



EFSA Stakeholders Consultative Group on Emerging Risks (StaCG-ER)

Emerging Risks Unit

For openness and transparency, but also for information and data sharing, communication and dialogue on issues pertaining to emerging risks, stakeholders' engagement is essential.

The Stakeholder Consultative Group on Emerging Risks (StaCG-ER) was

- established in 2010
- met four times in one year period

The StaCG-ER was created in order to:

- share information concerning identified emerging risks and/or signals, the methods used to detect them and for the analysis of the collected data
- help in providing information for potential drivers such as new technologies, industrial practices, and farming practices within the food and feed areas

The StaCG-ER was coordinated by the Emerging Risks Unit (EMRISK) that also provided the chair, rapporteur and secretariat, and was responsible for drafting the minutes of the meetings, the report of the StaCG-ER, and reporting back to the SCP.

- The StaCG-ER was composed of a group of 17 experts ensuring, as far as possible, a balanced representation of stakeholders (including food and feed producers, farmers, traders and consumers).
- The selection of experts was also based on the individual expertise of the nominees.
- The selection was made from individuals nominated through the SCP

- Presentation of the StaCG-ER activities at the EFSA Scientific Colloquium on emerging risks held in October 2010
- Report on Stakeholders' activities in the area of emerging risks (finalised in May 2011)

The report was developed following round table discussions and written contributions among StaCG-ER members.

- The identification of emerging risks is an essential part of the daily activities in the food and feed sector organisations
- It is undertaken through regular monitoring of various data sources combined with information received through the organisations' networks
- A common approach among stakeholders is the use of multidisciplinary expert groups to discuss the relevance and importance of signals of potential emerging risks

Whilst data sources vary according to the scope of each organisation and therefore are sector specific, some general approaches were highlighted

- Expertise of individual scientists which are employees, members or collaborators of these organisations is a considerable pool of knowledge for the detection and prioritisation of emerging issues
- Scientific literature, institutional reporting and the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) are acknowledged as frequently used data sources

Drivers themselves are not specifically risks, but they may, individually and/or in combination, affect the way that potential risks develop in the food and feed chain

The drivers described in the report are related to general themes of

- social/economic developments
- changes in human lifestyle/diet
- operation and functioning of the feed and food chain
- technology/analytical developments
- environmental/climate change

The group recognised that not all stakeholders/operators have the capacity to identify and interpret the impact of emerging issues/risks.

In order to strengthen the capability to identify emerging risks of public health importance, a multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach is essential for both vision and interpretation, as is a means for sharing information and accumulated knowledge.

Therefore, the development of a common language with shared definitions, terminology and methodology is necessary.

Mandate for a new Stakeholders consultative group to be drafted.

Emphasis on exchange of data and signals.

- Nominations through the Stakeholders' Consultative Platform
- Balanced representation of the food chain
- Three to four meetings in one year period