

Framework for interaction between the European Food Safety Authority and the Stakeholder Discussion Group on Emerging Risks (StaDG-ER)

The scope of this document is to provide a framework for interaction between EFSA and the Stakeholder Discussion Group on Emerging Risks as one of targeted platforms established under the new Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA)¹ through which EFSA engages with stakeholders on technical issues. The relations and the work carried out through all interactions within this engagement mechanism will be guided by EFSA's core values of transparency and independence.

1. Background

The EFSA's Management Board adopted on its 70th Meeting (16th March 2016) the Decision on the criteria for establishing a list of registered stakeholders and the establishment of the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau², setting the frame for the new way EFSA engages with its stakeholders. Once registered, stakeholders are able to take part the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau, the two permanent mechanisms for engagement. Registered stakeholders are also invited to interact with EFSA through targeted engagement platforms, based on their interest and technical expertise (e.g. Roundtable meetings, Question Framing Working Groups, Discussion groups, Communicators Lab, etc.).

Networking with stakeholders, MSs, EU and international agencies is seen as a key step in developing the effectiveness of the emerging risks identification process³. The Stakeholder Discussion Group on Emerging Risks (StaDG-ER) is a targeted platform that has allowed EFSA to capitalise on stakeholders' specialist knowledge in the identification of new or emerging issues since 2010. The group was created to improve the exchange of information about emerging risks identification and to enhance communication and dialogue on issues pertaining to emerging risks with stakeholders

The current StaDG-ER is composed of EU-wide stakeholder organisations working in the food chain and organisations representing consumers, food and feed operators, food industry, food trade and NGOs, providing a balanced representation of the interests of the stakeholders that interact with EFSA.

The present Framework for interaction between the European Food Safety Authority and the Stakeholder Discussion Group on Emerging Risks substitutes the previous StaDG-ER's Terms of Reference⁴ in accordance with the new EFSA Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA) and introduces an updated overview on the way the group performs.

¹Stakeholder Engagement Approach

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EFSA%20Stakeholder%20engagement%20approach_FINAL.pdf

² Decision of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority on the criteria for establishing a list stakeholders and the establishment of the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Document18992.pdf>

³ Piloting a process for emerging risks identification: lessons learnt and next steps;
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/310e.htm>

⁴ Terms of reference of the Stakeholder Group on Emerging Risks (2014-2015)
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/assets/emrisknetworksscg.pdf>

2. Scope of interaction

The StaDG-ER will enable the members of the group to provide strategic input to EFSA's work on emerging risk identification. The themes and topics of each meeting will be determined by demands from its registered stakeholders and by the priority areas identified by EFSA. The group will provide with inputs and available data to support EFSA emerging risk identification system.

3. General objectives

StaDG-ER members shall:

- present to the group information, data and knowledge concerning identified emerging risks and/or issues as well as the methods used to identify them;
- provide access to data related to the reported emerging risks/issues;
- provide additional information on on-going issues discussed by the previous StaDG-ER.

Emerging issues are identified at the beginning of the Emerging Risk Identification process as issues that may merit further investigation and additional data collection. Emerging issues can include specific issues (e.g. specific chemical substance or a pathogen), as well as general issues such as drivers of change (e.g. climate change). Risk management issues resulting from a lack of compliance with existing regulations should be excluded.

In order to strengthen the overall emerging risks identification process at EFSA and to ensure coordination and efficient collaboration at different levels, the activities of StaDG-ER will be regularly presented to the EFSA's Emerging Risk Engaging Network (EREN) and vice versa.

4. Working methodology

4.1. Composition and selection of members

To ensure balance and to be aligned with the new EFSA Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA), the composition of the current StaDG-ER established in 2010 and renewed in 2012 and 2014, shall be revised and renewed for the period 2018-2020.

The StaDG-ER shall be composed of at least one representative from a registered stakeholder in each of the following categories: consumers; environmental/health NGOs and/or advocacy groups; farmers and primary producers; business and food industry; distributors and HORECA (food service industry preparing and serving food and beverages), associations of practitioners working in fields relevant to EFSA's food safety and public health remit and academia.

