

3 - 4 June 2026

09:00-17:30 / 09:00-13:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 18 June 2026

Location: Parma and teleconference

Attendees:

- Panel Members:
Ana Allende, Avelino Alvarez-Ordóñez, Valeria Bortolaia, Alessandra De Cesare, Wietske Dohmen, Laurent Guillier, Lieve Herman, Liesbeth Jacxsens, Maarten Nauta, Lapo Mughini-Gras, Jakob Ottoson, Luisa Peixe, Fernando Pérez-Rodríguez
- Hearing Experts¹:
Not Applicable
- Applicants participating in a technical hearing²:
Not Applicable
- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:
Gunilla Eklund (DG SANTE)
- EFSA:
ASSESS Department: Guilhem De Seze, Despoina Papadopoulou, Maria Ruiz Castro
BIOHAW Unit: Sandra Correia, Beatriz Guerra, Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Valentina Rizzi, Eleonora Sarno, Pietro Stella, Natisha Vatwani, Frank Verdonck, Anna Zdanowicz
CSO: Marta Bisaschi

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Sara Bover-Cid and Panagiotis Skandamis.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes (changes to be listed).

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence³ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management⁴, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Panel 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 Panel members at the beginning of this meeting.

¹ As defined in Article 34 of the document "Implementing Rule of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority laying down the rules on the selection, appointment and operations of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups":
<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/paneloperation.pdf>

² As defined in the "EFSA's Catalogue of support initiatives during the life cycle of applications for regulated products":
<https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6472>

³ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

⁴ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf



4. Agreement of the minutes of the 185th BIOHAZ Panel Plenary meeting held on 22 and 23 April 2026, via teleconference

The minutes of the 185th Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 7 May 2026.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for adoption/endorsement

No scientific outputs submitted for adoption.

5.1 Statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA. 24: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until March 2026 ([EFSA-Q-2025-00686](#))

The last working group (WG) meeting was held on 20 May. A total of 103 notifications were received between October 2025 and March 2026 (inclusive), of which 47 were proposed for use in feed, 33 as food enzymes, food additives and flavourings, 5 as novel foods and 18 as plant protection products. 30 notifications were related to microorganisms generally excluded from QPS evaluation (including 22 were notifications of filamentous fungi, 6 of *Escherichia coli*, 2 *Streptomyces*) and 55 have the QPS status. Of the remaining 18 notifications corresponding to 15 taxonomic units (TUs), 7 have already been evaluated for a possible QPS status in previous Panel Statements of the previous QPS 3-years cycle and therefore will be assessed again now: *Bacillus thuringiensis*, *Ensifer adhaerens*, *Enterococcus lactis*, *Heyndrickxia faecalis*, *Hyphomicrobium denitrificans*, *Microbacterium foliorum* and *Papiliotrema terrestris*. The other 8 TUs will be assessed for the first time: *Listeria innocua*, *Pseudomonas protegens*, bacteriophages against *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis* (BACMM), bacteriophages against *Erwinia amylovora* (BAEA), bacteriophage against Walnut *Xanthomonas arboricola* pv. *Juglandis*, Pecentumvirus P100, *Lactococcus cremoris* (new species, previously a subspecies, which was part of a QPS status species -*Lactococcus lactis*) and *Companilactobacillus pabuli* (new species "split" from a previous QPS TU - *Companilactobacillus farciminis* (synonym *Lactobacillus farciminis*). The assessments of these TUs were discussed and agreed, with the exception of the 4 new bacteriophages, for which it was decided to postpone the assessment to the next QPS Panel statement part 25. The ELS exercise summaries were agreed by the Panel. The Panel statement was adopted by the BIOHAZ Panel.

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1 Scientific opinion on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feeds as notified to EFSA ([EFSA-Q-2025-00689](#))

The last WG meeting was held on 20 May, and the next meeting is scheduled on 11 June. The follow up of the new challenges for this new three-years cycle was discussed with the Panel. The deadline for adoption of this Opinion is 31 December 2028.

6.2 Scientific opinion(s) on the current status of the occurrence and spread of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales in the food chain in the EU/EFTA

EFSA updated the Panel on the developments of the EFSA-funded Carba-R-ales (CPEs in the EU/EFTA food Chain, ToR2 of the BIOHAZ Panel Mandate) and WateResist (Role of



reused water in the spread of AMR) projects. Both projects run until mid of 2027. Generated data will be used for the update of the CPE in the food chain scientific opinion Part 1⁵.

