NUTRITION & FOOD INNOVATION UNIT

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

MINUTES OF THE 149th MEETING

Held on 16 March 2022, TELE/WEB

(Agreed on 4 April 2022)

Participants

- Panel Members:

Jean-Louis Bresson, Tamas Dalmay (chair), Ian Dewhurst, Michelle Epstein, Leslie George Firbank, Philippe Guerche, Jan Hejatko, Francisco Javier Moreno, Hanspeter Naegeli, Fabien Nogué, Nils Rostoks, Jose Juan Sanchez Serrano, Giovanni Savoini, Eve Veromann and Fabio Veronesi

- European Commission:

DG SANTE : Alexandre Huchelmann and Juliette-Marie Margueritte

- EFSA:

NIF Unit: Ana Afonso, Michele Ardizzone, Giuseppe Condorelli, Giacomo De Sanctis, Silvia Federici, Antonio Fernández Dumont, Andrea Gennaro, Tilemachos Goumperis, Paschalina Grammatikou, Leng Heng (for item 9.1), Dafni Maria Kagkli, Paolo Lenzi, Aleksandra Lewandowska, Franco Maria Neri, Nikoletta Papadopoulou, Pietro Piffanelli, Tommaso Raffaello, Reinhilde Schoonjans and Franz Streissl

MESE Unit: José Ángel Gómez Ruiz

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies for absence were received from Ewen Mullins.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

[1] As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director concerning the selection of members of the Scientific Committee, the Scientific Panels, and the selection of external experts to assist EFSA with its scientific work: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/expertselection.pdf

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence[2] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management[3] EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Working Group members invited to the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the members at the beginning of this meeting.

4. Hearing Experts

Prof. Dominique Turck and Dr. Simon Moxon were invited to present their views for items 9.1 and 9.2 of the present meeting, respectively.

5. Report on written procedures since the 148th GMO Plenary meeting

Since the 148th Plenary meeting, one output has been adopted by written procedure:

5.1. The minutes of the 148th Plenary meeting

The minutes of the 148th Plenary meeting were adopted by written procedure and published on 8 February 2022.

6. Scientific topics for discussion and possible adoption

6.1. Application for authorisation of genetically modified maize MON 89034 × 1507 × MIR162 × NK603 × DAS-40278-9 and subcombinations, for food and feed uses, import and processing in accordance with Regulation EC 1829/2003 by Corteva Agroscience (EFSA-GMO-NL-2018-151)[4]

Maize MON 89034 × 1507 × MIR162 × NK603 × DAS-40278-9 was produced by conventional crossing to combine five single maize events: expressing Cry1A.105, Cry1F, Cry2Ab2 and Vip3Aa19 to confer resistance to certain lepidopteran pests; CP4 EPSPS (including its variant CP4 EPSPS L214P) providing tolerance to glyphosate-containing herbicides; PAT providing tolerance to glufosinate-ammonium-containing herbicides; AAD-1 providing tolerance to 2,4-D- and the AOPP-containing-herbicides; and PMI as selectable marker. The scope of the application EFSA-GMO-NL-2018-151 is for food and feed uses, import and processing and does not include cultivation in the European Union.

The GMO Panel revised the current text, where appropriate and questions were raised and addressed throughout the different sections of the draft opinion. It was agreed that, once the missing information is provided (DNA sequence information, updated bioinformatic analyses and literature search), the GMO Panel will assess it and, where appropriate, amend the text of the draft opinion.

A revised draft opinion will be circulated via email to the GMO Panel and, if no further questions are identified during the revision, the opinion will be proposed for adoption by written procedure.

[2] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf
[3] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf
[4] https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2018-00457

6.2. Application for authorisation of genetically modified RF3 Canola Quality *Brassica juncea*, import and processing in accordance with Regulation EC 1829/2003 by BASF Agricultural Solution Seeds US LLC (EFSA-GMO-NL-2019-158)[5]

Brassica juncea RF3 was developed by conventional breeding, crossing a *B. juncea* line with *B. napus* RF3. The original *B. napus* RF3 parental line was obtained by *Agrobacterium*-mediated transformation of oilseed rape using a single transformation vector to introduce the *bar* gene conferring tolerance to glufosinate-ammonium-containing herbicides and the *barstar* gene coding for Barstar protein, which is part of a breeding system. The scope of the application is to modify the terms of the existing authorisation of the RF3 event to cover the presence of the RF3 event in Canola Quality *B. juncea*. It is the first time that the GMO Panel is assessing a *B. juncea* dossier and the Panel discussed the challenges that the comparative assessment of the *B juncea* is posing due to the high variability in the levels of glucosinolates and some fatty acids (in particular erucic acid and oleic acid) between Canola and Mustard quality varieties of *B. juncea*. Further discussion is needed.

6.3. Application for authorisation of genetically modified oilseed rape LBFLFK, for food and feed uses, import and processing in accordance with Regulation EC 1829/2003 by BASF Plant Science Company GmbH (EFSA-GMO-DE-2019-157)[6]

The application was not discussed due to time constraints.

7. New Mandates

7.1. Applications under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003

None

7.2. Upcoming mandates

None

7.3. Other Requests and Mandates

None

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/the Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission

8.1. Scientific Committee and other Scientific Panel(s) including their Working Groups

The Head of the NIF Unit informed the GMO Panel that the Scientific Committee will discuss its work-programme 2022-2024 at the Plenary meeting to be held on the 27-28 April 2022.[7]

The NIF Unit circulated to the NDA and GMO Panels a survey to collect the 1) views of the Panel members on the topics already identified by the Scientific Committee and 2) proposals for additional

[5] https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2019-00412
[6] https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2019-00394
[7] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/108th-plenary-meeting-scientific-committee

topics, The received feedback will be analysed and submitted in due time to the Scientific Committee for future consideration.

8.2. EFSA including its Working Groups/Task Forces

None

8.3. European Commission

The representatives of the European Commission (EC) informed the GMO Panel on their on-going activities, including approval procedures for applications for which the GMO Panel has delivered a scientific opinion.

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1. Presentation of the NDA Panel activities

The chair of the Panel on nutrition, novel foods and food allergens (NDA) gave a comprehensive presentation on the remit of the NDA Panel and ongoing activities such as the mandate related to nutrient profiling for the development of harmonised mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling and the setting of nutrient profiles for restricting nutrition and health claims on foods; the request from EC to update a series of tolerable upper levels of intake (UL) for micronutrients; the recently finalised scientific advice related to UL for dietary sugars; and the activities on novel and traditional foods. The presentation was followed by questions from the GMO Panel that thanked the Chair of the NDA Panel for the presentation.

9.2. Sequencing quality check assessment: conclusions and considerations for the future

EFSA took the responsibility of DNA sequence quality check for GMO applications in October 2018 when the technical note on quality of DNA sequencing for the molecular characterisation of GM plants[8] entered into force. An overview of the most frequently encountered issues on the quality of the sequences submitted in the dossiers since December 2021 was presented. The Panel experts discussed strengths and limitations of the current approach for sequence quality checks. The completeness and compliance of the raw data submitted in applications was discussed and the Panel decided to continue this discussion at a dedicated MC WG meeting.

10. Any other business

None

11. Adoption of the minutes and next meeting

The minutes of the current meeting will be adopted by written procedure and will be published at: https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/149th-plenary-meeting-gmo-panel

The 150th GMO Plenary meeting will be held on 4-5 May 2022 online.

[8] Accessible at https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/j.efsa.2018.5345