Authority. It will be made clearer in the Strategy document.
- The vision probably embeds a too broad spectrum for EFSA alone, since the Authority could not be in the position to pursue it without the contribution

of the other actors of the European food safety system (e.g. Commission, Member States and EU Parliament).
  - Further reflections on the vision of the Authority will be carried out in view of the June workshop with the Management Board.

- 'Safer food for European citizens' could lead to the interpretation that nowadays the food is not safe enough.
  - Food products are allowed to circulate on the market when the present legislation considers them safe enough. Still, the vision could maintain the objective of pursuing an even safer food through the decrease of the residual risks that the managers accept when designing the legislative framework.
- The suggestion of having a relatively short document to support EFSA's Strategy 2020 is very much welcome.
- The Strategy document should include a paragraph on EFSA users and stakeholders. Similarly, a paragraph could be added on the scientific cooperation activities carried out in collaboration with the international organisations.
- The statement on EFSA's mission could be limited to the first sentence of the proposed text.
- The Strategy should promote the reflection around the long-term sustainability of the current scientific advisory system.
- EFSA's mission needs to be aligned to the requirements of the EU legislator, who described it in art. 22 of the Regulation 178/2002.
  - EFSA is committed to pursue the application of the regulatory framework as the EU legislator designed it. However, within this framework, EFSA would propose to highlight the specific objectives it plans to pursue over the next five years, perhaps also looking beyond the values of independence, responsiveness and transparency described in EFSA's Founding Regulation.
- A clear definition of 'openness' would be needed before its inclusion among EFSA's core values and strategic objectives.
  - A clearer definition will be provided. The ED reflected on the opportunity to add values to those already embedded in the legal framework, which would promote a more innovative approach in pursuing the overall objectives of better science and better protection of public health.
- Reflections are needed on whether 'Open EFSA' needs to be considered a tool to achieve EFSA's objectives, or it should be seen as an objective on its own.
  - The ED said that in his view 'Open EFSA' should not be considered as an objective on its own, but as a tool to make EFSA faster, cheaper, more responsive, more innovative and open to the engagement with the public.
- The analysis of risks and challenges should be moved more upfront in the Strategy document.
- EFSA's activities in the fields of environmental risk assessment and animal and plant health should be reflected into EFSA's vision.
  - EFSA acknowledges the central importance of the activities it carries out in the above-mentioned scientific fields. In preparation of the June workshop, EFSA will further reflect on the phrasing of its vision, which needs to get the balance right between what it

considers being its core (i.e. safe food) and the tiers around this (i.e. environmental, animal and plant health).

- The timeline proposed for the public consultation would seem a bit unfortunate, since it will be held during the summer period.
  - The pubic consultation would remain open for two months in July and August. Like that, it is believed that the holiday habits of both the northern and southern European countries would be addressed allowing time enough to everyone to comment EFSA's Strategy. On the other hand, the suspension of activities during summer would imply an unavoidable postponement of the adoption of the Strategy, which however remains an option that could be considered.

19. Concluding, the Chair noted that the Board supported the overall structure of the Strategy and the approach used to identify the core values, which however will need to be better framed in the context of what EFSA's purpose is within the current legal framework. Finally, she invited the Board members to further discuss the issue in occasion of the workshop to be organised back-to-back with the Board June meeting.

Item 7: Preliminary Annual Management Plan, Budget & Establishment Plan 2016

20. Alessia Vecchio, *ad interim* Head of the Resource and Support Department, introduced the item highlighting that the Preliminary Annual Management Plan, Budget and Establishment Plan 2016 (hereinafter PAMP 2016) was drafted along the lines traced by the Single Programming Document 2015-2017, which the Board adopted in December 2014. She underlined that although the workload level is foreseen to remain stable in 2016, EFSA will have to cope with the availability of less resources in terms of staff (2% reduction of statutory staff compared to 2015) and a budget that in nominal terms remains at the previous year level. Among others, in 2016 EFSA will give priority to the further development of risk assessment methodologies, technical guidance documents, reduction of the backlog, strengthening of the EU risk assessment community, review of the operation of the Advisory Forum, measurement of EFSA's reputation and impact, and a new framework for stakeholder relations. With reference to the multiannual projects, Alessia Vecchio mentioned, among others, Prometheus, Matrix, Open EFSA, Information programme, Talent management, EFSA Journal and STEP 2018. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

21. The Board addressed the following questions and comments:

- The transfer of human resources from the horizontal administrative tasks to the scientific core business activities was welcomed, especially in view of the plan to invest more resources for the absorption of the backlog.
- The activities planned to be carried out for the reduction of the backlog in 2016 should be described more prominently in the PAMP 2016. In addition, a specific Key Progress Indicator should be developed to monitor the achievements in this area.
  - The activities planned to reduce the backlog will be described better and a specific KPI will be included in the Single Programming Document 2016-2018.
- EFSA needs to ensure the right balance between the activities carried out in the fields of general risk assessment and assessment of regulated products.

