Minutes

31st MEETING OF THE ADVISORY FORUM WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNICATIONS

BUDAPEST (HUNGARY), 21-22 JUNE 2011

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY FORUM WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNICATIONS:

Chair: GASSIN Anne-Laure, Communications Director

Members:

Austria	PUBLIG Elisabeth	Hungary	CSEH Júlia
Belgium	BUSSCHOTS Lieve	Ireland	CONWAY Edel
Bulgaria	PCHELINSKA Mariela	Italy	TARANTO Anna-Mirella
Czech Republic	BALGA Josef	Lithuania	BARTNIKIENE Rasa
Denmark	FRANDSEN Gitte	Portugal	SEABRA Maria João
Estonia	PRIISALU Piret	Slovak Republic	THEISZOVA Marica
Finland	VIKMAN-ROSLIN Pia	Slovenia	VRDELJA Mitja
France	THOMANN Carole	Spain	GARRIDO-GARCIA Carmen
Germany	FIACK Suzan	Sweden	GUSTAFSSON Karin
Greece	KARDASI Dimitra	United Kingdom	COLLIS Terrence

Observers:

Croatia	MIKRUT Sara	Montenegro	MIRECKI Slavko
FYROM	JONOVSKA Katerina	Turkey	KARAGOZ-EMIROGLU Zehra

European Food Safety Authority Staff:

ADAMOVA Monika	AVANZINI Francesca	GASSIN Anne-Laure
AMORETTI Francesco	GAMMING Yenny	SMILLIE Laura

Apologies:

Cyprus	Partassides Dora	Poland	WISNIEWSKA Iwona
European Commission	STYLIANOU George	Romania	MONEA Alina-Ioana
Luxembourg	HAU Patrick	The Netherlands	KRIKKEN Kris
Norway	BJERKAS Astrid		

DAY 1: 21ST JUNE 2011 - 14H00 – 17H30

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

1.1. Anne-Laure Gassin opened the meeting by welcoming all participants and thanking the Hungarian Food Safety Office (HFSO) for hosting the meeting. Then she gave the floor to Dr. Mária Szeitzné Szabó, Director of the HFSO and EFSA Advisory Forum member. In her welcome speech Dr. Mária Szeitzné Szabó highlighted the importance of cooperation in food safety and provided an overview of HFSO activities. Anne-Laure Gassin thanked Mária Szeitzné Szabó for the supportive words and pointed out that HFSO's contribution to the Advisory Forum and to the AFCWG had been significant and that Hungary's continued support of these activities was much appreciated.

1.2. Anne-Laure Gassin then welcomed the new working group member from Belgium and the new observers from Turkey and Montenegro. She also informed the group that apologies had been received from Cyprus, Luxembourg, Norway, Romania, The Netherlands, Poland and the European Commission.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Doc AF Comm WG 21 6 11 – 1)

2.1. Anne-Laure Gassin thanked the members who had already filled in their Declarations of Interests and reminded the remaining few that they should complete the electronic form as soon as possible. As no additional items were indicated by the members, the agenda was adopted as proposed.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING IN PARMA 23-24 MARCH AND MATTERS ARISING (Doc AF Comm WG 21 6 11 – 2)

3.1. Anne-Laure Gassin informed the members that the minutes of the meeting held on 23-24 march in Parma were approved by written procedure and published on the Extranet and the EFSA website.

3.2. She outlined the matters arising from the meeting in Parma that would be discussed with the group during the day.

4. KEY POINTS ARISING FROM THE ADVISORY FORUM MEETING (25-26 MAY, BUDAPEST) AND THE FOCAL POINTS MEETING (11-12 MAY COPENHAGEN)

4.1. Torben Nilsson summarised the outcome of the 40th Advisory Forum meeting in Budapest, mentioning among other items the update on the development of EFSA's Science Strategy 2011-2016. The Science Strategy will be launched for public consultation in the autumn and the final draft should be adopted by the Management Board later this year.

