EU Member States Initiative Group on PFAS

Motivations, path and outcomes of the Initiative

Report from the Steering board (SB)
and Risk Assessors Team (RAT) meetings

Presented at the EFSA Workshop on latest advancements of PFASs risk assessment
17.11.2025

by Matthieu Schuler (SB Chair) and Jorge Numata (RAT Chair)

PFAS risk management: key characteristics

History

– From legacy PFAS management to acknowledging the need for a broader approach

Main priority: EU REACH PFAS restriction process

– Cut exposure sources (using grouping approach and cost of environmental burden)

– Takes time (wide group of substances, variety of uses)

– Pending question: until restriction's effectiveness, how to manage the historical and existing exposure

=> Restriction Needs to be supported, needs to be completed !

anses

PFAS risk management : key characteristics

Specific challenges

– The grouping approach tends to suggest that all the substances would be of the same toxicity

– The number of substances « under the spotlights » OVERWHELMS the capacity of both research and regulatory activities to be characterised in a timely manner

– The public attention is acute, due to: the emergence of the term «forever chemicals», number of substances, feeling of uncertainty

Need for an (as much as possible) harmonised or coordinated approach for existing contamination and associated exposures

anses

Initiative rationale

Ambitious goals

– Avoid duplication, share developments in all aspects of risks, identify shared concerns and need for convergence

Narrow pathway :

– No replacement of existing expertise processes / organisations

– No regulatory power or capacity to issue mandates

Original organisation

– 2 circles of contributors :

  – Steering Board for the sharing science to policy concerns

  – Risk Assessors Team for in-depth sharing of scientific assessments

– Strong support to start **granted by EFSA**

anses

PFAS Initiative : path followed

Background

- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS): group of **synthetic chemicals** used as components in a wide range of industrial applications and consumer products (enhanced water-resistant properties)
- **Persistence and widespread use**: found in the environment. **Residues** detected in humans and in wildlife, prompting concern about **impacts on health**
- Beginning of the 21st century: **environmental** impact and **toxicity** to human and mammalian life studied in depth
- PFAS commonly described as **persistent organic pollutants or "forever chemicals"** because they remain in the environment for long periods of time
- PFAS: **issue of high and growing concern** for risk managers, risk assessors and general public worldwide

Discussions during the 86th AF meeting December 2022

Discussions during the 87th AF meeting March 2023

Initiative group on PFAS launched : meetings in July and September 2023

Kick-off meeting of risk assessement experts January 2024

Organisation of the discussion groups, set-up of Terms of reference 2024

Regulars meetings of Steering Board and Risk Assessors Team, Activity report 2024-2025

PFAS initiative : the project's participating countries

- SB member : SFA
- RAT member : SFA

- SB member : VKM, IMR
- RAT member : IMR

- SB member : DTU
- RAT members : DTU

- coChair SB : NVWA
- coChair RAT : RIVM
- RAT members : WUR, MU

- coChair SB : ANSES
- Support SB: ANSES
- RAT members: ANSES

- Participation as observer : EFSA (ASSESS Department)

- coChair RAT : BfR
- Support RAT: BfR

- SB member : AGES
- RAT members : AGES

- SB member : ALVA

- RAT member : FSVO

- RAT members : HAPIH

- RAT members : ISZUM, UNIMI, ISS

- SB member : FSSA
- RAT members : FSSA

Results obtained and following goals

Strengths of the initiative

– Eagerness to share and contribute from participating institutions

– Diversity of countries

– Capacity to exchange with international PFAS players

– Low formalism

New challenges identified

– Draw and follow an explicit roadmap

– Specific focus on data sharing and potentially crossing environmental data with health data

– Keep flexibility to cope with burning questions (among PFAS)

– Provide for coherence within the risk management of POPs

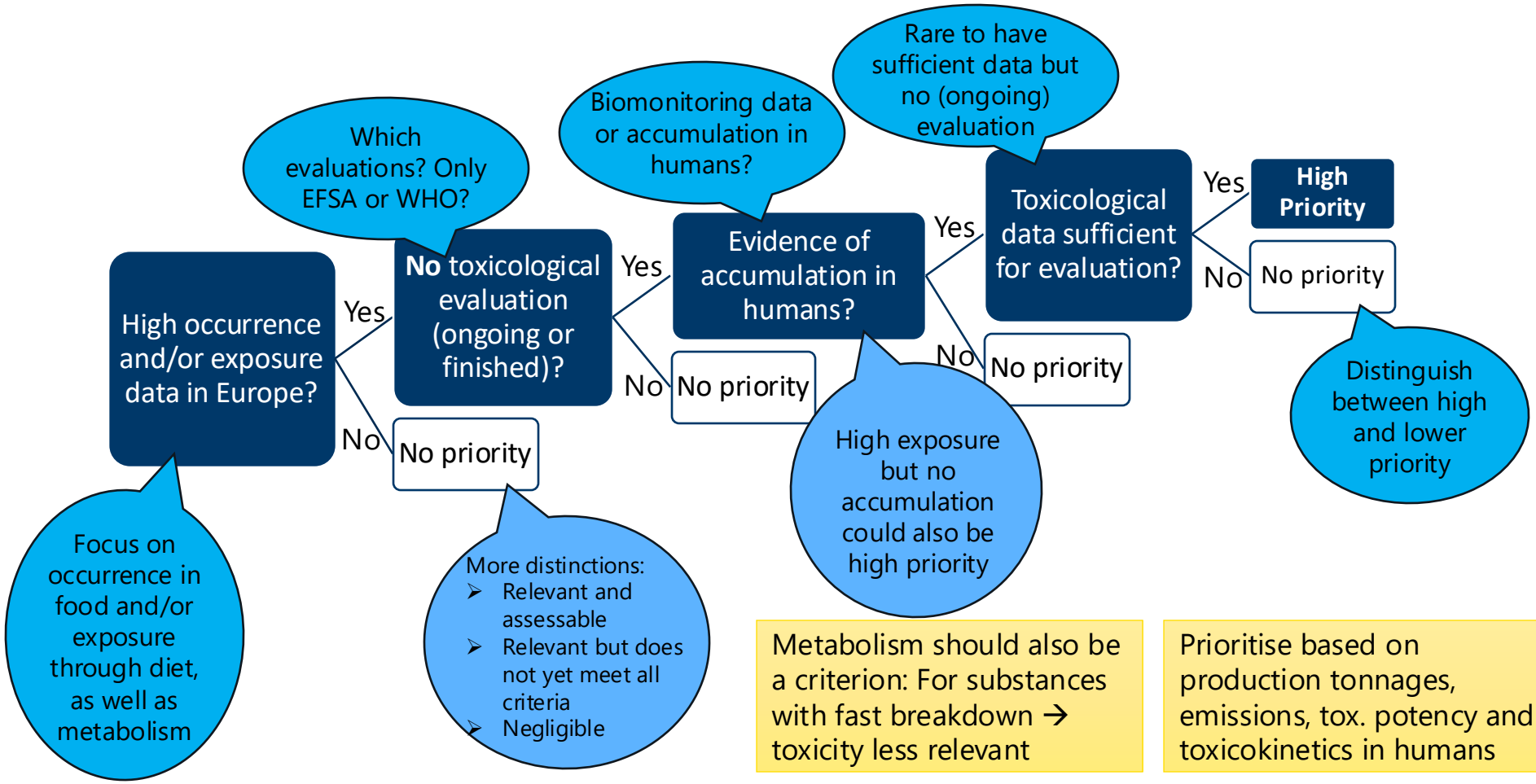
Risk Assessors Team (RAT) Meetings until now

- 8-jul-24: 2nd RAT meeting
- 15-nov-24: 3rd RAT meeting
- 24-mar-25: 4th RAT meeting
- 23-may-25: 1st subgroup “Toxicological information of PFAS beyond EFSA-4“
- 27-jun-25: 5th RAT meeting
- 8-oct-25: 6th RAT meeting
- 5-dec-25: 1st subgroup “PFAS Transfer in the food chain“

