



Brussels, 2nd March 2005

**MINUTES OF THE 12th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS
Held in Brussels on 26th and 27th of January 2005**

AGENDA:

1. **Welcome**
2. Apologies and declaration of interests
3. Adoption
4. Presentation by DG Sanco on the New Regulation on the scope of the BIOHAZ Panel adopted in 2004 which will enter into force in 2006.
5. Self tasking issues: Discussion on the BIOHAZ/guidance document on setting microbiological criteria and other food safety objectives
6. Official requests to EFSA.
 - 6.1 Presentation of new mandates received from the Commission
 - 6.2 Organization of Working Groups
7. Discussion and possible adoption of opinions
 - 7.1 *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs
 - 7.2 *Bacillus* in foodstuffs
 - 7.3 *Clostridium* in foodstuffs
 - 7.4 Evaluation of proposal for a different processing method for the production of collagen.
8. Progress reports and discussion on the following mandates:
 - 8.1 Risk assessment of *C. bovis*
 - 8.2 Risk Assessment of *Trichinella*
 - 8.3 Washing of table eggs
 - 8.4 The risk of feeding farmed animals with ready-to-use Category 3 milk, milk-based products and milk-derived products and raw products produced to food standard under Directive 92/46/EEC, without further treatment
 - 8.5 Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk
 - 8.6 TSE in goats
 - 8.7 Animal By-products
 - i. Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.
 - ii. Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of heat treatment of manure

9. Prospects for Quantitative Microbiological Risk Assessment in EFSA. Presentation by Dr Arie Havelaar.
10. Recommendations for further research to DG RTD following BIOHAZ opinions.
11. Update of the activities on the monitoring of zoonoses.
12. Feed-back by the Chairman on subjects discussed in the SC of interest to the Panel
13. Feed-back by the Panel members attending WG from other Panels
14. AOB
15. Closure of the meeting

MINUTES:

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic, Pierre Colin, John D. Collins, Christian Ducrot, James Hope, Günter Klein, Hilde Kruse, Ernst Lücker, Antonio Martinez López, Christophe Nguyen-The, Birgit Noerrung, Servé Notermans, George- John Nychas, Maurice Pensaert, Terence Roberts, Ivar Vågsholm, Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch and Mac Johnston.

Apologies

Simone Magnino, Riitta Liisa Maijala, Christian Ducrot (27th)

EFSA

Marta Hugas, Bart Goossens, Lucia Pena Alberdi (Scientific Staff)
Angela Cohen (Administrative staff)

Commission

DG Health and Consumer Protection: Taina Sateri, Maija Hatakka, Jean Charles Cavitte, Koen Van Dyck.

1. WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everybody.

2. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Apologies were received from Dr Simone Magnino, Prof Riitta Liisa Maijala and Dr Christian Ducrot (27th). There were no additional Declarations of Interest.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

4. PRESENTATION BY DG SANCO ON THE NEW REGULATION ON THE SCOPE OF THE BIOHAZ PANEL ADOPTED IN 2004 WHICH WILL ENTER INTO FORCE IN 2006

Mr Cavitte from the European Commission presented a comprehensive overview of the basic principles recast for the new Directives on food hygiene.

5. SELF-TASKING ISSUES

EFSA may propose self mandates with the agreement of the Executive Director. During former plenaries it was suggested to establish a self-tasking issue on the remit of the BIOHAZ Panel of a guidance document on the appropriateness of setting microbiological criteria and other food safety objectives. A draft background and specific Terms of References prepared by several members was distributed and discussed. It was agreed that after amendments were made, the new draft would be circulated for adoption by written procedure so as to be submitted to the Executive Director for his agreement.

6. OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA.

6.1. PRESENTATION OF NEW MANDATES RECEIVED FROM THE COMMISSION

No new mandates were received.