4.2. Regarding food safety research funding, Torben Nilsson informed the group that EFSA had received feedback from DG Research on research proposals submitted on behalf of EFSA in 2010 and the on-going activities of the EFSA task force addressing this work. Following the feedback received, EFSA has submitted more targeted proposals to address specific gaps in research for the last calls under FP7 and provided information on Work Programme activities relevant to the proposals made. Advisory Forum members were also informed that the European Commission will be developing the next Framework Programme in 2011; the members will be kept informed of these developments and the strategic discussions that will be held with the Advisory Forum.

4.3. In addition, the Advisory Forum discussed the proposal to set up EFSA´s cooperation and confidentiality agreements with national counterparts in Member States and planned EFSA training activities on principles and methods of food safety risk assessment, which are to be developed in cooperation with Member States.

4.4. Regarding the issues raised by Member States, Torben Nilsson reported on those issues which were not tabled at the AFCWG meeting: Germany provided an update on food contact materials of melamine resins; France reported on the residues of pharmaceutical products found in water intended for human consumption, and French national projects on endocrine disruptors; and Sweden provided an update on manganese in baby food.

4.5. Lastly, Torben Nilsson updated the group on the outcome of the latest Focal Points meeting, held in Copenhagen on 11-12 May. Among the topics discussed were: data collection at national level and an update from EFSA on data collection for chemical, residue and dietary monitoring, and Zoonoses data collection. Focal Points also discussed in detail the current state of the Expert Database and were invited to continue to promote it in their Member States. They also talked about the Article 36 organisations and preparation of guidelines for the management of the Article 36 list and shared their experiences in this area. Lastly, the UK Focal Point presented a very interesting study on input of the social sciences into the work of the UK's Food Standards Agency (FSA).

4.6. Germany asked whether the members could receive the UK FSA social sciences presentation given at the Focal Points meeting. The UK informed the members that the FSA is also preparing a social sciences report and proposed to share it with the group when available. Anne-Laure Gassin informed the members that AFCWG and Focal Points secretariats are planning to organise a joint meeting in October 2012. Members agreed to add the joint meeting on the agenda of the next AFCWG meeting, during which members will discuss the format, programme and identify topics for discussions.

Action 1: Social Sciences study by UK FSA *- EFSA to send to the members the UK's FP presentation on role of the social sciences in the work of the FSA. UK to share the social sciences report with the group when available.*

Action 2: Joint AFCWG /FP meeting in 2012 - *Agenda point at the AFCWG meeting in October to discuss the programme.*

5. UPDATE ON EFSA'S ACTIVITIES

5.1. Anne-Laure Gassin briefly updated the group on EFSA's new organisational structure, focusing specifically on the Communications Directorate. She explained the rationale for the re-organisation and presented the mission and objectives of the two new Units - Editorial and Communications Channels. She also presented EFSA's Media Relations Strategy, highlighting the importance of further enhanced coordination of communications activities with the Member States and more proactive work.

5.2. Furthermore, Anne-Laure Gassin provided further information on the development of EFSA's Science Strategy 2011-2016 and updated the group on upcoming public consultations planned for summer 2011 on topics such as: GM animals; Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC); animal-based measures to assess the welfare of dairy cows; and EFSA policy on independence and scientific decision making processes. Anne-Laure Gassin also informed the members about the outcome of EFSA's meeting with stakeholders, during which the Communications Directorate organised three interactive sessions on Risk Communications focused on health claims, zoonoses and pesticides. Lastly, she updated the group on EFSA's recent and forthcoming publications and events, including the results of communications activities carried out for the Festa dell'Europa - a series of events organised in Parma to celebrate Schuman Day.

5.3. Bulgaria congratulated EFSA on the new organisational structure for communications, pointing out that this new structure could further enhance communication between EFSA and Member States as well as European institutions and European consumers.

