

21-22 May 2026

13:30-18:00, 09:00-18:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 12 June 2026

Location: webconference

Attendees:

o Panel Members:

Agneta Åkesson¹, Vasileios Bampidis, Margherita Bignami, Laurent Bodin, James Kevin Chipman, Gisela Degen, Antonio Hernández-Jerez, Tim Hofer, Christer Hogstrand², Helle Katrine Knutsen (Chair), Stefano Landi, Jean-Charles Leblanc, Kyriaki Machera, Evangelia Ntzani, Isabelle P. Oswald³, Guido Rychen⁴, Salomon Sand, Katharina Vejdovszky, Barbara Viviani

o Hearing Experts⁵:

Keyvin Darney (item 6.3), Arjen Gerssen (item 6.4), Thorhallur Halldorsson (item 6.1)

o Applicants participating in a technical hearing⁶:

Not Applicable

o European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

EC: Paolo Caricato, Veerle Vanheusden, Frans Verstraete

o EFSA:

FEEDCO Unit – CONTAM Team: Maria Anastassiadou, Elena Bogensperger, Anna Christodoulidou, Chantra Eskes (CONTAM Team Leader), Alexandros Georganas, Mary Gilsean (FEEDCO Head of Unit), Eirini Kouloura, Anita Radovnikovic, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi (Panel Coordinator), Giulia Rampazzo, Elena Rovesti, Sofie Schryvers, Hans Steinkellner

MESE Unit: Irene Muñoz-Guajardo

CSO Unit: Jean-Lou Dorne

o Observers:

Federico Cruciani, Annamarija Romac, Tuuli Tauriainen

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

¹ On 22 May, absent from 17:15 CET onwards.

² Absent on 21 May 2026.

³ On 22 May, absent from 17:00 CET onwards.

⁴ On 22 May, absent from 14:00-16:00 CET.

⁵ 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>

⁶ 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. Declarations of Interest of Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence⁷ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management,⁸ EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Panel members invited to the present meeting. For further details on the outcome of the screening of the Annual Declarations of Interest, please refer to the Annex. Oral Declaration(s) of Interest were asked at the beginning of the meeting and no additional interest was declared.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 159th CONTAM Panel Plenary meeting held on 21-23 April 2026, via teleconference

The minutes of the 159th Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 14 May 2026.

5. Report on written procedure

The following WG Chair was nominated by written procedure and agreed by the Panel Chair:

- Salomon Sand has been nominated as Chair of the WG on the sanitary shucking of scallops contaminated with domoic acid toxins.

6. Scientific output(s) submitted for discussion /endorsement / approval

6.1 Draft Statement on the findings presented in the 2024 report on the Toxicological Profile for Mercury issued by the US ATSDR (EFSA-Q-2025-00670)

The Chair of the WG on Mercury presented the draft Statement for possible endorsement. The CONTAM Panel discussed the document and the made modifications based on the comments received. The Panel endorsed the draft Statement that will then be subject to approval by EFSA. The Panel thanked the WG members for the work done.

6.2 Draft Opinion on the health risks related to the presence of capsaicin in foods (EFSA-Q-2025-00304)

The Chair of the WG on Capsaicin presented selected sections of the draft Opinion for possible endorsement. The CONTAM Panel went through the sections on Supporting information for the assessment, Toxicokinetics, Human observations, and Toxicity in experimental animals (gastrointestinal toxicity, general toxicity, neurotoxicity). The Panel provided comments which will be taken into account by the WG to update the draft Opinion accordingly. The Panel endorsed the sections presented, pending the addressing of the comments made.

⁷ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

⁸ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf



6.3 Draft Opinion on the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of *Alternaria* toxins in feed and food (EFSA-Q-2024-00285)

The Chair of the WG on *Alternaria* toxins presented the draft sections on hazard and risk characterisation for human and animal risk assessment. The CONTAM Panel discussed these sections and provided comments that will be taken into account by the WG to update the draft Opinion accordingly.

6.4 Draft Statement on the request to assess the appropriateness of the study carried out by ANSES (the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety) on the effectiveness of sanitary shucking of queen scallops (*Aequipecten opercularis*) contaminated by okadaic acid toxins with a view to the production of edible parts meeting the safety requirements foreseen in the Union legislation (EFSA-Q-2026-00065)

The Chair of the WG on sanitary shucking of scallops contaminated by okadaic acid and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer presented the draft statement for possible endorsement. The CONTAM Panel reviewed and discussed all sections of the document, minor modifications were agreed and the Panel endorsed the draft Statement that will then be subject to approval by EFSA. The Panel thanked the WG members for the work done.

6.5 Draft Opinion on the update fo the risk assessment of Emerging and Novel BFRs in food (EFSA-Q-2018-00436)

The Chair of the WG on BFRs in food and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer presented an overview of the comments received during the pre-announced targeted consultation of the draft Opinion and the proposed lines to reply to the comments. The Panel agreed with the proposals and the WG will work towards finalization of the draft Opinion.

6.6 Draft Opinion on the risks for public health related to the presence of thebaine and oripavine in poppy seeds and derived products (EFSA-Q-2024-00400)

The Chair of the WG on thebaine/oripavine provided an overview on the progress of the draft Opinion. The CONTAM Panel provided comments that will be taken into account by the WG to continue with the development of the draft Opinion.

7. AOB

The members were reminded about the upcoming dates of Plenary meetings in 2026. The next Plenary meeting will be open to Observers⁹.

8. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 16-18 June 2026 (Open to Observers), in Parma.

⁹ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/161st-plenary-meeting-contam-panel-open-observers>



Annex

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of the Annual Declaration of Interest

In the Annual Declaration of Interest submitted by Dr Jean Charles Leblanc, the following interest has been declared: "Head of the pesticides and marine biotoxins unit at the food safety laboratory of ANSES. During the 158th CONTAM Plenary, Dr Jean Charles Leblanc declared that this ANSES unit prepared the report on the effectiveness of sanitary shucking of queen scallops contaminated by lipophilic toxins. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence¹⁰ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management¹¹, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a conflict of interest.

This resulted in the exclusion of the expert from any discussion, voting or other processing of the agenda item 6.4 by the concerned scientific group.

¹⁰ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

¹¹ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf