

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON
ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE
152nd Plenary meeting



13 December 2023

09:00-13:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 22 December 2023

Location: Web conference

Attendees:

- Panel Members:
ALVAREZ Julio, VELARDE Antonio, BICOUT Dominique, CALISTRI Paolo, CANALI Elisabetta, DREWE Julian Ashley, GARIN-BASTUJI Bruno, GONZALES ROJAS Jose Luis, GORTAZAR SCHMIDT Christian, HERSKIN Mette, MICHEL Virginie, MIRANDA Miguel Angel, NIELSEN Søren Saxmose, PADALINO Barbara, ROBERTS Helen, SPOOLDER Hans, STÅHL Karl, VILTROP Arvo, WINCKLER Christoph.
- Hearing Expert¹:
Not Applicable
- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:
COHEN Iulia-Delia, AMSLER Sandrine; ALAEZ PONZ Ester; RASMUSSEN DITTMANN Susanne.
- EFSA:
ANTONIOU Sotiria-Eleni, ASHE Sean, AZNAR ASENSIO J Inmaculada, BALDINELLI Francesca, BROGLIA Alessandro, CANDIANI Denise Francesca, DHOLLANDER Sofie, FABRIS Chiara, GERVELMEYER Andrea, KOHNLE Lisa, MANAKIDOU Aikaterini, MUR Lina, ROJO GIMENO Cristina, VITALI Marika.
- Others:
Not Applicable

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management³, 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.

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>

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. Agreement of the minutes of the 151st AHAW Panel Plenary meeting held on 27 September 2023 via Web

The minutes of the 151st Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 27 September 2023.

5. Scientific output(s) submitted for adoption

Not applicable

6. Scientific outputs for information/updates

6.1 Vaccination against highly pathogenic avian influenza: Term of reference 3 and 4. (EFSA-M-2022-00145).

Part 2 of the Scientific Opinion on vaccination in poultry was presented. Terms of Reference (ToR) 3, on surveillance in vaccinated zones, and ToR 4 on risk mitigation measures to be applied in vaccination zones were discussed. The surveillance strategies elaborated by the working group for emergency and preventive vaccination were presented to the Panel, as well as the methodology and the parameters used to assess the effectiveness of the different surveillance strategies outlined in the Scientific Opinion. Also, the preliminary results of the simulations were presented and discussed. The Panel agreed on the general approach proposed and on the proposed models being used in the Opinion to answer ToR 3 and 4.

6.2 Scientific Opinion concerning the use of Diathermic Syncope for stunning cattle (EFSA-Q-2023-00085).

An update on the activities to address the mandate was presented. The applicant had submitted an updated dossier. The replies to the EFSA's request for additional information and some clarifications were presented to the Panel. The deadlines of the deliverables of the tasking grant group were rescheduled. The Panel was informed about the rescheduled working group meetings in 2024, together with the related Panel activities.

6.3 Scientific opinions concerning the on-farm killing of small ruminants (EFSA-Q-2018-00722), the slaughter of horses (EFSA-Q-2023-00310) and the on-farm killing of horses (EFSA-Q-2021-00285). Tollgate 1

These are the three remaining Scientific Opinions of a series on welfare during slaughter and killing of animals initiated in 2018 and that was put on hold due to the receipt of the Farm to Fork (F2F) mandates. The proposal from the working group to update the approach for these Opinions in line to the protocol developed for the F2F was discussed. The Panel agreed with the proposal: precisely, the F2F protocol will be applied to the pre-slaughter (or pre-killing) phases with the selection of highly relevant welfare consequences. For the stunning and bleeding phases, the relevant welfare issues are instead, 'pain' and 'fear'. The approach was tested in the Opinion on the on-farm killing of small ruminants and it was agreed that it will apply to all three opinions. Therefore, Tollgate 1 is passed for the three Scientific Opinions.

6.4 Art. 29 - Request for a Scientific Opinion concerning the protection of turkeys on farms; presenting TORs and discussion - EFSA-Q-2023-00648.

The Panel was updated on the composition of the working group and on the stakeholder engagement approach. In particular, the public consultation and the call for evidence to support the assessment was presented. The call for evidence is focused on eight topics: 1) Husbandry systems of turkeys kept for turkey breeders, hatchery conditions, turkey poults and turkeys kept for meat production; 2) Breeding turkeys and impact on welfare; 3) Space allowance in different husbandry systems; 4) Environment conditions & Environmental enrichment; 5) The practice of mutilations on turkeys; 6) Separation of male and female turkey in the barn; 7) The practice of thinning in turkeys kept for meat production; 8) Welfare assessment in turkey farming.



6.5 Art. 29 - Request for a Scientific Opinion concerning the protection of beef cattle. Tollgate 1 - EFSA-Q-2023-00535.

The Panel was consulted regarding the protocol for the request for a Scientific Opinion concerning the protection of beef cattle. The TORs have been translated into risk assessment questions and sub-questions using the APRIO (Agent-Pathway-Receptor-Intervention-Output) approach. The Panel agreed with the approach for the assessment and Tollgate 1 was successfully passed.

The Panel would like clarification on whether the APRIO approach is to be used for all animal welfare mandates and how much flexibility there might be when this approach is used. These issues are to be further discussed in the following plenary meeting.

7. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/ Scientific Panels/EFSA/ EC

Not applicable

8. New Mandates

8.1 Request for a scientific opinion concerning the protection of animals kept for fur production.

The new mandate received in December on the protection of animals kept for fur production was presented and discussed at the meeting. The Panel member Mette Herskin was suggested⁴ as chair of the working group for this mandate.

9. Other topics for information and/or discussion

9.1 Short guide for the implementation of uncertainty analysis in animal welfare.

A short guide for the implementation of the uncertainty analysis in animal welfare Opinions was presented. It was agreed that working groups can follow this guide to comply with EFSA requirements to run and communicate uncertainty analysis during the assessments. The guide includes 5 steps: i. identify the sources of uncertainty, ii. select key conclusions (if needed), iii. rephrase key conclusions so that they refer to well defined quantities of interest, iv. perform the uncertainty judgement, v. report the uncertainty in the conclusions.

10. Any other business

Not applicable

11. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 24th January 2024 via teleconference.

⁴ As the Declaration of Interest of the Mette Herskin was not approved on 13 December 2023 for the involvement as Chair of the working group on fur animals, the minutes published on 22 December 2023 have been amended as following: "The Panel member Mette Herskin was announced as chair of the working group for this mandate", was replaced by: "The Panel member Mette Herskin was suggested as chair of the working group for this mandate". The minutes were republished on 12 January 2023.