European Food Safety Authority

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND ADVISORY FORUM UNIT

Parma, 11 February 2010
EFSA/AF/M/2010/314/PUB/FIN

Minutes

THIRTY FOURTH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY FORUM

ATHENS (GREECE), 25-26 NOVEMBER 2009

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY FORUM

Chair: *Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle,* Executive Director, EFSA

Austria	*Roland Grossgut*	Italy	*Giancarlo Belluzzi*
Belgium	*Benoît Horion*	Latvia	*Gatis Ozoliņš*
Bulgaria	*Stefka Petrova*	Lithuania	*Snieguolė Šćeponavicienė*
Cyprus	*Stella Canna-Michaelidou*	Luxembourg	*Félix Wildschutz*
Czech Republic	*Jitka Götzová*	Malta	*Ingrid Busuttil*
Denmark	*Arne Büchert*	Netherlands	*Johan Cornelese*
Estonia	*Hendrik Kuusk*	Poland	*Jan Krzysztof Ludwicki*
Finland	*Kirsti Savela*	Portugal	*Manuel Barreto Dias*
France	*Valérie Baduel*	Slovakia	*Zuzana Bírošová*
Germany	*Andreas Hensel*	Spain	*Ana Troncoso*
Greece	*Antonios Zampelas*	Sweden	*Leif Busk*
Hungary	*Maria Szeitzné Szabó*	United Kingdom	*Alison Gleadle*
Ireland	*Raymond Ellard*		

OBSERVERS AND INVITEES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Croatia	*Jarmila Turkalj*	European Commission (DG Health and Consumers)	*Jeannie Vergnettes*
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	*Dushica Santa*	European Commission (DG Research)	*Valérie Rolland*
Norway	*Kirstin Færden*	European Commission (DG Research)	*Danièle Tissot*
Switzerland	*Michael Beer*	EFSA Management Board	*Konstantinos Yazitzoglou*
Turkey	*Hatice Uslu*		

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Bernhard Berger	*Djien Liem*
Gian Luca Bonduri	*Riitta Maijala*
Hubert Deluyker	*Elena Marani*
Dirk Detken	*Jeffrey Moon*
Stefan Fabiansson	*Torben Nilsson*
Anne-Laure Gassin	*Claudia Roncancio Pena*
Georgi Grigorov	*Tobin Robinson*
Jürgen Gropp (Vice-Chair of EFSA's FEEDAP Panel)	*Carola Sondermann*
Per Have	*Didier Verloo*
Marta Hugas	*Victoria Villamar*

1 WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE MEETING

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle opened the meeting by welcoming the observers from EFSA's Management Board and DG Research and new AF members/alternates. She then passed the floor to Antonios Zampelas, President of the Hellenic Food Authority, for his opening speech. He highlighted that while each country has its own risks, it is important to address them together. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle thanked Greece for the good cooperation. She further mentioned that apologies were received from the Czech Republic and Romania.

2 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted without changes. Norway suggested discussing a new study on folic acid under agenda item 5.4. Norway also requested information on the crisis simulation exercise. This would be covered under agenda item 8. France requested information on the sharing of confidential information. This would be covered under agenda item 6.4. Finally, Hungary offered to provide feedback from a national focal point meeting under agenda item 3.13.

3 GENERAL MATTERS ARISING SINCE THE 33RD ADVISORY FORUM MEETING

3.1 Management Board meeting in Parma on 8 October 2009

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle briefed the AF on the outcomes of the Management Board meeting: A new stakeholder platform had been appointed for one year; EFSA's activities in the FEEDAP area were presented and discussed (see also agenda item 6.1), an updated list of article 36 institutions was approved, and the review of EFSA's communications strategy had started. This would involve also the AF (see also agenda item 3.7).

3.2 Commissioner Vassiliou's visit to EFSA on 16 October 2009

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle informed the AF about the visit of Commissioner Vassiliou to EFSA that included discussions on GMOs, nanotechnology and cloning as well as visits to the *Scuola per l'Europa* and to the site of EFSA's new building that would be ready by summer 2011.