5.4. Sweden asked whether EFSA had any special editorial tools. Laura Smillie informed the members that a new document management system was being applied across EFSA and asked members whether they could share with EFSA information on any software to support editing across different platforms (print, online). Regarding EFSA's new organisational structure, Germany asked whether the panel system was still sustainable. Germany was also interested in how EFSA manages its media contact database. Anne-Laure Gassin explained that the re-organisation took into consideration the growing number of requests for scientific advice and their nature, pointing out that two-thirds are related to the assessment of regulated products, and therefore the aim was to ensure better organisation of the growing volume of work in this area and best use of experts' time. She suggested that EFSA's press office gets in touch with the BfR to exchange information on media contacts database management.

5.5. Laura Smillie reported on the state-of-play of the report analysing the national data based on the Eurobarometer findings and DG Research FoodRisk Project. She thanked members who have submitted their report on analysis of Eurobarometer findings at Member States level to EFSA. Laura Smillie explained the importance of the analysis for further strategic discussions and for better understanding of how the national data impact on communications work.

Action 3: Editorial tools *- Members to share with EFSA information on any software to support editing across different platforms (print, online)*
Action 4: EFSA's media contacts database: *EFSA's Press Office to liaise with the members from BfR regarding EFSA's media contacts database*
Action 5: DG Research - FoodRisC project: *Learning from this project, i.e. use of social media in food safety and risk communications guidelines will be shared with the AFCWG as soon as available (most likely at the October meeting).*

6. TRANSPARENCY AND INDEPENDENCE OF SCIENCE

6.1. Anne-Laure Gassin updated the members on the development of EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making. She mentioned that following the approval of the Draft Policy by the Management Board, the Policy will be submitted for public consultation in July and a stakeholder meeting to further discuss the Policy is currently planned for September/October 2011. The final step would be to present the Policy to the Management Board for adoption by the end of 2011.

6.2. Laura Smillie invited the group to help to disseminate news about the public consultation on EFSA's Draft Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes to the relevant stakeholders in their Member States. She also encouraged them to comment on the draft policy through the online public consultation. Regarding the EFSA workshop on Independence scheduled for Sept/Oct 2011, it has been agreed that EFSA will provide the members with more information as soon as it will be available and asked members whether they could suggest keynote speakers/moderators in the field of Independence from their Member State to participate in the workshop.

6.3. UK recognised the great importance of the subject and the usefulness of public consultation but pointed out that while trying to get feedback from stakeholders, attention should be paid to the balance of feedback received as often when such input is requested only those with negative views/criticism respond. UK also mentioned that the FSA regularly publishes a newsletter called BITE, containing "science bites back" features. Anne-Laure Gassin agreed that independence of science is a complex subject and in this regard EFSA is seeking to elevate the debate and highlight that science needs to confront different points of view. She also agreed that science is increasingly coming under attack and this situation needs to be tackled. UK suggested that we need to communicate more on science and be more

transparent, leaving thus less space for criticism. Considering that science is becoming more and more popular, UK stressed also the importance of communicating benefits of science and sending out positive news. Germany pointed out that science changes, there is more pluralism, more views, more experts, therefore, it is increasingly important to build up trust in science. Germany also highlighted that crisis can provide a good opportunity to build up trust via effective communications. Austria mentioned that when AGES organises information campaigns all interested groups are invited, in order to give space to all different points of view. AGES also compares their scientific evaluation to other opinions and provides the comparisons to the media and public. Since stakeholders are very diverse, Bulgaria suggested a tailor-made approach to the public consultation, in order to target the right/relevant stakeholders. Sweden complimented EFSA on its draft policy and agreed with the points of view expressed by Bulgaria and UK.

