

EFSA Stakeholder Forum 2021

9-10 November 2021
Virtual meeting

Background

The aim of the annual Stakeholder Forum is to bring together representatives of the registered stakeholder organisations and its Stakeholder Bureau, EFSA's Management Board, EFSA's Senior Management, scientific and communication officers, observers from sister Agencies and the European Commission to provide strategic input on specific aspects of EFSA's work.

The Forum presented an opportunity to update registered stakeholders on recent changes in EFSA's structure and ways of working, related to transparency and interactions with stakeholders.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Stakeholder Forum took place online on November 9th and 10th.

The format was structured around two blocks: on day one the Forum focussed on the renewed Stakeholder Engagement Approach and on the second day on the challenges and opportunities emerging in the food safety ecosystem, what they mean for EFSA and the role of stakeholders.

Agenda

9 November 2021

14:00 **Welcome and warm-up**

14:15 **Opening of the Stakeholder Forum** by Victoria Villamar, Head of Engagement & Cooperation Unit, EFSA

14:30 **The SEA journey** by Barbara Gallani, Head of Communication, Engagement and Cooperation Department, EFSA

Get to know the outcomes of the co-design journey leading to the new Stakeholder Engagement Approach and learn how it will influence your work with EFSA.

15:10 **Launch of the Stakeholder Engagement Platform** by Max Blanck, External Engagement Officer, EFSA

Introduction to the new single digital gateway to access relevant information and interact with EFSA and other registered stakeholders. Screening of presentation video.

15:30 **Closing of Day 1**

15:40 **Deep Dive session into the Stakeholder engagement platform**

10 November 2021

14:00 **Welcome and warm-up for Day 2**

14:15 **Strategic developments within and around EFSA** by Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA

14:30 **Inspire @ EFSA** by Alexandra Nikolakopoulou, Head of Unit, D1 DG SANTE, European Commission

Challenges and opportunities in the transition to a sustainable food system.

14:40 **Inspire @ EFSA** by Guy Van den Eede, Acting Director, Health, Consumers and Reference Materials, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

Tackling the challenges and opportunities that emerge in the area of life sciences and from the application of FAIR principle to data management.

14:50 Inspire @ EFSA by Cortney Price, Lead for Behavioural Science, Office of Innovation, FAO

Exploring how applied behavioural science can support innovation around the way in which we promote change.

15:00 How do we tackle the future challenges together?

Interactive panel discussion among participants and speakers (Bernhard Url, Alexandra Nikolakopoulou, Guy Van den Eede, Cortney Price, Barbara Gallani).

15:50 Closing of the EFSA Stakeholder Forum 2021

16:00 Online networking

Outcomes of the Forum

Day 1

Opening of the Stakeholder Forum

Victoria Villamar (Head of Engagement & Cooperation Unit, EFSA) opened the meeting by welcoming the stakeholders to the Forum and highlighting its timeliness in the context of the changes related to improving transparency and inclusiveness that EFSA has gone through.

EFSA's updated Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA)

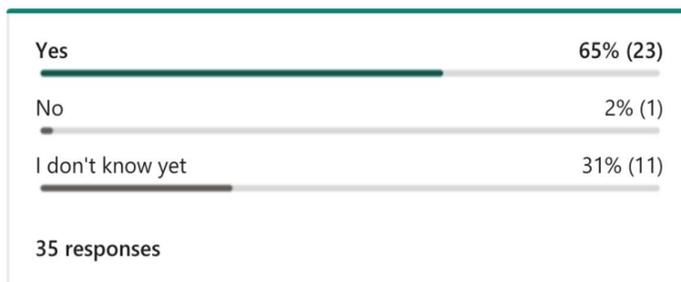
Barbara Gallani (Head of Communication, Engagement and Cooperation Department, EFSA) gave a presentation on the Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA).

In 2019 EFSA initiated a review of the SEA to take stock of the improvement requests voiced by the registered stakeholders, which were followed by some Management Board recommendations.

The evolved SEA is organised around three distinct topical domains: foresight and preparedness, risk assessment process and dialogue with stakeholders. By prioritising topic-based engagement and by diversifying and expanding the catalogue of engagement activities of EFSA's Engagement Toolkit, the SEA aims to ensure that each domain relies on appropriate engagement mechanisms to be effective.

The presentation was followed by a Q&A session, which was concluded with a short poll to gauge stakeholder's perceptions about the updated SEA.

"Do you think the new SEA is going in the right direction?"



EFSA's Stakeholder Digital Platform

In the next session, EFSA officially launched a new digital platform to facilitate stakeholder engagement. Max Blanck (External Engagement Officer, EFSA) gave a presentation and showed a [video](#) about the digital platform, explaining how the platform was built, including the approach, and platform's primary features.

Deep dive into the digital platform

Following the official close of Day 1 participants were guided through the registration process and given further instructions for navigating the platform and utilising its features with support from Max Blanck. Then, the participants received the link to the platform and were encouraged to login and explore it themselves.

Day 2

Opening and Strategic developments within and around EFSA

Bernhard Url (Executive Director, EFSA) opened the day by welcoming participants and elaborating on strategic developments within and around EFSA.

The increasing complexity of food safety risk assessment, the evolving policy framework and shifting societal expectations and values present both challenges to and opportunities for delivering timely scientific advice.

Stakeholders play a key role in the sharing of important input and knowledge and provide important intelligence on innovations and expectations.