3.3 WHO visit to EFSA on 26 October 2009

Djien Liem informed the AF about the WHO visit to EFSA that had provided a good opportunity for a mutual update on ongoing activities and an identification of areas, *e.g.* exchange of information, where the cooperation could be improved. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that the strengthened cooperation would be confirmed in an exchange of letters that would be shared with the AF.

Germany said that the WHO and EFSA experts often reach different limit values due to different scientific approaches and suggested that these divergences should be addressed. Riitta Maijala explained that the differences are often caused by different data sets and agreed that the differences should be addressed. Denmark welcomed the cooperation between the WHO and EFSA and suggested that data collection and sharing should be considered as a priority. As some national agencies have worked with the WHO for many years, France and Sweden suggested that further discussion in the AF would be important in order to ensure the coherence of all actions. In addition, France considered that it would be preferable to present this collaboration as a network with the WHO and national agencies coordinated by EFSA. Germany found that this could also be discussed in the SGC. Hubert Deluyker emphasised the role of the European Commission in

avoiding the duplication of mandates and said that the practical aspects of data sharing were being addressed by the IT working group on data warehousing and web reporting, while the AF would be consulted on the strategic issues.

3.4 Scientific Committee meetings in Parma on 29-30 September 2009 and in Brussels on 17 November 2009

Djien Liem reported back from the SC meetings that an SC working group had been established to address the issue of 90-day feeding trials by the end of 2010, that a SC working group would be established to follow up on nanotechnology in order to attempt to address a request for specific guidance from the European Commission, and that genotoxicity testing, threshold of toxicological concern, application of statistical methods, and terminology in risk assessment would be addressed by the SC as self tasking.

Germany emphasised the importance of a close cooperation with the Member States and EMEA on nanotechnology to avoid duplication of efforts. Germany also said that the lack of data makes it very difficult to provide guidance on nanotechnology. Austria proposed a network on nanotechnology. France supported this proposal and further emphasised the importance of addressing nanotechnology in the Novel Food Regulation. Djien Liem informed that a conference on nanotechnology would be organised during the Belgium EU Presidency in the autumn 2010. He also mentioned that the lack of exposure data and detection methods for nanomaterials made risk assessments very difficult. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle agreed on the establishment of a network on nanotechnology and confirmed that EFSA works with EMEA and ECHA.

Germany found that the Member States should be involved in the discussion on terminology and proposed an ESCO working group to harmonise the risk assessment glossary. Hubert Deluyker said that EFSA is preparing an inventory of risk assessment terminology. This could be the basis for possible further work in an ESCO working group in 2010. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle agreed.

Action 1: EFSA to submit a draft mandate of the network on nanotechnology for possible endorsement at the next AF meeting.

3.5 SGC meeting in Dublin on 16 October 2009

Bernhard Berger informed the AF about the outcomes of the SGC meeting: The SGC had agreed to an extension of the deadline of the ESCO work on isoflavones, supported the important and ambitious project aiming at establishing a way to translate between different food classification systems, and highlighted the importance of coordinating with Member States regarding the work of the IT working group on data warehousing and web reporting, since similar activities are ongoing in some Member States. The SGC also discussed medium term planning and some Member States expressed difficulties in providing detailed information

on foreseen risk assessment activities and related resources at national level. It was highlighted that an important contribution to EFSA's work was the involvement of national scientists in the Panels and working groups. It was agreed that EFSA would prepare a proposal on medium term planning taking into account also the results of the ongoing article 36 survey. This would be discussed again at the next SGC meeting. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle informed that isoflavones would be covered under agenda item 6.3. She also said that the AF would discuss medium term planning for the next three years in the first half of 2010.

France agreed to consider the experiences from article 36 and to discuss medium term planning in the AF. Sweden suggested more frequent SGC meetings, since the next SGC meeting would be in April 2010. Germany agreed with Sweden. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle concluded that EFSA would work first with the SGC and then come back to the AF on medium term planning in May 2010.

