

Biological hazards and contaminants Unit (BIOCONTAM Unit)

Parma, 10 February 2015
EFSA/CONTAM/2374

Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain
Minutes of the 69th plenary meeting
Held on 20-22 January, 2015, Parma (Italy)
(Agreed on 19 February 2015)

Participants

- **Panel Members:**

Diane Benford, Bruce Cottrill, Sandra Ceccatelli¹, Michael Dinovi², Eugenia Dogliotti, Lutz Edler, Peter Farmer, Peter Fürst, Ron Hoogenboom, Helle Knutsen, Anne-Katrine Lundebye³, Manfred Metzler, Antonio Mutti⁴, Carlo Nebbia⁵, Michael O'Keeffe, Annette Petersen, Dieter Schrenk, Hendrik Van Loveren⁶, Christiane Vleminckx⁷ and Pieter Wester

- **Hearing Expert⁸:**

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- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

Leonidas Palilis (Hellenic Food Authority) (for item 6.2) and Frans Verstraete⁹(European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, unit E7)

- **EFSA:**

- **BIOCONTAM Unit:**

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia, Barbara Dörr, Ernesto Liebana Criado, Karen Mackay, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Ruth Roldán Torres, Hans Steinkellner and Natalie Thatcher

¹ Present on 20-21 January 2015.

² Present by tele-web on 20-22 January 2015.

³ Present on 21 January 2015.

⁴ Present on 20 and 22 January 2015.

⁵ Present on 21-22 January 2015.

⁶ Present on 20 and 21 January morning 2015.

⁷ Present by tele-web on 21 January morning and 22 January 2015

⁸ As defined in Article 11 of the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁹ Present on 20-21 January 2015, and by tele-web on 22 January 2015.

- **DATA Unit:**

José Ángel Gómez Ruiz (for items 6.2-6.4), Davide Arcella (for item 6.1) and Sofia Ioannidou (item 6.5).

- **AMU Unit:**

Elisa Aiassa (for item 9.1)

- **Observers¹⁰:**

Not Applicable

- **Others:**

Not Applicable

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Marina Marini (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, unit 03), Frank Swartenbroux (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, unit E7), and Mari Eskola (BIOCONTAM Unit, EFSA).

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes¹¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest¹², EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Scientific 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 68th Plenary meeting held on 25-27 November 2014, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 68th Plenary meeting held on 25-27 November 2014 were agreed by written procedure on 8 January 2015¹³.

5. Report on the written procedures since 68th Plenary meeting

Not Applicable.

¹⁰ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/stakeholders/observers.html>

¹¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

¹² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

¹³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/contam/contammeetings.htm>

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and/or possible adoption

6.1 Discussion on the draft Scientific Opinion on the risk to human health related to the presence of acrylamide in food (EFSA-Q-2013-00007)¹⁴

The scientific officer of the BIOCONTAM Unit and the chair of the WG on Acrylamide in food presented to the members of the CONTAM Panel the outcome of the stakeholder meeting held on 10 December 2014 to discuss part of the comments received during the public consultation of the draft opinion on acrylamide in food (EFSA-Q-2013-00007). The CONTAM Panel discussed the comments and the responses to the comments. The chair of the WG will bring the feedback received to the WG which will take them into account. The discussion on the comments received during the public consultation will continue at the 70th CONTAM Panel plenary meeting. The comments and their respective responses will be published in the EFSA Technical Report together with the Scientific Opinion on acrylamide in food.

6.2. Discussion and possible adoption of the draft Scientific Opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of nickel in food (EFSA-Q-2012-00378)¹⁵

The chair of the CONTAM WG on Chromium and nickel in food presented the draft opinion (EFSA-Q-2012-00378) in which the Hellenic Food Authority had asked EFSA to assess the risk for human health related to the presence of nickel in food. The CONTAM Panel discussed the draft opinion and adopted it subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The CONTAM Panel decided to change the title of the opinion from “nickel in food” to “nickel in food and drinking water”. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed her appreciation to the members of the WG and the EFSA staff.

6.3. Discussion and endorsement of the selected chapters of the draft Scientific Opinion on the risks for animal and public health and the environment related to the presence of nickel in feed (EFSA-Q-2013-00766)¹⁶

The chair of the CONTAM WG on Nickel in feed presented the draft opinion (EFSA-Q-2013-00766) in which the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risk for animal and public health and environment related to the presence of nickel in feed. The members of the CONTAM Panel discussed the draft opinion and provided their suggestions. The chair of the WG will bring the comments back to the WG which will take them into account in the draft opinion. The draft opinion on the risks for animal and public health and the environment related to the presence of nickel in feed will be presented for discussion and possible adoption at the 70th meeting of the CONTAM Panel (3-5 March 2015).

6.4. Discussion on approach to take for the draft Scientific Opinion on the risks for human health related to the presence of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in milk and other food of animal origin (EFSA-Q-2013-00787)¹⁷

The chair of the CONTAM WG on THC in milk and other food of animal origin presented the draft opinion (EFSA-Q-2013-00787) in which the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risk for human health related to the presence of THC in milk and other food of animal origin. The members of the CONTAM Panel discussed the draft opinion and provided their suggestions. The chair of the WG will bring the comments back to the WG which will take them into account in the draft opinion. The draft opinion on the risks for human health

¹⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00007>

¹⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2012-00378>

¹⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00766>

¹⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00787>

related to the presence of THC in milk and other food of animal origin will be presented for discussion and possible adoption at the 70th meeting of the CONTAM Panel (3-5 March 2015).

6.5. Discussion on approach to take for the draft Scientific Opinion on the risks to human health related to the presence of nitrofurans and their metabolites in food (EFSA-Q-2014-00066)¹⁸

The chair of the CONTAM Standing WG on Non-allowed pharmacologically active substances in food and feed and their reference points for action presented the approach for the risk assessment on nitrofurans and their metabolites in food (EFSA-Q-2012-00666). The members of the CONTAM Panel discussed the approach and provided their suggestions. The chair of the SWG will bring the comments back to the SWG which will take them into account in the draft opinion. The draft opinion on the risks to human health related to the presence of nitrofurans and their metabolites in food will be presented for further discussion at the 71th meeting of the CONTAM Panel (28-30 April 2015) and for possible adoption at the 72nd meeting of the CONTAM Panel (3-5 June 2015).

7. New mandates

7.1. Request from the European Commission for a scientific and technical assistance on the health based guidance value for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs (EFSA-Q-2015-00026) and a Scientific Opinion on the risks for animal and human health related to the presence of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in feed and food (EFSA-Q-2015-00028)

The CONTAM Panel discussed the requests. The Scientific Report will be developed internally by the EFSA staff and reviewed by three CONTAM Panel members. For request for the Scientific Opinion, the CONTAM Panel agreed to initiate a new WG on Dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in feed and food. The WG chair and vice chair will be communicated by written procedure.

7.2 Request from the European Commission for a Scientific Opinion on the risks for animal and human health related to the presence of erucic acid in feed and food (EFSA-Q-2015-00027)

The CONTAM Panel discussed the requests and agreed to initiate a new WG on Erucic acid in feed and food. The WG chair and vice chair will be communicated by written procedure.

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

8.1. Scientific Committee and Scientific Panel(s) including their Working Groups

8.1.1 Scientific Committee and its Working Groups of interest to CONTAM Panel

This agenda item was deferred to the 70th CONTAM Panel meeting (3 to 5 March 2015) due to lack of time.

¹⁸ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00066>

8.2. CONTAM Panel Working Groups

8.2.1. Working Group on Acrylamide in food

See item 6.1.

8.2.2. Working Group on Chromium and nickel

See item 6.2.

8.2.3. Working Group on *Fusarium* toxins

This agenda item was deferred to the 70th CONTAM Panel meeting (3 to 5 March 2015) due to lack of time.

8.2.4. Working Group on Nickel in feed

See item 6.3

8.2.5. Standing Working Group Non-allowed pharmacologically active substances in food and feed and their reference points for action

See item 6.5.

8.2.6. Working Group on Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in milk and other products of animal origin

See item 6.4.

8.2.7. Working Group on Chlorate in food

This agenda item was deferred to the 70th CONTAM Panel meeting (3 to 5 March 2015) due to lack of time.

8.2.8. Working Group MCPD and glycidyl esters

This agenda item was deferred to the 70th CONTAM Panel meeting (3 to 5 March 2015) due to lack of time.

8.2.9. Working Group on Phorbol esters in *Jatropha* kernel meal

This agenda item was deferred to the 70th CONTAM Panel meeting (3 to 5 March 2015) due to lack of time.

8.3. EFSA

8.3.1. Advisory Forum

The last Advisory Forum (AF) meeting was held on 10-11 December 2014 in Parma, Italy. Among the agenda items, the AF discussed external review of the impact of scientific grants and procurement projects, further developments of a draft guideline for dealing with situations of diverging scientific opinions (Article 30 of the founding regulation), the initiatives of EFSA to increase robustness, transparency and openness of risk assessments, namely i) promoting methods for evidence use in science (Prometheus), ii) uncertainties in risk assessment, iii) the use of the weight of evidence approach, and iv) identification of biological relevance of adverse/positive health effects. In addition, the first version of the

Scientific Cooperation Toolbox was presented to the AF and the AF and EFSA exchanged the information on the new mandates. More information on the AF and its meeting is available on the EFSA website¹⁹.