Following the launching of an official call to stakeholder organisations for nominating experts to the EFSA Discussion Group on Emerging Risk, registered organisations may submit nominations for up to three experts. EFSA will select one member and one alternate member per registered organisation. The experts shall be selected on the basis of their technical expertise.

As emerging risks may concern all areas of the food and feed chain and animal-plant health, a group of approximately 15 to 20 experts with a wide range of expertise shall be selected from the candidates proposed by the organisations on the list of registered EFSA stakeholders⁵ to participate in the StaDG-ER. Other organisations interested in nominating a member for this Discussion Group should

⁵ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/stakeholders-registered-list.pdf>

send first a request to become registered as an EFSA stakeholder; information for submitting a request is available at and this [web link](#).

As stipulated in Article 3 of the Decision on the criteria for establishing a list of registered stakeholders and the establishment of the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau⁶, non-registered stakeholder may be invited to the meetings of StaDG-ER based on the need for specific expertise or technical knowledge. Any involvement of non-registered Stakeholders will be communicated in transparent and timely manner. The usefulness of this activity will be reviewed after the third year of its operation.

4.2. Roles and responsibilities

The StaD-ER will be coordinated by EFSA that will also provide the chair, rapporteur and secretariat and be responsible for drafting the minutes of the meetings, the report of the activities of the StaDG-ER as well as reporting back to the Standing working Group on Emerging risks and to EFSA.

4.3. Frequency of meetings

The StaDG-ER shall meet at least two times per year (Annex 1).

4.4. Scope in EFSA's work

The work of StaDG-ER is integrated into EFSA's emerging risks identification process. The StaDG-ER activities are presented in the Standing working Group on Emerging risks, Advisory Forum and Scientific Committee of EFSA on a regular basis.

Potential emerging issues are discussed at the group to add further information and data. Issues can be further elaborated in a form of a Briefing Note.

With an aim at enhancing possible ways of collaboration and exchange of information, EFSA will regularly provide to the group information related to the issues identified through the EFSA's emerging risks identification process, to the on-going EFSA activities related to the development of methodologies on emerging risks identification, as well as informing the group on the outcome and needs for data of EFSA's groups (e.g. Working groups) actively working on the identified issues.

4.5. Expected deliverables

- Meeting minutes summarizing the issues discussed and the agreed actions.
- Report on issues identified by the StaDG-ER including the data exchanged related to on-going issues as well as information on the latest developments in the area of emerging risks identification i.e. methods, data sources and drivers of emerging risks not described in previous reports of the StaDG-ER.

5. Transparency requirement

Openness and transparency are fundamental aspects of EFSA and are enshrined as concepts in EFSA's regulatory framework (art. 38 of EFSA's Founding Regulation (EC) No 178/2002) and in the Decision of the Management Board establishing the Forum.

The transparency of the work of the Stakeholder Discussion Group on Emerging Risk will be made available through the timely announcement of EFSA's upcoming activities on Emerging Risks identification as well as through the publication of

⁶ Decision of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority on the criteria for establishing a list of stakeholders and the establishment of the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Document18992.pdf>

agendas, participant' lists and the outcome of each of the meetings of this group on the EFSA website.

6. Monitoring and review

A review of the effectiveness of EFSA's stakeholder engagement, including activities related with the Stakeholder Discussion Group on Emerging Risk, shall be carried out every three years, as of the entry into force of the Decision of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority on the criteria for establishing a list stakeholders and the establishment of the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau (15 June 2016) and, at any time, upon request of the Management Board, Article 9.

ANNEX 1- StaDG-ER. Timeline for 2018-2020

- 1) February 2018: composition of the StaDG-ER to be renewed.
- 2) March-May 2018: first meeting of the renewed StaDG-ER to discuss about the EFSA's activities on emerging risks and adopt the work plan for 2018-2019-2020. Presentation of emerging issues identified by the members of the StaDG-ER through their own networks or the organisation they represent and by EFSA.
- 3) November-December 2018: second meeting of the StaDG-ER to discuss emerging issues identified by the members of the StaDG-ER through their own networks or the organisation they represent and by EFSA.

A third meeting could be hold, if the group sees the necessity, in order to address the number of issues presented.

Points 2 and 3 shall be repeated in 2019 and in 2020.