3.6 Special AF meeting on plant health in Parma on 20-21 October 2009

Riitta Maijala informed the AF about the special AF meeting on plant health that addressed EFSA's role in the field of plant health, ongoing article 36 projects, the cooperation to facilitate pest risk assessment at the EU level through data collection and exchange, and responding to emerging risks. She also mentioned the proposal to convert these special AF meetings into a scientific network that would communicate more frequently. Hungary supported the proposal. Denmark requested clarification on the relationship between the focal points and special AF representatives. Please refer to agenda item 6.6 regarding the proposed networks.

3.7 AFCWG meeting in Prague on 21-22 October 2009

Anne-Laure Gassin briefed the AF on the review of EFSA's communications strategy that would be discussed further at the next AF meeting, a new journalism prize, and the development of guidelines in risk communications.

3.8 Report of the GMO conference in Brussels on 14-15 September 2009

Riitta Maijala informed the AF that the report of the GMO conference had been published and briefly reiterated the outcomes of the meeting. Denmark and Germany expressed appreciation of the meeting. Germany suggested that discussions should be structured with one part on science and another part with stakeholders. Germany also suggested further discussion in the AFCWG on communication aspects. Belgium supported this suggestion. Riitta Maijala informed that a stakeholder meeting on EFSA's environmental guidance on GMOs is foreseen in June 2010. Upon request from Sweden, she informed that the need for a 90-day feeding trial is assessed on a case-by-case basis by the GMO Panel and that the SC will address the issue of 90-day feeding trials in 2010, since it concerns also other areas than GMOs.

3.9 National expert meeting on health claims in Brussels on 6 October 2009

Riitta Maijala informed the AF about the outcome of the national expert meeting on health claims and referred to the briefing document that was published on EFSA's website. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle informed the AF about ongoing discussions between EFSA and the European Commission.

France expressed disappointment that EFSA had not involved Member States in the work and requested a discussion on the criteria used by EFSA's NDA Panel. Germany agreed on the need for cooperation with Member States and said that the Panel is overwhelmed by the workload and faces problems with the level of evidence. Riitta Maijala replied that the guidance had been discussed with Member States, that the approach applied by EFSA is based on the mandate from the European Commission, and that the article 13 claims are assessed on the basis of the references provided by the Member States. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that the Member States could have done more at the screening stage, *e.g.* by avoiding submitting article 13 claims without data for characterisation. France agreed that criteria set for screening at national level had not been used equally in different Member States. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle concluded that it was not too late to consider a better organisation, since it is a learning experience for all parties, including the European Commission.

3.10 National expert meeting on aspartame in Porto on 10-11 November 2009

Jeffrey Moon referred that the national expert meeting on aspartame had addressed the draft report on aspartame prepared by the organising team, in particular the part on anecdotal data. The report would be finalised and shared with the AF for discussion at the AF meeting in February 2010.

3.11 Scientific colloquium on 'What's new on Novel Foods' in Amsterdam on 19-20 November 2009

Bernhard Berger informed the AF about the scientific colloquium on 'What's new on Novel Food'. Various aspects of the safety assessment of novel foods were addressed by the more than one hundred participants.

3.12 Botanicals workshop in Athens on 24 November 2009

Djien Liem informed the AF about the background and outcome of the botanicals workshop where the outcomes of the ESCO working group on botanicals had been presented to AF members, stakeholders and national experts. It had been agreed to continue to keep the compendium updated and to further clarify that it is not intended as a positive list.

France expressed support to this important work and agreed on the conclusions. In addition, France said that communication is needed and that the industry would need to understand the complexity of the issue and assume their responsibility,

since it would not be possible to provide simple tools for the safety assessment of plants, because the safety depends on their origin, the part of the plant that is used, *etc.* Bulgaria congratulated EFSA on the work and asked if the compendium could now be used to update national negative lists. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle confirmed that the compendium can already be used. Belgium mentioned problems on risk management side to implement the tools due to the lack of EU harmonisation.

Action 2: EFSA to share the report of the botanicals workshop with the AF members.

3.13 Other general matters

Hungary informed the AF about an event organised by the Hungarian focal point with the participation of EFSA staff, Panel members and the Chair of the MB. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that such events were a good way to attract EFSA experts.

4 UPDATE ON THE 7TH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME OF DG RESEARCH

Valérie Rolland and Danièle Tissot (DG Research) presented DG Research's activities in the area of biotechnologies, agriculture and food, in particular under the 7th EU Framework Programme. The ongoing interaction between EFSA and DG Research was highlighted.

France, Denmark, Bulgaria, the Netherlands and Sweden thanked for the comprehensive presentation and provided ideas for further research topics. Austria suggested that more time would be needed to provide inputs. DG Research thanked for the inputs and agreed to receive further inputs in writing after the AF meeting. It was emphasised that the proposals would need to be thoroughly described and justified, since a simple list of issues would not allow DG Research to prioritise. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle suggested that AF members would submit their proposals to EFSA within two weeks, where after EFSA would forward the proposals to DG Research with a cover letter indicating EFSA priorities. Denmark proposed that proposals submitted by the AF members should be limited to EFSA's remit.

Action 3: AF members to submit research proposals to EFSA for subsequent consideration by DG Research.

5 EMERGING ISSUES

5.1 Follow up on emerging issues raised at the previous AF meeting

Riitta Maijala and Hubert Deluyker provided an overview on EFSA's follow up and documents shared through the Information Exchange Platform in relation with emerging issues raised at the last AF meeting.

France informed that a French opinion on pine nuts had been published, although the phenomenon was not yet fully understood. Ireland suggested a possible link with the bleaching of nuts in China.

5.2 France: National Vigilance Plan for Food Supplements

France presented its national vigilance plan for food supplements that was launched in October 2009 due to the increased consumption of food supplements in France over the past years. Medical professionals are engaged in reporting adverse effects observed in people who have consumed food supplements and a number of different authorities, including the French Food Safety Agency, are involved in steering the implementation.

Riitta Maijala said that the work would be useful also for EFSA and other Member States and invited France to share their findings. France confirmed that annual reports would be shared. Upon request from Hubert Deluyker, France confirmed that the plan would monitor acute effects. Sweden drew a parallel to pharmacological reporting. Bulgaria asked about the organisation and possible limitations in the scope of the plan in terms of the aspects that are covered. France explained that there had been a strong interest from consumers, that a dialogue had been installed with the industry to raise awareness on the common interest in addressing consumer issues, and that the health authorities had been very supportive and interested.

5.3 Norway: Handling of diverging scientific opinions by EFSA and Member States

Norway raised concerns over the occasional scientific divergences between opinions issued by EFSA's Panels and other risk assessment bodies, provided two concrete examples regarding bisphenol A (BPA) and ethyl lauroyl arginate (ELA), and urged EFSA to identify and possibly resolve such divergences as foreseen in article 30 of its Founding Regulation.

Riitta Maijala explained that in the case of BPA, further information, which has become available after the adoption of the last opinion, is presently being considered by the CEF Panel that will issue a new opinion in May 2010. As regards ELA, divergences between opinions issued by EFSA's former AFC Panel and the Scientific Committee for Consumer Safety were identified and discussed between the experts. The main reasons were the limited information available and different exposure scenarios. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle agreed that divergences should be identified and explained in coordinated communications. France said that often divergences are only apparent due to different replies, *e.g.* risk versus hazard, or different remits, *e.g.* not considering all exposure sources. Germany agreed and suggested that such divergences should be addressed from the communication perspective. Germany further said that divergences often arise due to uncertainties, which may lead to criticism in the media. Thus, it was

proposed that the AFCWG should discuss how to communicate uncertainties. Austria found that scientific divergences could be caused by different studies, so it would be important to clarify and discuss the source of different opinions. Hungary agreed on the importance of explaining possible differences. Norway requested a feedback on the new opinion on BPA prior to its adoption in May 2010. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle promised that the AF members would receive pre-notification of the new opinion on BPA as it already happens with key opinions. She also emphasised the various efforts of EFSA in identifying possible scientific divergences at an early stage through networks and other contacts with national experts, technical hearings, Member State and public consultations on key opinions and risk assessment guidelines, *etc.* in order to address these prior to adoption of EFSA's opinions. She also agreed to discuss the communication aspects of the handling of uncertainties and diverging opinions in the AFCWG.

5.4 Other emerging issues

Norway informed the AF about a new study on cancer incidence and mortality after treatment with folic acid and vitamin B12 published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Sweden suggested that this paper should be shared with the Panel/SC considering the ESCO report on folic acid.

6 COOPERATION BETWEEN EFSA AND THE MEMBER STATES

6.1 Cooperation in the FEEDAP area

Jürgen Gropp, Vice-Chair of EFSA's FEEDAP Panel, presented the role and work of the FEEDAP Panel as well as the current and future cooperation with Member States. He expressed concerns over the workload of the FEEDAP Panel in connection with the re-evaluation of about 2700 existing feed additives due to the tight deadline of only six months. Member States would be consulted on the framework of this activity in March-April 2010 and cooperation, possibly through outsourcing to a consortium, would be sought.

Austria asked if EFSA would receive fees for the feed additive dossiers and supported the consortium idea. France declared its support to any proposal supporting cooperation with the national authorities and suggested using the peer review model applied in other areas. Denmark supported cooperation through article 36, but asked whether an existing consortium would have a monopoly. Germany commented on the limitations of the Panel system. Jürgen Gropp replied that no fees were foreseen and that consortia would not have a monopoly, although it would make sense to work with core groups rather than individuals. He emphasised that all external assistance would need to be organised during the six-month period. The workload of the Panel could not be increased, but the system could be extended through working groups under the Panel, if more

experts were available. Claudia Roncancio Pena reiterated that cooperation with the Member States would be sought for the re-evaluation of the feed additives. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle looked forward to this cooperation and promised adequate support to the FEEDAP Panel through article 36.

6.2 ESCO working group on non-plastic food contact materials

Riitta Maijala presented the draft mandate of the ESCO working group on non-plastic food contact materials that would initiate its work in early 2010 and complete it by March 2011. She invited the AF members to submit the CVs of proposed working group members to the AF secretariat.

Germany said that toxicological knowledge on these substances was missing, so no positive list could be established. Instead a different approach would be needed for substances already in use. Riitta Maijala clarified that no risk assessments would be performed by the ESCO working group, which would simply provide an inventory of the present situation in Europe and recommendations on how to proceed. France supported the ESCO working group and the German comment regarding the approach. France also stressed the importance of obtaining data from the industry. Denmark suggested that the aim of the ESCO working group would be to obtain an overview. Austria suggested contacting ECHA to obtain assessments that had possibly already been made of certain substances. Belgium requested a clarification on the experts needed for the ESCO working group. Riitta Maijala said that data from Switzerland based on inputs from the industry could be very valuable and confirmed the involvement of ECHA and possibly EMEA. Germany suggested that the ESCO working group should deliver its first report after six months. Malta mentioned that ECHA would exclude food related data. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle concluded that the AF supported this activity and that the mandate of the ESCO working group would be amended to reflect the discussion and omit the part on publication of the ESCO report, since this aspect would be addressed when the report was ready.

Action 4: AF members to propose members of the ESCO working group on non-plastic food contact materials by submitting CVs to the AF secretariat.

6.3 ESCO working group on isoflavones

Didier Verloo updated the AF on the progress of the ESCO working group on isoflavones and proposed new timelines for the completion and publication of the work by December 2010. Upon request from Belgium and Sweden, Didier Verloo provided further explanation on the approach and scope of the ESCO working group. The AF endorsed the new timelines.

6.4 Regulatory aspects of data collection and sharing

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that EFSA is presently preparing a document on the regulatory aspects of data collection and sharing. Dirk Detken presented the

ongoing reflections and invited the AF members to share their views. Austria said that it is not always easy to identify the relevant body in Member States, since this may sometimes be the focal point, sometimes laid down in legislation, while AF members have been designated by the permanent representations as formal representatives of the Member State. Hence, it differs from one situation to another. France emphasised the importance of obtaining data from the competent authorities (legally and scientifically), not by individual experts. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle agreed and added that it is important to know who owns the data. Dirk Detken said that data should be obtained from the right source for well-defined use. The European Commission said that EFSA and the European Commission would work closely together for common data needs. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle concluded that EFSA would finalise the draft document on the regulatory aspects of data collection and sharing in close cooperation with the European Commission and table it for further discussion at the next AF meeting.