8.3.2. Management Board

The last Management Board (MB) meeting took place on 18 December 2014 in Parma, Italy. The MB adopted EFSA's Multi-annual Programme for the next three years and the EFSA draft budget for 2015. The MB also provided feedback for the discussion paper on the role of EFSA in the field of nutrition and for the presentation on the benefits and future developments of EFSA's Stakeholder Consultative Platform. More information on the MB and its meeting is available on the EFSA website²⁰.

8.3.3. Other

As in the previous CONTAM Panel meetings since May 2014, the CONTAM Panel noted again that in its process for adoption of the scientific opinions, extensive peer review of the text drafted by external experts and Panel members is regularly performed. The contributions of the resigned CONTAM Panel member Ivonne Rietjens to the draft opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of nickel in food and bottled water were also discussed, in view of the new interest situation identified in Spring 2014. It was concluded that all the contributions drafted by Ivonne Rietjens in the aforementioned scientific output have been thoroughly discussed by WG members and subsequently peer reviewed by the members of the CONTAM Panel. This process ensures that the information provided is transparently considered.

In relation to the Scientific Opinion on the risks to public related to the presence of perchlorate in food, in particular fruits and vegetables (EFSA-Q-2013-00675) published on 17 October 2014, the members of the CONTAM Panel were informed that a technical error in the exposure assessment of perchlorate was identified in the opinion. The CONTAM Panel discussed the matter and decided to re-open the opinion without delay in order to update the risk assessment. The CONTAM Panel noted further that the exposure estimation will likely change and therefore the previous final conclusions of the opinion will also require revisions.

8.4. European Commission

The European Commission representative gave feedback on the activities of the European Commission in relation to the issued scientific opinions of the CONTAM Panel. Several amendments for current legislation are under discussion with the Member States as an outcome of the CONTAM Panel scientific opinions. In addition, several recommendations to the Member States have been made by the European Commission based on CONTAM opinions.

The new requests from the European Commission on the influence on public health of possible deregulating pectenotoxins in bivalve molluscs, and on the evaluation of certain substances as acceptable previous cargoes will be submitted to EFSA in the beginning of 2015. In addition other potential future mandates were also discussed.

¹⁹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/af/afmeetings.htm>

²⁰ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/mb/mbmeetings.htm>

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1. Presentation on the EFSA Prometheus Project

The scientific officer of the AMU Unit presented to the members of the CONTAM Panel the EFSA project called Prometheus (Promoting Methods for Evidence Use in Science). The project aims at improving and harmonising the methods to manage the evidence in the EFSA risk assessments. More precisely the project objective is that the way of generating/extracting, validating/appraising and analysing evidence is consistent between the assessments, and that this process is documented, and decided in the beginning of the work how complex it should be for each risk assessment. The acting Team Leader of the CONTAM Team indicated that the Scientific opinion on dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs will be proposed to test the methodologies discussed in the Prometheus project. The CONTAM Panel discussed the presentation of the project and noted that it would be difficult to predict the practical implications of the project in the approach followed for the development of the scientific opinions on contaminants, and noted that it could be adequate to select a simpler opinion as a pilot test.

9.2. Present status of current outsourcing activities of the CONTAM Team (BIOCONTAM Unit)

For the Article 36 grant on the combined bioaccumulation/toxicity study on a broad mixture of mineral oil saturated hydrocarbons relevant to the human dietary exposure (signed with INRA (France) and NIPH (Norway) in September 2013), the second interim report is due by February 2015.

For the Article 36 grant to collect occurrence data on sterigmatocystin in food (signed with RIKILT (the Netherlands), Unicatt (Italy), Fera (United Kingdom), BPI (Greece) and NVWA (the Netherlands) in September 2013), the final report was submitted in January 2015.

For the Article 36 grant on occurrence data of pyrrolizidine alkaloids in food (signed with RIKILT (the Netherlands), BfR (Germany) and IRTA (Spain) in September 2013), the second interim report was submitted in September 2014. The final report is due in May 2015.

For the Article 36 grant on deoxynivalenol biomarkers in urine (signed with ISS (Italy), Unicatt (Italy), NVI (Norway), NIPH (Norway) and UoH (UK) in December 2013), the draft final report was submitted in January 2015. The final report is due in February 2015.

For the Article 36 grant on occurrence of tropane alkaloids in food, the contract was signed with the appointed beneficiary (RIKILT (the Netherlands), IRTA (Spain), FERA (UK) and VSCHT (Czech Republic). The project kick-off meeting was held on 8 January 2015.

10. Any other business

Not Applicable