Action 6: Transparency / Independence of science: *Members invited to help to disseminate news of the public consultation on EFSA's Draft Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes to their networks as appropriate*
Action 7: *Members invited to comment on the draft policy through the online public consultation*
Action 8: *EFSA to provide the members with more information on EFSA workshop on Independence scheduled for Sept/Oct 2011*
Action 9: *Members to suggest keynote speakers/moderators in the field of Independence from their Member State*

7. COOPERATION IN COMMUNICATIONS: THEMATIC APPROACH UPDATE & NANOTECHNOLOGY

7.1. Laura Smillie updated the group on the progress made on EFSA's integrated communications approach in the area of Zoonoses, whose aim is to help target audiences become aware, understand, appreciate and advocate EFSA's work and cooperation in the area of Zoonoses. She thanked those members who have shared their communications activities on their existing and/or planned national programmes/campaigns in the area of Zoonoses and asked the members who have not yet provided this information if they could do so at their earliest convenience. She pointed out that Zoonoses is the first of several themes to be rolled-out and invited members to comment on the other proposed themes. Laura Smillie also mentioned the importance of evaluation of the integrated approach in the area of Zoonoses and informed the group that EFSA was planning to carry out in 2012 a quantitative target audience research. Lastly, in order to align EFSA's communications with Member States' activities, Anne-Laure Gassin encouraged members to suggest ideas for possible joint activities.

7.2. Members welcomed the integrated approach, pointing out that it should facilitate the cooperation with Member States and help to improve overall understanding and

communications on the topic. Italy, UK, Austria and Denmark informed the members about their current activities in the area of Zoonoses. Anne-Laure Gassin thanked the members for their feedback and pointed out that this approach should lead to the creation of a more integrated plan with the Member States, i.e. Member States can provide a perspective and broader context.

7.3. Then, the UK provided an update on the Food Standards Agency's research results regarding consumers' views on the use of nanotechnology in food and food packaging.

7.4. Austria asked how the UK FSA selected the interviewees. UK responded that they used a professional research company that approached people who reflect different population groups as much as possible. UK pointed out that it would be interesting to run this kind of research across different Member States. Anne-Laure Gassin suggested asking the AGRC members whether they are aware of similar research on nanotechnology carried out in other Member States.

7.5. Laura Smillie presented the draft common FAQ on Nanotechnology and thanked the task force for their feedback. It has been agreed that EFSA will integrate the feedback received and re-circulate the FAQ for comments from the rest of the group.

Action 10: Zoonoses *- members to provide information on their existing and/or planned national programmes/campaigns in the area of Zoonoses*
Action 11: *In order to align EFSA communications with MS activities, members are invited to comment on other themes proposed by EFSA & suggest ideas for possible joint activities*
Action 12: Nanotechnology *- EFSA to include feedback received from members and re-circulate the common FAQ on nanotechnology*
Action 13: *EFSA to ask AGRC members whether they are aware of a similar research on nanotechnology as the UK FSA's survey on nanotechnology*

8. SOCIAL MEDIA

8.1. Yenny Gamming talked about emerging social media trends affecting EFSA and national food safety authorities. She presented the EFSA draft social media approach, including the social media engagement guidelines and reported on the results of EFSA's review of social media platforms. She also informed the group about Facebook community pages on EFSA, explaining what they are and how they work.

8.2. Several members reported on their use of social media and pointed out that it helps them to draw new audiences, and/or increase the number of visits to their national food safety authority's website: the UK uses Facebook for individual campaigns (also their staff create links from their own Facebook pages), they also use twitter and have their Chief Scientist blog; Italy used Facebook for a communications project on food safety and created a

Facebook page on a rare diseases campaign; Sweden also uses Facebook to promote different activities; Greece is planning to use Facebook, while Portugal mentioned that they have not used social media so far as they had not identified a need to do so. Croatia suggested adding in future Eurobarometer survey a question on trust relating to the use of social media. Yenny Gamming pointed out that there is an existing Eurobarometer study on Public Opinion in the European Union that contains information on public perception about social media. It has been agreed that EFSA will send members the link. Anne-Laure Gassin concluded the debate by encouraging the members to continue sharing their experiences with social media and their social media policies.

Action 14: *EFSA to send a link to Eurobarometer study on Public Opinion in the European Union that contains information on public's perception about social media.*

9. EFSA'S UPDATE ON WEB ACTIVITIES

9.1. Yenny Gamming presented the results of the EFSA website user survey and thanked those members who completed the survey. As there were no follow-up questions, Anne-Laure Gassin closed the first day of the AFCWG meeting.