In this context, building a community of diverse actors that interact on shared values, objectives, and relationships is crucial for the realization of a partnership approach of the EFSA's Strategy 2027.

Inspire@EFSA

Following Bernhard Url's speech on the strategic developments within and around EFSA, speakers from the European Commission, JRC and FAO gave short and thought-provoking pitches, which were then followed by a panel discussion.

Alexandra Nikolakopoulou, Head of Unit Farm to Fork Strategy, DG SANTE, European Commission, presented the significant role that the food system has within the EU Green Deal and the Farm to Fork strategy and reflected on the challenges and opportunities that emerge from the transition to a more sustainable food system. Given the complexity of the matter, it is important to leverage the existent knowledge coming from our experts and stakeholders to help science identify relevant data and potential data gaps.

Guy Van den Eede, acting director JRC Health, Consumers and Reference Materials, reflected on the increasing scientific complexity and the challenge of turning the massive amount of data we have access to into knowledge.

Cortney Price, Lead for Behavioural Science, FAO, explored how applied behavioural science can promote change conducive to food safety. He argued that we need to tackle the context around behaviours and not only look at our knowledge and understanding of the issues as the main drivers of our actions. Knowledge transfer rarely changes behaviour on its own and looking at what additional elements drive decisions is crucial to foster change in the way we act and collaborate.

Panel Session - Tackling future challenges together?

Following the Inspire@EFSA talks, the moderators invited the speakers as well as Barbara Gallani and Bernhard Url to take the 'virtual stage' for a panel discussion around the issues raised in the talks.

Closing of the Stakeholder Forum

Bernhard Url thanked the stakeholders for their participation and the panellists for interesting presentations and discussions. The following closing remarks were made:

"We have similar objectives which unite us here in Europe and beyond. If we put our experiences and knowledge together with our stakeholders in our ecosystem, we can play our role, as EFSA, more impactfully."

Post Stakeholder Forum Spatial Chat virtual networking event

Following the official close of the Forum, moderators invited event participants and panel speakers to a virtual networking session on a platform called Spatial Chat, which provided them with an opportunity to pick up on the event's discussions, exchange ideas and meet each other.

Conclusions and recommendations

The Stakeholder Forum provided an important opportunity for an open and frank exchange with the registered stakeholders.

From the presentations and the discussions, a consensus emerged that the collaboration with all actors of the food safety ecosystem that EFSA is operating in is key to ensure continued preparedness to address present and future challenges and provide high-quality and timely scientific outputs.

This provided further evidence that tapping into the experiences and knowledge of all ecosystem actors through cooperation and collaboration will be instrumental in putting EFSA and the other players in the position to continue to ensure safe food and feed in Europe.

In this context it was appreciated that the new engagement approach will focus on efficient topic-based collaboration and support EFSA's scientists by generating relevant information, data, and methodological support from EFSA's ecosystem. Tools such as the online stakeholder platform can be instrumental in fostering such continued dialogue.

However, to ensure that EFSA can continue deliver quality advice at the forefront of the European food safety risk assessment, the engagement process needs to keep evolving in sync with the societal, regulatory, and scientific landscapes. Only then will it allow all actors to play their part and be instrumental in realising the new EFSA 2027 Strategy.

List of participating stakeholders

Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU Countries (AVEC)
Association of the Chocolate, Biscuit and Confectionery Industries of Europe (COABISCO)
Association of the European Self-Medication Industry (AESGP)
Association of Veterinary Consultants (AVC)
Committee on Trade in Cereals, Livestock, Oilseeds, Olive Oils and Fats and Agricultural Productions in the EU (COCERAL)
CropLife Europe
Diagnostics for Animals – Veterinary Diagnostic Manufacturers
Energy Drinks Europe (EDE)
EU Association of Specialty Feed Ingredients and their Mixtures (FEFANA)
EU Specialty Food Ingredients
EU Vegetable Oil and Protein Meal Industry (FEDIOL)
EuroCommerce
Eurogroup for Animals
European Association of Chemical Distributors (FECC)
European Association of Sugar Producers (CEFS)
European Biostimulants Industry Council (EBIC)
European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC)
European Community of Consumer Co-operatives (EuroCoop)
European Consumer Organization (BEUC)
European Council of the Paint, Printing Ink, and Artist’s Colours Industry (CEPE)
European Dairy Association (EDA)
European Federation for Animal Health and Sanitary Security (FESASS)
European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA)
European Federation of Honey Packers and Distributors (FEEDM)
European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD)
European Feed Manufacturers' Federation (FEFAC)
European Flavour Association (EFFA)
European Food Information Council (EUFIC)
European Livestock and Meat Trades Union (UECBV)
European Manufacturers of Feed Minerals Association (EMFEMA)
European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility (ENSSER)
European Pet Food Industry Federation (FEDIAF)
European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)
European Vegetarian Union e.V.(EVU)
European Nurserystock Association (ENA)
Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)
Food Supplements Europe (FSE)
FoodDrinkEurope
Fur Europe
Global Harmonization Initiative (GHI)
International Biocontrol Manufacturers Association (IBMA)
International Federation of Beekeepers’ Association (APIMONDIA)
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – European Union (IFOAM EU)
International Platform of Insects for Food and Feed (IPIFF)
International Probiotic Association – Europe (IPA Europe)

Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN Europe)
PlasticsEurope
Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry Europe (SETAC)
Soft Drinks Europe (UNESDA)
Specialised Nutrition Europe (SNE)
Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME)