PESTICIDES PEER REVIEW UNIT

5th Joint EFSA/ECHA Working Group meeting on TFA fate and behaviour

8 September 2026 (09:00-17:00)

MINUTES - Agreed on 28 September 2026

Location: Virtual

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:

Michael Stemmer, Joannis Kandris, Helena Banning, Signe Rasmussen

- Hearing Experts[1]:

Dr. Finnian Freeling - Hearing expert in analytical methods and TFA anaysis

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Valerio Spinosi

- ECHA:

Aiga Latsone, Evelyne Frauman, Lan Dupuis

- EFSA:

PLANTS UNIT: Roberto Lava (Chair), Magdalini Sarntaridou (trainee)

PREV Unit: Dimitra Kardassi

- Apologies:

None

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups 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 and the preparatory meetings listed under agenda item "Preparatory meeting/s with Risk Assessment". No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in these meetings have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of these meetings.

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[2] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

[3] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf

IV. Agreement of the minutes of the 4th Working Group meeting held on 2 July 2026, in Parma and via web-conference

The minutes of the 4th Working Group meeting were agreed by written procedure on 17th July 2026.

V. Scientific topics for discussion

The Working Group reviewed progress with the full-text assessment of the selected publications. The assessment of the remaining publications is on-going.

The Working Group considered the consolidated review of monitoring reports from several Member States. The reviewed reports provide information on the environmental occurrence of TFA and reported concentration levels in different environmental compartments. However, differences in scope, study design, reporting formats and assessment approaches limit direct comparison across the available datasets. It was agreed that the Scientific Opinion would include a concise synthesis of the information considered, together with an overview of its inherent limitations, while the reviewed reports and supporting references would be listed in an annex.

The Working Group reviewed the data-mining exercise covering PFAS pesticide active substances and studies on degradation in soil and water/sediment systems, photolysis, hydrolysis, lysimeters and related endpoints. The full extraction will be retained as supporting information, while the opinion will present the data used in the assessment. The database will be consolidated into a single working version, independently verified.

Hearing with the expert in analytical methods

The Working Group heard Dr Finnian Freeling from the TZW DVGW - Technologiezentrum Wasser (German Water Centre) on analytical methods, screening approaches and transformation pathways in the environment relevant to TFA.

The expert addressed questions prepared by the Working Group members.

Drafting of the Scientific Opinion

The structure of the Scientific Opinion was reviewed. To remain within the expected length, detailed datasets and technical material will be moved to annexes or supporting information where appropriate. Analytical considerations from the hearing will be integrated into the assessment, and a concise description of the literature-search and selection process will be included.

VI. Next meeting

The next Working Group meeting will be held on 4 and 5 November 2026 in Parma and via web conference.

PESTICIDES PEER REVIEW UNIT

4th Joint EFSA/ECHA Working Group meeting on TFA fate and behaviour

2 July 2026 (10:00-17:00)

MINUTES - Agreed on 17 July 2026

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Location: Virtual

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:

Michael Stemmer, Joannis Kandris, Helena Banning, Signe Rasmussen

- Hearing Experts[1]:

None

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Valerio Spinosi

- ECHA:

Aiga Latsone, Evelyne Frauman, Lan Dupuis

- EFSA:

PLANTS UNIT: Roberto Lava (Chair), Magdalini Sarntaridou (trainee)

PREV Unit: Dimitra Kardassi

- Apologies:

None

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups 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 and the preparatory meetings listed under agenda item "Preparatory meeting/s with Risk Assessment". No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in these meetings have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of these meetings.

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[3] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf

IV. Agreement of the minutes of the 3rd Working Group meeting held on 28-29 May 2026, in Parma and via web-conference

The minutes of the 3rd Working Group meeting were agreed by written procedure on 19th June 2026.

V. Scientific topics for discussion

Literature review

The Working Group reviewed the outcome of the targeted literature search and noted that the full-text screening had been completed. The relevant papers cover topics including microbial degradation, photolysis processes, plant uptake, environmental fate and monitoring data related to TFA. Main thematic areas were identified in order to facilitate the extraction of evidence. The experts agreed that the next phase should focus on extracting the most relevant quantitative and qualitative information from the selected studies and assessing how this evidence can support the objectives of ToRs.

Assessment Methodologies and Modelling Approaches

The experts discussed different approaches for estimating environmental concentrations of TFA and reviewed the limitations of simplified calculations compared with regulatory groundwater exposure assessments. Strengths and limitations of the available experimental studies were considered.

The Working Group welcomed information on ongoing and planned follow-up projects aimed at improving the understanding of TFA behaviour in environmental systems. The experts considered these initiatives particularly valuable because they could provide experimental evidence addressing several of the uncertainties identified during the meeting.

Draft opinion and Annexes

The Working Group discussed organisational aspects related to drafting the Scientific Opinion and related appendices/annexes.

Tasks were distributed among Working Group members.

VI. Next meeting

The next Working Group meeting will be held on 8 September 2026 via web conference.

PESTICIDES PEER REVIEW UNIT

3rd Joint EFSA/ECHA Working Group meeting on TFA fate and behaviour

28 May 2026 (14:00-18:00)
29 May 2026 (09:00-13:00)
MINUTES - Agreed on 19 June 2026

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Location: EFSA - Parma

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:

Michael Stemmer, Joannis Kandris, Helena Banning

- Hearing Experts[1]:

None

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Valerio Spinosi

- ECHA:

Aiga Latsone, Evelyne Frauman (online), Lan Dupuis (trainee, online)

- Apologies

Signe Rasmussen.

- EFSA:

PLANTS UNIT: Roberto Lava (Chair), Amarela Becirovic, Magdalini Sarntaridou (trainee)

PREV Unit: Dimitra Kardassi

MESE Unit: Irene Pilar Munoz Guajardo

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Signe Rasmussen.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

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no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of these meetings.

IV. Agreement of the minutes of the 2nd Working Group meeting held on 23 March 2026 via web-conference

The minutes of the 2nd Working Group meeting were agreed by written procedure on 10th April 2026.

V. Scientific topics for discussion

Literature review, mechanistic understanding and data integration

Discussions addressed the ongoing literature review and the types of evidence to be considered relevant for understanding TFA formation. Particular attention was given to the balance between monitoring studies and mechanistic studies, with recognition that much of the available literature documents focus on occurrence rather but provides limited information on the causal processes. The group considered the inclusion of broader PFAS-related studies (e.g. photochemical or plant uptake studies) as a way to strengthen mechanistic understanding. There was also discussion on how best to integrate physicochemical information, degradation behaviour, and regulatory data into a coherent evidence base to support modelling and assessment.

Analytical challenges, experimental limitations and implications for assessment

A substantial part of the discussion focused on the limitations of current experimental designs and analytical methodologies for detecting TFA. Experts explored shortcomings of OECD test guidelines, including constraints related to study duration, radiolabeling strategies, and the detection of low-level or unidentified metabolites. Analytical issues such as contamination, variability, insufficient sensitivity, and losses during sample preparation were also highlighted, alongside the challenge of balancing between major and relevant metabolites. More broadly, it was discussed that non-detection cannot be interpreted as absence of formation. Also, methodological limitations may significantly influence the observed outcomes and the interpretation in regulatory assessments.

Discussions continued on how to approach the different ToRs, including the methodologies and evidence to be considered under each ToR.

Tasks were distributed among Working Group members.

VI. Next meeting

The next Working Group meeting will be held on 2 July 2026 via web conference.

PESTICIDES PEER REVIEW UNIT

2nd Joint EFSA/ECHA Working Group meeting on TFA fate and behaviour

23 March 2026
10:00-17:00
MINUTES - Agreed on 10 April 2026

Location: Web conference

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:

Michael Stemmer, Joannis Kandris, Signe Rasmussen, Helena Banning

- Hearing Experts[1]:

None

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

None

- ECHA:

Aiga Latsone, Lan Dupuis (trainee)

- EFSA:

PLANTS UNIT: Roberto Lava (Chair), Amarela Becirovic, Magdalini Sarntaridou (trainee)

PREV Unit: Dimitra Kardassi

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

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IV. Update on the preliminary literature search screening

The WG was provided with an overview of the ongoing literature search and abstract screening currently being conducted in DistillerSR.

V. Discussion on ToRs

The proposed approach for addressing ToR1 was discussed, and agreement was reached on the type of information to be collected and reported for each individual PFAS pesticide/biocide.

The proposed approaches under ToR2, including the suitability and limitations of existing OECD guidelines, were also discussed.

In addition, proposed approaches for ToR3 were presented and discussed, focusing on the need for alternative or complementary assessment approaches to evaluate TFA formation and its environmental relevance in cases where standard guideline studies and existing data are insufficient to conclusively demonstrate formation of TFA.

VI. Next meeting

The next Working Group meeting will be held on 28 May (14:00-18:00) and 29 May 2026 (09:00-13:00), at EFSA premises.

PESTICIDES PEER REVIEW UNIT

1st Joint EFSA/ECHA Working Group meeting on TFA fate and behaviour

27 January 2026
10:00-17:00
MINUTES - Agreed on 13 February 2026

Location: Webconference

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:

Michael Stemmer, Joannis Kandris, Signe Rasmussen, Helena Banning, Aiga Latsone (ECHA)

Hearing Experts[1]:

None

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Valerio Spinosi (SANTE)

- EFSA:

PLANTS UNIT: Roberto Lava (Chair), Amarela Becirovic, Christopher Lythgo

PREV Unit: Dimitra Kardassi

MESE: Isabelle Delaunois

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

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IV. Scientific topics for discussion

a. Request for EFSA and ECHA to consider the fate and behaviour of trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) in soil and water

The WG was provided with an overview of the mandate background, Terms of Reference (ToRs) and deadlines.

Discussion on problem formulation and interpretation of mandate terms of reference took place.

V. Next meeting

The next Working Group meeting will be held on 23 March 2026 (10:00-17:00), online.