- How the EFSA Journal contributes to the achievement of the strategic objective of 'Trust'.
  - The Journal is also a tool to increase the outreach of EFSA to the wider scientific community. In this respect, the Journal contributes to the trust in EFSA's activities within the scientific world.
- The PAMP 2016 should give more emphasis to the activities in the area of emerging risks. In addition, the expression 'customer-oriented approach' was felt as somehow misleading. Hence, it was suggested to revise the wording used to describe the activities in the area of regulated products.
  - The PAMP 2016 will be revised to address the above-mentioned comments.
- Information was asked on the difference between the number of technical reports in 2015 and 2016.
  - The lower number of technical reports in 2016 is mainly due to a re-classification of certain scientific outputs.
- Explanation was requested on how the impact score of articles dedicated to EFSA is calculated.
  - EFSA will provide detailed information to the Board member.

22. The Management Board adopted EFSA's Preliminary Annual Management Plan, Budget and Establishment Plan 2016, subject to some changes in accordance with the comments provided.

Item 8: Appointment of the members of the Scientific Committee and eight Scientific Panels

23. The Chair reminded to the members that the Board role is to oversee the correct application of the selection procedure rather than commenting individual experts. She asked Tobin Robinson (*ad interim* Head of the Science Strategy and Coordination Department) to introduce the item.

24. Tobin Robinson explained that EFSA had received a total of 935 applications (an increase of 7.3% compared to 2012), 807 of which resulted eligible following the preliminary screening. Each application was assessed by internal evaluators in accordance with the selection criteria specified in the call for expression of interest. Based on the assessment score, candidates were divided into two groups: above the threshold (i.e. >66) and below the threshold (i.e. ≤66). Independent external evaluators assessed a sample of 10% of the eligible applications. In 16 cases the comparison between the internal and external evaluation showed a discrepancy higher than 20 points. Hence, with the presence of observers from the Management Board, the European Parliament and the European Commission, internal and external evaluators held a meeting to resolve these cases. The Declaration of Interests (DoI) of all candidates above the threshold was assessed against EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Process and its implementing rules. Following the screening of the DoIs, 380 applications were shortlisted. Some statistics were presented: 47% of the selected experts applied for their first mandate; 32% for a second mandate and 21% for a third mandate. Two thirds of the selected experts are men and one third women. 70% of these experts have an age above 50, whilst the remaining 30% have an age up to 50. EFSA will contact the newly appointed experts asking them to confirm their availability and update their DoI. The list of new Panel members is expected to be published in spring, once the above-mentioned procedure is accomplished. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

25. The Commission and the Board representative who participated in the selection process as observers declared that EFSA had applied the selection rules in a rigorous and sound manner.

26. Questions and comments were received on:

- The average age of the selected experts. In particular, concerns were expressed with reference to the long-term scientific sustainability of EFSA and the need to become more attractive for younger experts.
  - ➢ While sharing the concerns expressed by the Board, the ED wished to acknowledge the great contribution provided by experienced experts and the huge amount of time they devote to EFSA.
- The need to keep monitored the number of cases seeing experts serving for three consecutive mandates in a Panel and then again in the same Panel after a break.
- The need to have in the Panels a balanced representation of nationalities as far as possible.
- The need to ensure that the Panels include experts able to contribute with diverse scientific perspectives.

27. The Board adopted the decision appointing the new members of the Scientific Committee and of the Scientific Panels on AHAW, BIOHAZ, CONTAM, FEEDAP, GMO, NDA, PLH and PPR. In addition, the Board adopted the reserve list of suitable candidates for the Scientific Committee and all Scientific Panels.