6.3 Scientific opinion on the implementation of point 2 of Annex V of Regulation (EU) 2025/40 on Packaging and Packaging Waste ([EFSA-Q-2025-00456](#))

The WG Chair provided an update of the work, as discussed at the WG meeting on 28 and 30 April 2026. The section dealing with the list of unprocessed fresh FVH commodities to be assessed in this mandate (subquestion (SQ) 1.1.) was endorsed by the BIOHAZ Panel. The section on SQ 1.2. (possible packaging units and packaging materials for the selected commodities) needs significant shortening. The lists of most relevant foodborne human pathogens to be applied across FVH commodities (SQ 1.4) and of spoilage microorganisms that were found to be associated with each group of unprocessed fresh FVH commodities (SQ 1.5) was presented. The approach to deal with SQ 1.6 (potential impact of alternative packaging units and bulk handling compared with plastic packaging units on growth/survival of selected pathogens and spoilage microorganisms or cross-contamination) was presented using a table. The Panel commented to simplify this assessment. The next WG meeting will take place on 4 and 5 June 2026. The deadline for delivery of the scientific opinion is end of November 2026.

6.4 Scientific opinion on Food Safety Culture and its microbiological food safety impact in the EU ([EFSA-Q-2025-00553](#) and [EFSA-Q-2025-00554](#))

The WG chair updated the Panel on the progress of this mandate and on the outcome of the WG meeting held on 20 May 2026. The WG chair presented the interim results of the screening of scientific literature, identification of grey literature and of a trial performed for the extraction of information from a selection of scientific papers through artificial intelligence. Following to the positive outcome of the trial, the methodology will be implemented further, and all the extracted information doublechecked and validated by experts. The WG is collaborating with EFSA social scientists in drafting an interview guide to support interviews with selected EU stakeholders aimed at gathering relevant information on the promotion and implementation of food safety culture in food business operators. A preliminary structure of the draft scientific opinion (part 1) was presented to the Panel. The deadline for adoption of the first scientific opinion is end of December 2026.

6.5 Scientific opinion on the health risks posed by microplastics in food, water and air ([EFSA-Q-2025-00702](#))

The Chair of the SubWG-BIOHAZ briefly updated the Panel on the progress of the mandate, which is allocated to the CONTAM Panel with the contribution of the BIOHAZ Panel. The BIOHAZ Panel covers the role of micro- and nano-plastics as vectors for human foodborne microbiological hazards in food of plant and animal origin (ToR5) and will contribute to the related issues within the One Health aspect (ToR1). The last joint meeting of the WG took place on 29 April, the specific meeting for the SubWG on 21 May 2026. The joint draft protocol for this opinion is under targeted consultation. Screening of the scientific literature is on-going. The next meeting of the subWG-BIOHAZ will be on 2 July 2026, and the next meeting of the full working group will be on 22-23 September 2026. Deadline for the adoption of the scientific opinion is end of December 2027.

⁵ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2025.9336>



6.6 Scientific opinion on the microbiological status of fishery products following the stiffening process with focus on smoked salmon ([EFSA-Q-2026-00032](#))

The third WG meeting took place on 29 May 2026. The WG Chair presented an update of the work since the last plenary meeting. For each of the assessment questions, the currently available data and approaches were presented. In particular, he presented an exploratory analysis of the effect of prior freezing stress on the physiological state of *Listeria monocytogenes*, expressed through the parameter $h0$. The working assumption is that prior freezing may affect the post-stress recovery kinetics of surviving cells. This effect is represented by an additional $h0$ value, calculated relative to a control condition. This approach was supported by the panel. More data will be searched for as input data are heterogeneous across studies, matrices, strains, freezing temperatures, storage durations and post-stress growth conditions. The next WG meeting will be held on 23 and 25 June 2026. The deadline for delivery of the scientific opinion is end of December 2026.

7. Update on new Mandates

No new mandates have been received since the previous BIOHAZ Panel plenary meeting.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee, other Scientific Panels, EFSA and the European Commission

8.1. Scientific Committee

The Panel Chair reported to the Panel the main topics discussed during the 130th Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC)⁶, that took place on 7 and 8 May 2026, in particular: a discussion on the building-up of the SC work programme 2027-2029 and the organisation of an EFSA Conference in 2027 in Parma.

8.2. European Commission

A brief update was given by EFSA staff in relation to possible topics for future EC mandates to EFSA in the area of biological hazards.

9. Other topics for information and/or discussion

9.1. Topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards, including an update on the activities of the EFSA EREN and StaDG-ER platforms

No detailed discussions took place in relation to this agenda item.

⁶ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/130th-plenary-meeting-scientific-committee>



10. AOB

EFSA Head of ASSESS Department, Guilhem De Seze, joined the BIOHAZ Plenary meeting and exchanged views with the Panel in relation to the evolution of the internal structure of EFSA and the possible future changes in the way of working of scientific panels.

EFSA staff briefly presented the recent update of EFSA authorship principles⁷.

11. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 9 and 10 July 2026, by teleconference.

⁷ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2026.e240101>