



## Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain

### Minutes of the 107<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting

**Audio-web conference, 26-28 May 2020**

**(Agreed on 29 June 2020)**

#### Participants

■ Panel Members:

Margherita Bignami, Laurent Bodin, Kevin Chipman, Jesús Del Mazo, Bettina Grasl-Kraupp, Christer Hogstrand, Ron Hoogenboom, Jean-Charles Leblanc, Carlo Nebbia, Elsa Nielsen, Evangelia Ntzani, Annette Petersen, Salomon Sand, Dieter Schrenk, Tanja Schwerdtle, Christiane Vleminckx and Heather Wallace.

■ Hearing Experts<sup>1</sup>:

Not Applicable.

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Frans Verstraete (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, Unit E2).

■ EFSA:

BIOCONTAM Unit:

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia, Anna Christodoulidou, Federico Cruciani, Ernesto Liebana Criado, Karen Mackay, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Hans Steinkellner and Carina Wenger.

DATA Unit:

Davide Arcella, Petra Gergelova (for Item 6.1. and 6.2.), Sofia Ioannidou and Marina Nikolic (for Item 6.3.), Francesca Riolo (for Items 7.1. and 7.2.) and Davide Arcella (for Item 8.1).

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director concerning the selection of members of the Scientific Committee, the Scientific Panels, and the selection of external experts to assist EFSA with its scientific work: [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/expertselection.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/expertselection.pdf)

- Observers:  
Bruce Cottrill (for Item 6.2.).
- 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 D1) and Veerle Vanheusden (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, Unit E2).

## **2. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted without changes.

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence<sup>2</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management<sup>3</sup>, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Panel members invited to the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the members at the beginning of this meeting.

## **4. Agreement of the minutes of the 106<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting held on 08.05.2020**

The minutes of the 106<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting held on 8 May 2020 were agreed by the CONTAM Panel on 26 May 2020<sup>4</sup>.

## **5. Report on written procedures since the 106<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting held on 08.05.2020**

Not applicable.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/policy\\_independence.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/competing\\_interest\\_management\\_17.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/106th-plenary-meeting-contam-panel>

## **6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption**

### **6.1. Draft update of the EFSA scientific opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of nickel in food and drinking water. (EFSA-Q-2019-00214)<sup>5</sup>**

The Chair of the WG on Nickel in food introduced the draft opinion. The CONTAM Panel reviewed the main changes implemented in the opinion since the 105th Panel meeting and discussed the sections on risk characterisation, uncertainty, conclusions and recommendations, summary and abstract. Pending the modifications agreed during the discussion, the CONTAM Panel endorsed the draft opinion for the public consultation, which will indicatively take place between the second week of June and mid-July 2020.

### **6.2. Draft Scientific Opinion on the risks for animal health related to the presence of nitrites and nitrates in feed (EFSA-Q-2019-00098)<sup>6</sup>**

The Chair of the WG on Nitrite and nitrate in feed introduced the draft opinion. The Panel reviewed the changes implemented following the discussion on the hazard identification and characterisation sections held at the previous plenary meeting and discussed the sections on occurrence, exposure assessment, risk characterisation, uncertainty analysis, conclusions and recommendations, summary and abstract. Pending the modifications agreed during the discussion, the CONTAM Panel endorsed the draft opinion for the public consultation, which will indicatively take place between mid-June and the third week of July 2020.

### **6.3. Draft Update of the Scientific Opinion on Hexabromocyclododecanes (HBCDDs) in Food (EFSA-Q-2018-00433)<sup>7</sup>**

The Chair of the WG on Brominated flame retardants in food presented the draft opinion on HBCDDs in food. The Panel discussed the sections on occurrence and exposure and endorsed them pending minor modifications. Furthermore the Panel discussed the sections on hazard identification and characterisation and requested additional clarifications from the Working Group, which will be further discussed at the next panel meeting.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2019-00214>

<sup>6</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2019-00048>

<sup>7</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00433>

## **7. Overview of comments received during public consultations**

### **7.1. Draft opinion on Perfluoroalkyl substances in food (EFSA-Q-2017-00549)<sup>8</sup>**

The Chair of the WG on Perfluoroalkyl substances presented an overview of the comments received from the public consultation on the draft opinion on perfluoroalkyl substances in food. The Panel focused the discussion on some selected comments related to the hazard characterization approach and dose-response and kinetic modelling. The discussion on the responses to the comments received and on the possible changes needed in the draft opinion will continue at the next meetings of the CONTAM Panel.

### **7.2. Draft opinion on Glycoalkaloids in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2016-00811)<sup>9</sup>**

The Chair of the WG on Glycoalkaloids presented an overview of the comments received from the public consultation on the draft opinion on glycoalkaloids in food and feed. The Panel discussed the main comments and the responses proposed by the Working Group. The discussion on the responses to the comments received and on the possible changes needed in the draft opinion will continue at the next meetings of the CONTAM Panel.

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

### **8.1. European Commission**

The agenda item was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

### **8.2. Update from CONTAM Panel Working Groups**

The agenda item was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

### **8.3. EFSA**

EFSA informed the Panel on a letter received from the Consortium of Parmigiano Reggiano producers in relation to the recent Panel opinion on the risk assessment of aflatoxins in food<sup>10</sup>. In the letter, the Consortium expressed concerns on the evaluation of the occurrence data on aflatoxin M1 (AFM1) in milk and dairy products present in the opinion and noted that the statement: "The highest AFM1 mean concentrations were reported for the food category 'milk and dairy products' and milk-based food belonging to the category 'food

<sup>8</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00549>

<sup>9</sup> <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00811>

<sup>10</sup> <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2020.6040>

for infants and small children'. In particular, Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese was the milk-based food with the highest reported mean AFM1 concentration" would not reflect the reality. To support their view, the Consortium reported a summary of internal control data, indicating AFM1 levels below 0.275 µg/kg in 722 out of 723 samples, which does not correspond to the results available to EFSA at the time of the opinion from 51 samples of Parmigiano Reggiano. The Consortium asked whether, considering the additional information provided, it would be possible to update the EFSA opinion. EFSA clarified that data should be submitted via the EFSA annual call for data on contaminants and that additional comments and information should have been provided during the public consultation that took place before the publication of the opinion on aflatoxins in food. However it was agreed to consider including a note in the opinion to more clearly highlight the uncertainties present in the dataset of AFM1 levels in cheeses. The CONTAM Panel acknowledged the view of the Consortium and noted that the uncertainties related to the relatively small dataset on the occurrence of AFM1 in cheeses and in particular the possible influence of risk-based monitoring strategies could have led to an overestimate of the AFM1 levels in Parmigiano Reggiano. However, these uncertainties were carefully considered and analysed together with the other uncertainties present in the opinion. In addition it was reiterated that stakeholders had the opportunity to comment during the consultation on the opinion and accepting on an exceptional basis such request would risk to undermine the consultation process. Therefore the Panel agreed that the re-publication of the opinion with the inclusion of a note specifically to comment the uncertainties of the data on Parmigiano Reggiano is not warranted.

#### **8.4. Scientific Committee and Working groups of interest to the CONTAM Panel**

The agenda item was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

#### **9. Any other business**

Not applicable