DAY 2 – 22ND JUNE 2011 – 09H00 - 13H00

10. "KEY TOPICS"

10.1. Anne-Laure Gassin extended her thanks and informed the group that Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Norway and Slovakia had sent their key country issues (all available on the Extranet). She reminded the members to regularly upload information on the Extranet calendar created specifically for sharing information on EFSA's and Member States' upcoming scientific issues/events and related communication activities relevant to the group.

10.2. Sweden informed the members that foxes were found to be infected by the Echinococcus multilocularis parasite and the Swedish National Food Administration advised the public stop eating fresh berries picked in forests (information that might be of interest especially to the neighboring countries).

CASE STUDY: EHEC OUTBREAK IN GERMANY

10.3. Germany provided a detailed overview of BfR's activities during the recent EHEC outbreak in Germany, focusing mainly on communications activities and challenges faced by the BfR. The outbreak triggered major public concern and high media attention; it highlighted the importance and challenges of handling a crisis, including communications aspects. She reported on cooperation of different bodies that proved to be crucial, as well as

early exchange of information and providing regular updates. Among the lessons learnt she highlighted the importance of providing recommendations according to the current state of knowledge and updating them immediately if necessary.

10.4. Turkey asked whether the real source of contamination was found. Germany replied that investigations are still ongoing. UK was interested to know whether cooperation in communications between the different bodies was effective. Germany responded that BfR cooperated closely with the federal government – Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV), Federal Ministry of Health (BMG), and Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), as well as Robert Koch Institute. The decisions were taken rapidly, spokespeople were available at any time, and communications information shared in advance that assured communicating up-to-date, coherent, consistent and clear messages to the public and media. Finland asked whether Germany had set up a call centre. Germany replied that hot lines were set up at the Ministries; BfR did not establish a hot line or a call centre. Bulgaria was interested to know who took the leadership in communications and Sweden asked how many BfR spokespeople were available. Germany pointed out that all bodies communicated according to their responsibilities. They had 4-5 experts/scientists available at all time to give interviews. President of BfR gave television interviews, BfR communications department dealt with press and radio requests. Greece congratulated Germany on handling the crisis and asked about the current outbreak in France; did France and Germany cooperate? France confirmed that some cases of EHEC infection were reported in Bordeaux area; investigations are underway and more information is needed. Also Sweden reported the existence of a confirmed case of EHEC infection. Sweden praised Germany for the way it handled the crisis. They appreciated timely information/recommendations received from Germany and the European Commission that helped them to communicate clear and consistent messages.

10.5. Spain reported on the communications activities of ASEAN during the EHEC outbreak in Germany. No cases of EHEC infection were reported in Spain, however, the outbreak had a great negative impact on the Spanish agricultural sector, due to information disseminated via RASFF system and the German authorities stating that Spanish cucumbers were one of the sources of infection. Communications activities among the Spanish authorities were well coordinated; in a period of a week they published 23 statements and organised 6 press conferences. To conclude Spain highlighted the importance of coordination before communication (EC, MSs involved, EFSA) and called for more involvement of EFSA / AFCWG in future to better coordinate exchange of information.

10.6. UK commented that when handling a crisis and communicating during a crisis, the health of consumers should come before trade issues but agreed that there is a need for better system for rapid sharing of information and improved communication among Member States. Anne-Laure Gassin concurred and pointed out that actions need to be taken to

improve coordination and exchange of information to better prepare for crisis and stressed the importance of the role of media. Sweden, UK and Austria highlighted the need for a system that is fast and avoids the danger of creating an information vacuum. Bulgaria emphasised the importance of timely involvement of EFSA by facilitating the exchange of information between Member States, it was considered that this would be very beneficial to all parties. Belgium stressed the need of crisis exercises organised in peace times. Some members stated they would have wanted more information from EFSA, while others (in particular those involved in the European Commission's Early Warning Response System) felt they had received sufficient information.