Central repository for research, RA activities and scientific communication on PFAS, example BfR

Studies on the transfer of PFAS in the food chain: feeding experiments and toxicokinetic modeling (ongoing: milk goats, fattening chickens, fattening lambs).
Risk assessment and mitigation of the transfer of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from soil to milk and meat from ruminants. In situ investigations, blood monitoring, and toxicokinetic modeling in the canton of St. Gallen, Switzerland. Cooperation with Agroscope, CH.
Accumulation of PFAS in tissues of mammals (wild boars: paper online; humans: ongoing sample analysis) Mertens et al., Sci Total Environ 2025 Jul
Investigations on molecular mechanisms of toxicity.
PFAS accumulation in human tissues (autopsy samples): ongoing analysis
Associations between internal exposure and cardiovascular and other outcomes (ongoing evaluation)
Cohort of children in Leipzig, Germany. - associations between internal exposure and vaccine levels at the age of one and two years - internal exposure during childhood (ongoing sample analysis)
Ulm Birth cohort: Early PFAS exposure and associations with parameter of sperm quality in adulthood (Paper will be submitted soon)
Kinetics of 8 short-chain and alternative PFAS in humans (study with 12 participants, recruitment completed, ongoing analysis and evaluation)
Investigations into the factors influencing PFAS occurence in food-producing wild animals (game and bees) and their products

Toxicological information of PFAS beyond EFSA-4
Selection Criteria still under discussion



Toxicological information of PFAS beyond EFSA-4 **Selection of substances (*1/2*)**

No.	Substance	CAS RN
1	6:2-Fluorotelomer alcohol (6:2-FTOH)	647-42-7
2	6:2-Fluorotelomer sulfonamide alkyl betaine (6:2-FTAB)	34455-29-3
3	6:2-Fluorotelomer sulfonic acid (6:2-FTS) #	27619-97-2
4	Short-chain perfluoroalkane sulfonamides (FASAs)	
4a	Perfluorobutane sulfonamide (FBSA)	30334-69-1
4b	Perfluoropentane sulfonamide (FPeSA)	82765-76-2
4c	Perfluorohexane sulfonamide (FHxSA)	41997-13-1
5	Bis(perfluoralkansulfonyl)imide (bis-FASIs)	
5a	Lithium bis(perfluoromethanesulfonyl)imide (HQ-115)	90076-65-6
6	Pentafluorosulfanyl perfluorosulfonic acids (SF_5-PFSAs)	
6a	8-(Pentafluorosulfanyl)perfluorooctyl sulfonic acid	2089109-34-0

#: if not already sufficiently covered by ANSES evaluation

BfR

Toxicological information of PFAS beyond EFSA-4 **Selection of substances (*2/2*)**

No.	Substance	CAS RN
7	Polyfluoroalkyl phosphate esters (monoPAPs and diPAPs)	
7a	6:2-monoPAP: 6:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate monoester	57678-01-0
7b	8:2-monoPAP: 8:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate monoester	57678-03-2
7c	6:2-diPAP: 6:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate diester	57677-95-9
7d	8:2-diPAP: 8:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate diester	678-41-1
7e	6:2/8:2-diPAP: 6:2/8:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate diester	943913-15-3
7f	8:2/10:2-diPAP: 8:2/10:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate diester	1158182-60-5
7g	10:2/12:2-diPAP: 10:2/12:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate diester	1158182-61-6
7h	10:2/10:2-diPAP: 10:2 Fluorotelomer phosphate diester	1895-26-7
8	Trifluoromethane sulphonic acid (TFMeS)	1493-13-6
9	diSAmPAP: Bis[2-[N-ethyl(heptadecafluorooctanesulphonyl)amino]ethyl] hydrogen phosphate)	2965-52-8

The Risk Assessors Team of the AF EU MS PFAS initiative

- **Concretely strengthens ties**
  - Example: AT and CH working closely together on toxicology of PFAS beyond EFSA-4

- **Avoids duplications**
  - Example: Advance notice of transfer studies on cows in NL allows DE to concentrate on other species