

97th meeting of the EFSA Management Board – public session

Location: Parma and hybrid

Management Board participants	
Aivars BĒRZIŅŠ - Chair (Latvia)	Koycho KOEV* (Bulgaria)
Pamela BYRNE - Vice-Chair (Ireland)	Hendrik KUUSK* (Estonia)
Ana BATALHA (Portugal)	Sanja MUSIĆ MILANOVIĆ (European Parliament)
Tejs BINDERUP (Denmark)	Isabel PEÑA-REY (Spain)
Ingrid BORG (Malta)	Michael PIELKE (Commission)
Claire BURY (Commission)	Martin POLOVKA* (Slovakia)
Floriana CIMMARUSTI* (Consumer Org.s)	Egidijus PUMPUTIS (Lithuania)
Laszlo CSUTAK-NAGY* (Romania)	Josefine SINKOVITS (Austria)
Beáta CZEGLÉDI* (Hungary)	Darja SOKOLIĆ (Croatia)
Ugo DELLA MARTA (Italy)	Annica SOLHSTRÖM* (Sweden)
Herman DIRICKS (Belgium)	Katarzyna STOŚ (Poland)
Jernej DROFENIK* (Slovenia)	Astrid THORS (European Parliament)
Rebeca FERNANDEZ* (Industry Org.)	Annette TOFT (Farmers Org.)
Jindrich FIALKA (Czech Republic)	Marie-Luise TREBES (Germany)
Ingunn Midttun GODAL (Norway)	Benoît VALLET (France)
Patrick HAU* (Luxemburg)	Ana VILORIA (The Netherlands)
Sebastian HIELM (Finland)	Stelios YIANNOPOULOS (Cyprus)
Hrönn Ólína JÖRUNDSÓTTIR (Iceland)	Antonis ZAMPELAS (Greece)
Janne Britt KRAKHELLEN (EFTA S.A.)	

Apologies: Environmental NGOs.

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority	
Bernhard URL (Executive Director)	Carlos das NEVES
Lucia BILARDI	Peter DE PAUW
Gian Luca BONDURI	Guilhem de SEZE
Dirk DETKEN	Alberto SPAGNOLLI
Barbara GALLANI	Selomey YAMADJAKO
Nikolaus Georg KRIZ	

Also attending:

Ewen MULLINS, Chair of the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms*

*Participation online



Simon MORE, Chair of the EFSA Scientific Committee

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SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

The Management Board **adopted**:

- The Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 (AAR 2023) and the assessment of the AAR 2023.
- The Decision on the appointment of the members of the EFSA Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels for the term 2024-2029.
- The updated list of Art. 36 competent organisations designated by the Member States.
- The amendment to EFSA's budget 2024.
- The Decision opting out from the application of the EC 2023's implementing rules of the Staff Regulations on the prevention of harassment.
- The Decision establishing the new scientific network on veterinary entomology.

In addition, the Board **noted**:

- The presentation on the feedback received from the Member States to the questionnaire on partnership with EFSA in the area of food/feed risk assessment.
- The update from the Management Board sub-group on independence.
- The presentation on the EFSA Journal performance.
- The feedback from the Chair of the Audit Committee.
- The presentation on the work of the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms.



Item 1: Welcome by the Chair

1. Aivars Bērziņš, Management Board Chair, opened the 97th Management Board meeting by welcoming the Board members, Executive Director, Chair of the Scientific Committee, EFSA's Management Team, EFSA staff present and external observers.
2. The Environmental NGOs were not represented at the meeting since the procedure for their selection had not been finalised yet (see also point 26 below).
3. The audio-file on this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

4. The Management Board adopted by consensus the agenda of the meeting. The agenda was adopted with the addition of the following items under Any Other Business: (1) Update from the Commission on the procedure for the appointment of the Management Board representatives of the Environmental NGOs; (2) Feedback from the Advisory Forum meeting held on 6-7 March 2024.
5. The audio-file on this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 3: Board members' Annual and Oral Declarations of Interests