7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF OPINIONS

7.1. CAMPYLOBACTER IN ANIMALS AND FOODSTUFFS

The Chairman/Rapporteur of the Working group explained the draft opinion to the plenary, mentioning that due to the size of the documents, the WG had decided to submit the whole documents as a report and a summary including conclusions and recommendation as the opinion. The panel focused the discussion on conclusions and recommendations. Several amendments were made combining some recommendations together. The opinion and the report were both adopted, with some editorials pending. The opinion will be published on EFSA's website with a direct link to the report.

7.2. BACILLUS IN FOODSTUFFS

The Chairman of the Working Group introduced the opinion to the Plenary. The plenary discussed the summary as well as the conclusions and recommendation thoroughly. After including several amendments, the opinion was adopted with some editorials pending.

7.3. *CLOSTRIDIUM* IN FOODSTUFFS

The Chairman of the Working Group introduced the document as amended from the previous plenary. The plenary discussed the draft opinion; however, it was agreed to re-structure several chapters. The Chair of the Panel invited the members to send comments/suggestions to the Secretariat. The members of the WG will work electronically together with the secretariat to amend the opinion to take account of suggestions received. The revised document, taking account of amendments requested, will be presented for adoption at the next plenary meeting.

7.4. RISK ASSESSMENT OF *C. BOVIS*

The chairman of the Working Group introduced the draft opinion and outlined the amendments made following suggestions received in the last plenary. After some discussion and amendments the opinion was adopted. The summary of the opinion will be circulated to the Panel members for adoption by written procedure.

7.5. EVALUATION OF A PROPOSAL FOR A DIFFERENT PROCESSING METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION OF COLLAGEN

The chairman of the Working Group and the assistant scientific coordinator introduced the draft opinion. After some discussion and amendments (anonymizing of the company's name, along with deletion of recommendations not asked for by the EC) the opinion was adopted. In the discussion that followed the question was raised as to whether or not mandates of this type should in future be directed to the Panel for attention.

8. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING MANDATES:

8.1. RISK ASSESSMENT OF *TRICHINELLA*

An advanced an updated draft opinion was presented for comments to the plenary. The rapporteur briefly introduced the table of contents and the various chapters and the Panel commented upon it. Main comments concerned the use of wild boars as sentinels for pigs. The members of the Panel were asked to provide comments to the Secretariat. The revised document will be tabled at the next plenary meeting for discussion and possible adoption.

8.2. WASHING OF TABLE EGGS

A first preliminary draft document was presented for comments to the plenary. The chair/rapporteur briefly introduced the table of contents and the various chapters and the Panel commented upon it. The main comments concerned the temperature of the water and the possible use of chemicals to sanitise the water used to decontaminate the surface of eggs. The chair explained that the WG was already taking into account the issues raised. The next working group meeting is scheduled for the beginning of March.

8.3. RISK OF FEEDING ANIMALS WITH READY-TO-USE CATEGORY 3 MILK, MILK-DERIVED PRODUCTS AND RAW PRODUCTS

The secretariat informed the panel that the main scope of this mandate is to assess the possible risk for animal health related to the feeding of Category 3 products (especially raw milk products) without further treatment to farmed animals. The European Commission's main concern is the transmission of animal diseases; accordingly this will require an analysis from the perspective of the Animal Health and Welfare Panel. However, other dairy milk products available on the market could be another possible source of hazard when fed to animals, arising from their introduction into the food chain, resulting in a possible impact on Public Health. The risk assessment of those hazards will be carried out by the BIOHAZ Panel.

8.4. QUANTITATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR RESIDUAL BSE RISK

An update on the progress of the work was presented along with the work carried out to-date on the draft opinions. Future meetings are foreseen for 1-2 March, 18-19 April and 17-18 May 2005. It is anticipated that drafts for a number of the draft opinions may be presented at the March Plenary meeting.

8.5. REVIEW OF AGE TO REMOVE SPECIFIED RISK MATERIALS IN CATTLE.

A proposal for a technical advice related to the mandate on the review of an age limit to remove the SRM in cattle was discussed and agreed. The letter containing this technical advice will be sent to the Commissions DG SANCO as a first step in the update of the opinion on age review. The next WG meeting during which this review will be further discussed is scheduled for 4th of February 2005. It is anticipated that a draft opinion will be ready for discussion and possible adoption at the next plenary meeting in March.