Dirk Detken then addressed the sharing of confidential data between EFSA and Member States raised by France at the previous AF meeting: He outlined the existing documents regulating the sharing of confidential data and emphasised that individual experts of EFSA are bound by confidentiality rules, so exchanges of data with Member States should be based on formal requests and not go through individual experts. France agreed on this conclusion but reminded that the question raised at the previous AF meeting also regarded the declaration of confidentiality of experts working both for EFSA and other structures, *e.g.* a national agency, with confidentiality requirements. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that even though this was a separate issue, it would be reflected in the document on the regulatory aspects of data collection and sharing.

6.5 Decision concerning the establishment and operation of networks

Hubert Deluyker presented the decision concerning the establishment and operation of networks. He emphasised that the intention was simply to provide a clear basis for the already existing and future networks. He emphasised the distinction between networks in which all Member States are represented with an aim to coordinate activities and exchange information and expertise (ref. articles 22.7 and 23 of EFSA's Founding Regulation) and networking with specific organisations on the article 36 list.

Austria and Denmark requested an overview of existing networks and members of these networks. France welcomed the clear connection of the networks to the AF, emphasised that the networks should support both EFSA and the Member States, found no need for voting in the networks, since the objective was merely an exchange of information, and requested clarification of the different tools for cooperation, *i.e.* ESCO working groups, SGC and networks. Hubert Deluyker clarified that the networks aimed at institutional exchanges with all Member States within a specific scientific area, ESCO working groups addressed a specific issue with selected national experts within a limited timeframe, while the

SGC overviewed ESCO work and provided inputs on medium term planning. The European Commission expressed support to the networks. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle concluded that EFSA would slightly amend the decision concerning the establishment and operation of networks and share it with the AF members when it was submitted to the MB for adoption. In addition, EFSA would provide the AF members with an overview on the existing networks, including mandates and membership.

6.6 Mandates of the networks

EFSA scientific network for risk assessment of GMOs, EFSA scientific network for risk assessment in plant health, EFSA scientific network for risk assessment in animal health and animal welfare, EFSA scientific network for microbiological risk assessment and EFSA scientific network on BSE/TSE

Riitta Maijala presented the proposed new network for risk assessment of GMOs, the existing networks for microbiological risk assessment and on BSE/TSE, and the proposed conversion of the special AF meetings on plant health and animal health and animal welfare into scientific networks.

France indicated a need to align the mandates of these networks with the decision concerning the establishment and operation of networks discussed under agenda item 6.5 and to consider the composition of the networks. Belgium agreed. Denmark welcomed the proposed conversion from special AF meetings to scientific networks. Austria asked about the relation between the networks and the AF and Panels and indicated a possible resource issue for Member States in case many new networks were created. Hungary agreed on the need to carefully consider the number of networks. Norway recalled that the networks already exist. Sweden was in favour of the networks and said that the Member States would select their own representatives. The Netherlands agreed that the networks already exist, but found that the scope was new. The United Kingdom requested a reference to the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation in the mandate of the network on plant health. Germany said that it could sometimes be difficult for the same person to represent the Member State and engage in scientific networking. Riitta Maijala recalled that the networks for microbiological risk assessment and on BSE/TSE already exist. The members were nominated by the AF members. Regarding plant health and animal health and animal welfare, the proposal is simply a conversion to a scientific network, so the special AF meetings will be replaced by network meetings with the previously nominated representatives. Hence, the only new network is the one for risk assessment of GMOs that will focus on scientific discussions, not risk management. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle concluded that EFSA would amend the profile of the members to align it with the description in the decision concerning the establishment and operation of networks and align the text with the draft mandate of the network on animal health and animal welfare.

EFSA's emerging risks exchange platform

Tobin Robinson presented EFSA's emerging risks exchange platform that was under establishment and its intended role in the emerging risks identification system. The Netherlands and the United Kingdom supported the proposal and referred that similar work was ongoing at national levels. Denmark suggested that microbiological and chemical aspects should possibly be covered by two different members. Tobin Robinson said that EFSA would consider this proposal. Hubert Deluyker underlined the practical nature of this activity and the cooperation with other EU agencies. He suggested an initial one-year phase before formalising the setup based on the lessons learnt. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle suggested that it could be considered as a network on emerging risks, took note of the support from the AF and said that EFSA would now proceed with the drafting of the terms of reference.