6. Pursuant to Article 13 of the [Management Board Rules of Procedure](#), the Management Board took note of the Executive Director's assessment of the Declarations of Interests submitted by 11 of its members and confirmed it.
7. In addition, the Management Board confirmed the assessment, carried out by the EFSA Legal Affairs Services, of the Executive Director's updated Declaration of Interest.
8. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 4: EFSA Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023

9. Following the presentation introduced by Bernhard Url (Executive Director) and Selomey Yamadjako (Head of the Management Services Department), the Management Board adopted by consensus the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023, which includes information on the implementation of EFSA's workplan and budget execution for the year 2023. As well, in compliance with Article 47 of the Financial Regulations applicable to EFSA and based on the report of the Chair of the Audit Committee, Mr Herman Diricks, the Management Board adopted by consensus the assessment of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023, which was drafted by the Audit Committee. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) is available online for a detailed description. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

10. **Actions:**

- EFSA to revise the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 in line with the comments received from the Management Board on the meeting day.
- EFSA to notify the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 to the relevant Institutions of the European Union and to publish it online.
- EFSA to periodically report to the Management Board on the management of the backlog of questions.

Item 5: Appointment of the members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels

11. Nik Kriz (Head of Risk Assessment Services Department) introduced the outcome of the selection procedure carried out by EFSA in application of the [Management Board decision laying down the rules on the selection, appointment and operations of the Scientific](#)



[Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups](#). In particular, he provided an overview on the composition of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels in terms of expertise, average age, gender and nationality of applicants and selected experts. Concluding, he outlined the actions planned to be carried out closely after the Management Board appointment which, among others, include the publication of the name of the appointed experts. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) is available online for a detailed description.

12. The Management Board adopted by consensus the Decision on the appointment of the members of the Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels, as well as the reserve list for the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Panels. The mandate of the renewed Scientific Committee and Scientific Panels will start on 1 July 2024. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 6: Amendments to the Article 36 list of organisations

13. The Management Board adopted by consensus the updated list of Art. 36 competent organisations designated by the Member States, which now includes 3 new organisations designated by Estonia, Italy and Luxembourg.
14. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 7: Amendment of the EFSA budget

15. The Management Board adopted by consensus the Decision amending EFSA's budget 2024 with the incorporation of the bank interests accrued in 2023. The Management Board also noted EFSA's proposal to amend the preliminary budget 2025 by written procedure. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 8: Implementing rules of the Staff Regulations

16. The Management Board adopted by consensus the Decision opting out from the application of the EC 2023's implementing rules of the Staff Regulations on the prevention of harassment. EFSA will consider the adoption of the model decision for EU agencies that is being developed by the Agencies Standing Working Party in consultation with the Commission Directorate General on Human Resources. EFSA will keep the Management Board informed of this process and its associated timeframe. Meanwhile, the 2017's Management Board Decision on the policy on protecting the dignity of the person and preventing psychological harassment and sexual harassment continues applying. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 9: EFSA scientific network on veterinary entomology

17. The Management Board adopted by consensus the Decision establishing the new scientific Network on Veterinary Entomology. Following up on the consultation with the Advisory Forum, EFSA will adopt the network's Terms of Reference. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) is available online for a detailed description. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).
18. **Action:** EFSA to notify to the Management Board the adopted Terms of Reference of the new scientific network on veterinary entomology.

Item 10: Feedback from the Audit Committee

19. Herman Diricks, Chair of the Audit Committee, updated the Management Board on the outcome of the meeting held on the previous day while addressing the agenda item no. 4 on the EFSA Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023.



