

**SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON
GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS**
163rd Plenary meeting



15th May 2024

09:00-15:15

MINUTES - Agreed on 24 May 2024

Location: Teleconference

Attendees:

○ Panel Members:

Ewen Mullins (chair), Jean-Louis Bresson, Tamas Dalmay, 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

○ Hearing Experts¹:

Not Applicable

○ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

DG SANTE: Alexandre Huchelmann, Kathleen Lehmann (for items 5.1 and 5.2), Olga Orlova and Mara Sgroi.

○ EFSA:

NIF Unit: Ana Afonso, Giacomo De Sanctis, Antonio Fernández Dumont, Andrea Gennaro, Aina Belen Gil Gonzalez, Tilemachos Goumperis, Dafni Maria Kagkli, Paolo Lenzi, Ana Martin Camargo, Franco Maria Neri, Nikoletta Papadopoulou, Pietro Piffanelli, Tommaso Raffaello, Marta Rodrigues and Reinhilde Schoonjans

FDP Unit: Claudia Parisi (for items 5.1 and 5.2)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. No apologies were received.

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.

4. Report on written procedure since the 162nd Plenary

4.1 Agreement of the minutes of the 162nd Plenary meeting held on 13th March 2024

The [minutes](#) of the 162nd plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 22nd March 2024.

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



5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

5.1 Scientific opinion on new developments in biotechnology applied to microorganisms EFSA-Q-2023-00050

At the 161st Plenary meeting of the GMO Panel, the draft opinion on new developments in biotechnology applied to microorganisms was endorsed and a public consultation launched.⁴ The consultation was closed 8/4/24 and about four hundred comments were received. The assessment of the comments is taking place in the GMM-NGT WG⁵. The GMO Panel revised the updated draft opinion. The opinion will be further revised by the GMM-NGT WG and the draft opinion will be presented at the next GMO Plenary for discussion and possible adoption.

5.2 European Parliament's request for a scientific opinion on recent studies on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on plants obtained by certain NGT and their food and feed and amending regulation (EU) 2017/625 EFSA-Q-2024-00178

The European Parliament on 22 February 2024 requested EFSA in accordance with Article 29 of Regulation 178/2002, to deliver a scientific opinion on the analysis by ANSES on Annex 1⁶ of the EC proposal for a regulation on plants obtained by certain NGTs and their food and feed and amending Reg (EU) 2017/625.

The GMO Panel was informed that the activity on the mandate is progressing by the cross cutting WG.⁷ The structure and the methodology followed by the WG were introduced and a first draft of the opinion presented. The GMO Panel revised the draft opinion. The opinion will be presented at the next GMO Plenary for discussion and possible adoption.

5.3 Update on the self-task mandate of the GMO Panel on a scientific opinion regarding protein safety assessment EFSA-Q-2023-00664

EFSA informed the GMO Panel on the progresses made on the self-task mandate of the GMO panel on a scientific opinion regarding protein safety. It was presented and discussed the current proposal on how to structure the opinion and the foreseen new timelines due to a postponement of the activities. It is expected to endorse the scientific opinion and launch the public consultation at the end of 2024. The final adoption of the scientific opinion estimated to happen by mid-2025. Further discussion is needed.

6. Update on new Mandates

6.1 Applications

- Renewal applications
 - GMFF-2023-21254 Application for renewal of genetically modified maize MON 87427 in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 (RX041)⁸
 - GMFF-2024-22651 Application for renewal of genetically modified maize T25 in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 (RX042)⁹

⁴ The public consultation was accessible at: <https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0ITk000000C3VB/pc0848>

⁵ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2023-01/gmm-ngt-minutes.pdf>

⁶ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:c88fe9ac-1c06-11ee-806b-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_2&format=PDF

⁷ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-04/applications-cross-cutting.pdf>

⁸ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00182>

⁹ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00185>



- GMFF-2024-21890 Application for renewal of genetically modified cotton GHB614 x LLCotton25 in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 (RX043) ¹⁰
- GMFF-2024-23010 Application for renewal of genetically modified cotton T304-40 in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 (RX044) ¹¹
- GMFF-2023-21252 Application for renewal of genetically modified maize NK603 x T25 in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 (RX045) ¹²
- GMFF-2024-23560 Application for renewal of genetically modified soybean 305423 in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 (RX046) ¹³

6.2 Mandates

- Assessment of additional information related to the application for authorisation of food and feed containing, consisting of and produced from genetically modified soybean MON 87705 x MON 87708 x MON 89788 ¹⁴

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

7.1 Scientific Committee

The Chair of the GMO Panel reported on discussions at the last Scientific Committee meeting and ongoing EFSA activities.¹⁵

7.2 European Commission

The representatives of the EC informed the GMO Panel on their ongoing activities, including approval procedures for applications for which the GMO Panel has delivered a scientific opinion.

7.3 Scientific Panel(s) including their Working Groups

The GMO Panel was updated on discussions of transversal relevance that took place in the last working groups molecular characterisation (MC), comparative risk assessment and ERA (CompERA) and food and feed (FF).

8. Any other business

8.1 EFSA's Executive Director meet the GMO Panel

EFSA's Executive Director, Bernhard Url, visited the GMO Panel during the plenary meeting. Views were exchanged about the work and challenges faced by the Panel. Bernhard Url extended his thanks to the Panel for their commitment and dedication to EFSA's work.

8.2 EFSA 2023-2024 Expert Feedback Survey

In December 2023 the experts of the EFSA Scientific Panels and of the Scientific committee were invited to fill a survey. The questions investigate the scientific and organisational support provided by EFSA and the expert's engagement in working with EFSA. The main findings of the survey, as well as the specific results for the GMO Panel were presented and discussed. The results of the survey will be used as input for lesson learnt and follow-up actions for the new Panel 2024-2029.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 19th - 20th June 2024 in Parma.

¹⁰ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00186>

¹¹ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00196>

¹² <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00266>

¹³ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00274>

¹⁴ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00277>

¹⁵ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/118th-plenary-meeting-scientific-committee>