Item 9: EFSA Anti-fraud strategy

28. Dirk Detken (Legal and Regulatory Affairs) introduced the item saying that the document submitted to the Board had been drafted along the guidelines received by OLAF. It had been discussed at the Board Audit Committee and received the positive feedback of OLAF. EFSA's Anti-fraud strategy embeds a broad definition of 'fraud' and was developed on the results of an EFSA-wide exercise aimed at identifying the areas where risks of fraud exist and the likelihood of their occurrence. The exercise brought to the identification of four main areas of risk: (1) Misbehaviour when completing a DoI, (2) Falsification of documents, (3) Plagiarism and (4) Favouritism. The Strategy includes an action plan containing seven actions, which aim at addressing the risks of fraud through activities of prevention, detection and investigation. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

29. Questions and comments were received on:

- Whether any particular fraud risk was identified with regards to the Management Board.
  - ➢ Since the Board involvement in operational tasks is very limited, proportionally the risk of fraud for the Management Board has been considered limited.
- The Audit Committee could have an oversight role on implementation of the Anti-fraud strategy.
  - ➢ EFSA agreed to provide the Audit Committee with periodical reports.
- With regard to plagiarism, nowadays the market offers software that screens articles, thesis, etc. against published scientific work.
  - ➢ EFSA is already looking into this kind of software, which would be used in the context of the EFSA Journal.

30. The Management Board adopted EFSA's Anti-fraud strategy.

Item 10: Extension of the mandate of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform

31. The Chair recalled the discussion held at the previous Board meeting with the Chair of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform, Mr Andreas Varlamos, when the Board was invited to consider the opportunity to extend the mandate of the current Platform. The extension of the Platform mandate would give sufficient time to the Platform itself and EFSA to review the way the Authority engages with stakeholders and reflect on whether the need exists to revise the functioning model of the Platform.

32. The Management Board adopted the decision on the extension of the mandate of the current Stakeholder Consultative Platform until the 30th of June 2016.

Item 11: Amendments to the Art. 36 list of organisations

33. Tobin Robinson informed the meeting of EFSA's proposal to add 12 new organisations, based in France (1), Malta (1), Slovenia (2), Spain (5), The Netherlands (1) and the United Kingdom (2) to the list of organisations capable of assisting the Authority in performing its tasks (Art. 36 of EFSA's Founding Regulation). He also drew the Board's attention to the technical changes adopted with the decision of the ED dated 12 February, 2015.

34. The Board adopted the amended Art. 36 list of organisations.

Item 12: Feedback from the Audit Committee

35. The Chair of the Audit Committee updated the Board on the outcomes of the meeting held on the 18th of March. He briefly reported on the discussion held around the 2014 Internal Audit Capacity (IAC) report, which had been adopted subject to the addition of more information on the level of implementation of the work plan 2014 and the inclusion of a table summarising the follow-up activities carried out, or to be carried out, to address recommendations received by the various audit bodies. The Audit Committee noted the report on the implementation of the internal control standards, which included some recommendations, one of which was classified very important: the need to formalise and enhance the ex-ante, interim and ex-post evaluations. The Committee also commented the draft version of its revised Charter, which is expected to be submitted to the Board for adoption at the following meeting. In addition, the possible revision of the IAC Charter was also discussed. Finally, the Audit Committee noted the information received from the ED with regard to the discharge procedure of the 2013 financial year, and drafted the assessment of the 2014 Annual Report (see also item n. 4 above).

36. The Board noted the feedback from the Audit Committee.

Item 13: 2015 Budget execution and transfers

37. Alessia Vecchio informed the Board that, at the end of February, EFSA commitment and payment levels were respectively 4% and 1% above the target for this time of the year. With regard to the budgetary transfers, she said that Title 1 appropriations had been increased by € 90,000 in order to address unexpected expenses for the recruitment of the Heads of Department. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

38. The Commission representative recommended to closely monitor the consumption level of payment appropriations.

39. The Board noted the presentation on EFSA's budget execution and transfers 2015.

Item 14: Any other business

Delegation of powers conferred to the Management Board regarding staff matters related to the Executive Director

40. The Management Board adopted the decision delegating to the EFSA Head of the RESU Department the power to validate the missions and trainings to be undergone by the ED. All other powers conferred by the Staff Regulations and the Conditions of employment to the Management Board as appointing authority of the ED remain solely with the Management Board.

41. A Board member suggested to include in the decision the specification that the ED will report annually to the Board on the missions and trainings he/she underwent during year.

END

Actions Arising

Meeting reference	Action	Deadline	Status
March 19, 2015	EFSA to provide the Board members with the Scientific Committee presentation of the toolbox on risk ranking.	ASAP	Done
March 19, 2015	EFSA to revise the Activity Report 2014 in accordance with the comments received.	ASAP	Done
March 19, 2015	EFSA to revise the document on 'Open EFSA' in line with the comments received from the Board.	June 2015	Open
March 19, 2015	EFSA to provide detailed information on how the impact score of articles dedicated to EFSA is calculated.	ASAP	Open

Document history	
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