Item 11: Partnership with the Member States for risk assessment

20. The Management Board noted the presentation of Alberto Spagnolli (Senior Policy Coordinator), who presented the results of the analysis of the Member States' response to the questionnaire circulated by EFSA in summer 2023 on the partnership between EFSA and the Member States in performing food risk assessment. In particular, he highlighted the opportunities for potential cooperation, the Member States' readiness for partnership and the blocking factors, as well as some preliminary ideas on possible actions to carry out in pursuing the road of a closer cooperation between EFSA and the Member States. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) is available online for a detailed description.
21. The Management Board members exchanged views and commented that the subject would deserve further reflections. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at the following [link](#).
22. **Action:** Member States that did not respond to the questionnaire are invited to do so.

Item 12: Update from the sub-group on independence

23. Pamela Byrne, Chair of the Management Board sub-group on independence, introduced the work carried out by the sub-group in revising EFSA's Independence policy. She presented the ongoing activities aimed to implement the recommendations in the [report on the ex-post evaluation of EFSA's Independence Policy](#) that in December 2023 the Management Board agreed to address. With regard to the recommendation suggesting to mention political pressure among the type of interests that can interfere with the independence of scientific work, the sub-group noted that a definition of political pressure is not harmonized at EU level and that objective screening criteria to detect it, as also underlined in the ex-post evaluation, are poorly applicable. The sub-group, therefore, recommended to the Management Board not to pursue that recommendation. Pamela Byrne concluded informing the fellow Board members that the sub-group plans to present the revised Independence policy for possible adoption by the Management Board in June 2024. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) is available online for a detailed description. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at the following [link](#).

Item 13: EFSA Journal: performance and developments

24. The Management Board noted the presentation of Barbara Gallani (Head of Communication and Partnership Department) on the EFSA Journal's recent performance, which also covered the new initiatives that EFSA has brought forward to increase the impact and relevance of the Journal. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) is available online for a detailed description. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at the following [link](#).

Item 14: Update from the Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms

25. Following the introduction by Prof. Simon More, Chair of the Scientific Committee, Prof. Ewen Mullins provided the Management Board with an overview of the work carried out by the scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) is available online for a detailed description. The audio-file on the presentation and discussion of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Item 15: Any Other Business

26. Claire Bury, representative of the European Commission, updated the Management Board on the state of implementation of the ongoing procedure for the selection of the Board members representing the Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations. She reminded that the



Management Board members representing the civil society and the food chain interests are appointed by the Council following consultation with the European Parliament, and on the basis of a list of candidates drawn by the Commission. The call for expression of interest was published on the Official Journal of the EU on 23 October 2023 and widely promoted among the networks of the Commission and EFSA. The initial deadline for application (i.e.: 4 December 2023) was extended twice: first until 24 January 2024, and until 26 February then. The applications received by the Commission are now subject to the eligibility check. The audio-file on the presentation of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

27. Barbara Gallani (Head of Communication and Partnership Department) updated the Management Board on the latest exchanges carried out in the framework the Advisory Forum meeting held on 6 and 7 March 2024. Among others, the Advisory Forum discussed around the activities of the Advisory Group on Data, which mandate has been expanded to include Artificial Intelligence too; the implementation of the Focal Point operational framework; risk communication, in particular focusing on the African Swine Fever campaign; and partnership in risk assessment and harmonisation of guidance documents. The audio-file on the presentation of this agenda item is available online at this [link](#).

Summary of actions

Action reference	Action	Deadline	Status
March 21, 2024 - 1	EFSA to revise the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 in line with the comments received from the Management Board on the meeting day.	21 March 2024	DONE
March 21, 2024 - 2	EFSA to notify the Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 to the relevant Institutions of the European Union and to publish it online.	1 March 2024	DONE
March 21, 2024 - 3	EFSA to periodically report to the Management Board on the management of the backlog of questions.	As of 2024	ONGOING
March 21, 2024 - 4	EFSA to notify to the Management Board the adopted Terms of Reference of the new scientific network on veterinary entomology.	ASAP	DONE
March 21, 2024 - 5	Member States that did not respond to the questionnaire on partnership in risk assessment are invited to do so.	ASAP	OPEN