7 MATTERS RAISED BY EFSA

7.1 Pan-European food consumption survey

Stefan Fabiansson referred to the general overview on data collection provided at the previous AF meeting and informed that the working group on food classification has now been established. At this meeting, a new initiative for a Pan-European food consumption survey was presented. This proposal was the result of previous consultations at an EFSA scientific colloquium and through the expert working group on food consumption data. The intention was to cover data for both adults and children. The design of the adult survey design had been validated already and an article 36 project would address the design of the infants and children survey. Collaborating organisations in the Member States had been identified already by the permanent representations in consultation with the AF members. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle said that the purpose of raising the issue in the AF was to seek their views, since there was still room for adjustments.

Bulgaria supported the Pan-European food consumption survey that would be important for risk assessments. Cyprus said that it is a fundamental project and applauded that children data would be included. Hungary appreciated the excellent work and said that the proposed survey is absolutely necessary. Austria agreed on the importance of the survey and asked about the funding situation. France supported the survey and said that France would be willing to adapt the methodology of ongoing national food consumption studies. France supported the survey, agreed that rules should be defined regarding the access to the data, and said that France would be willing to adapt the methodology of ongoing national food consumption studies. Sweden congratulated EFSA on the initiative and emphasised the importance of ensuring long-term funding and commitment from all Member States to adapt to the agreed format. Italy strongly supported the initiative and emphasised the importance of a coordinated approach and methodology also at national level. Norway expressed an interest in becoming

involved. Stefan Fabiansson agreed on the need for repeating the survey at certain intervals and thus to the need to ensure long-term funding. Hubert Deluyker mentioned that other countries, *e.g.* the United States and Japan, already undertake such surveys. He said that the funding issue still had to be addressed. A declaration from the AF expressing its strong support to the Pan-European food consumption survey could be very useful. The AF agreed that such a declaration could be prepared and subject to formal endorsement by the AF members at their next meeting.

7.2 Update from Member States and EFSA on influenza A H1N1

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle informed the AF that EFSA had received a request from the European Commission on influenza A H1N1. France shared information on the risk assessments performed in France. Per Have and Marta Hugas presented an overview on the origin of the virus, the work performed so far by EFSA and the content of the new mandate from the European Commission. It was emphasised that there is currently no scientific evidence suggesting that influenza viruses can be transmitted to humans through the consumption of meat. Danièle Tissot (DG Research) informed that a DG Research call on influenza A H1N1 is presently under evaluation, but the project would start only by mid-2010.

7.3 Update on the EFSA journal

Carola Sondermann informed the AF about the launch and features of the new EFSA journal that will comprise all EFSA scientific outputs.

France emphasised the importance of strengthening the recognition of the contribution of scientists involved in EFSA's work. France also asked if Member States could publish national risk assessments in the EFSA journal and whether Member States could become involved in its editorial board. Hubert Deluyker explained that the EFSA journal would contain all EFSA scientific outputs, while the Information Exchange Platform had been established for sharing national risk assessments, so he recommended a stepwise approach, while acknowledging that it would depend on the editorial policy. Many ideas were floated in the first meeting of the editorial board and the AF would be kept informed.

7.4 Other matters raised by EFSA

No other matters were raised by EFSA.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Tobin Robinson briefed the AF on the crisis simulation exercise that would be conducted on the 30 November 2009 with a focus on the communication between EFSA, the European Commission and the Member States in a crisis situation.

Didier Verloo presented the draft programme of the joint AESAN/EFSA workshop on science supporting risk surveillance of imports in Seville on 10 February 2010. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle expressed gratitude to Spain for hosting this event.

9 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle closed the meeting by thanking the Greek AF member and the Hellenic Food Authority for hosting the meeting. She also thanked the AF members and observers, DG Research for offering an opportunity to provide inputs to their planning, and the interpreters and EFSA staff.