8.6. TSE IN GOATS

The first meeting of this WG was held on 11th of January 2005 during which the mandate and the collection of further epidemiological data and scientific information were discussed. The progress made during the WG meeting was presented at the Plenary. Also during the plenary meeting a statement was discussed and agreed by the Panel on the announcement of the confirmation of the case of BSE in a French goat. (http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/biohaz/biohaz_documents/catindex_en.html) In addition to the statement a press release (http://www.efsa.eu.int/press_room/press_release/790_en.html) - prepared by the EFSA Communication department in consultation with the Panel and related to the announcement was discussed further and agreed. The next meetings of this WG are scheduled for 8th of March and 12th of May 2005.

8.7. ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS

- i Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.

A draft opinion was presented and discussed. The draft was not adopted and was referred back to the WG for further clarification on certain points. The next meeting of the WG is foreseen for 14th February 2005.

ii Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of heat treatment of manure

This mandate will be further discussed at the next meeting of the WG on ABP, i.e. on 14 February 2005.

9. PROSPECTS FOR QUANTITATIVE MICROBIOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT IN EFSA. PRESENTATION BY DR ARIE HAVELAAR.

Dr Arie Havelaar presented the preliminary results of an ongoing EFSA survey to Member States and to scientists around Europe relating to the need for, and existing resources available, to carry out Quantitative Microbiological Risk Assessments at the European Level. After the presentation, discussion revolved around several issues such as: data collection needed to assess exposure assessment and the differences in the nature of the data required for toxicological and microbiological purposes; usefulness of QMRA at European level; extrapolation of approaches from national to European level; enhancement of links between epidemiologists and risk assessors, and of communication between risk managers and risk assessors.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH TO DG RTD AFTER BIOHAZ OPINIONS

The chair briefed the Panel on the compilation of recommendations for further research contained in the adopted opinions of the BIOHAZ Panel and submitted to DG RTD via the EFSA Scientific Committee. The plenary was reminded that further recommendations from opinions now being finalised will also be identified and submitted as above.

11. UPDATE OF THE ACTIVITIES ON THE MONITORING OF ZOONOSSES

Dr Pia Makela from EFSA's Zoonoses Unit updated the plenary on the activities in the monitoring of the zoonoses field. The European Council conclusions on 6.12.2004 invited EFSA, in close cooperation with ECDC, to present on the basis of the annual Community Report on Zoonoses a detailed analysis about risk factors. The BIOHAZ Panel will be consulted for both the evaluation of the Report and for the Analysis of the Risk Factors.

12. FEED-BACK BY THE CHAIRMAN ON SUBJECTS DISCUSSED IN THE SC OF INTEREST TO THE PANEL

(Please see

http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sc_committee/sc_meetings/catindex_en.html)

13. FEED-BACK BY PANEL MEMBERS ATTENDING WORKING GROUPS OF OTHER PANELS

Several Panel members attending working groups of other Panels including the Scientific Committee briefed the Panel on the state of the art.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Panel discussed an issue brought up by the Secretariat on the validation of tests. Currently EFSA's Expert Working group on TSE testing is evaluating rapid "post-mortem" tests for BSE on request from the European Commission following a call for expression of interests published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 22 January 2003. In this case the laboratory evaluation is carried out by IRMM (Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements) which is funded by the European Commission.

The Panel was asked (1) if there was an inconsistency in the process as it is now established, (2) for their views about retaining the TSE validation tests in EFSA, and (3) if EFSA should carry out all test validations needed in such fields as e.g. animal diseases, allergens in food, microbiology methods etc. Following discussion the Panel agreed that validation of TSE testing should be kept in EFSA due to the specificity of the issue. However the Panel considered that there is now no need to duplicate work on e.g. microbiology that is currently being done in the Community Reference Laboratories and in other institutions. However, cooperation with those institutes, when necessary, could be useful.

15. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The meeting was closed at 16.30.