10.7. Laura Smillie then provided an overview of EFSA's involvement in the German EHEC outbreak. She pointed out that EFSA's role was to support the European Commission, following an urgent request for a scientific report on STEC in vegetables received from the European Commission. EFSA communications were carried out in cooperation with ECDC. In addition, EFSA sent a delegation to Germany to provide support in the outbreak investigation. Among the lessons learned, she highlighted that good coordination at the EU level between risk assessors and risk managers in an outbreak investigation and on risk communication is crucial. Good international cooperation also plays an important role.

10.8. Torben Nilsson further pointed out that Advisory Forum will discuss the lessons learned from the EHEC crisis at the next meeting in September, focused on who does what, what is EFSA's role, etc. To this end EFSA will draft a report highlighting outcomes and recommendations, pulling together learnings from EFSA and Member States and input from the AFCWG will be needed. Anne-Laure Gassin suggested that based on the discussions EFSA and AFCWG members (volunteers) will draft a short report focused on learnings from EHEC outbreak from the communications point of view, e.g. identify challenges, strengths and weaknesses and also outline recommendations for the future. AFCWG report will feed to the broader report to be presented to the Advisory Forum.

10.9. Members agreed that Advisory Forum is a good platform to discuss how better to coordinate communications. Sweden highlighted the need to clarify EFSA's role, which is seen in Sweden as supportive to EU and national authorities. Croatia pointed out that enhanced cooperation can be discussed in detail also at the joint AFCWG / Focal Points meeting. Anne-Laure Gassin thanked members for a very fruitful discussion and as an immediate action asked members to provide EFSA with links to their communications activities carried out for E. coli outbreak that would help to get a European wide overview to be shared with the entire group.

Action 15: E. coli outbreak *- Members to provide EFSA with links to their communications activities carried out for E. coli outbreak*
Action 16: *EFSA and members (volunteers) to draft a short report focused on learnings from E. coli outbreak from the communications point of view, e.g. identify challenges,*

strengths and weaknesses and also outline recommendations for the future. AFCWG report will feed into a broader report to be presented to the AF at the next meeting in Sept.

11. JOINT ACTIVITIES - RISK COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

11.1. Laura Smillie presented to the members the revised version of the draft risk communications guidelines that included all comments suggested at the last meeting. She furthermore suggested incorporating two forewords – one from Anne-Laure Gassin about the context, role and commitment of the AFCWG and the other one would be a joint statement from the AGRC scientists. She also proposed to include in the individual case studies information on financial implication and human resources. On this issue, EFSA will follow up individually with the relevant Member State, which provided the case study. Members agreed with the suggestions.

11.2. It has been agreed that EFSA will review and finalise the Risk Communications Guidelines by the end of July. EFSA will then send the final version of the guidelines to the members for comments, who will provide their feedback by end of August, with view to have the draft final version of the guidelines presented to the Advisory Forum members for comments at their meeting in September. Members will be presented the draft final guidelines at the AFCWG meeting in October, when Advisory Forum members' comments will be shared with a view of providing the final laid out product in December 2011. Laura Smillie suggested sharing the guidelines also with the EFSA Stakeholder Consultative Platform, since they are meant to be used by a wide public. The group agreed with the proposed time line and approval process.

Action 17: *Risk Communication guidelines - Editorial Taskforce to review and finalise the Risk Communications Guidelines to be presented at the next AFCWG meeting in October. Members include: Laura Smillie, Greece, Norway, Portugal and the UK.*
Action 18: *EFSA to send the final version of the guidelines to the members for comments.*
Action 19: *Members to provide their comments on the final version of the guidelines.*
Action 20: *Final version of the Guidelines to be presented to the AF for comments.*

12. EFSA SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

12.1. Anne-Laure Gassin updated the group on the medium-term planning for scientific cooperation between EFSA and Member States. She pointed out that scientific cooperation between EFSA and Member States is crucial to help build risk assessment capacity across Europe and address effectively the needs of risk managers. In this regard the brochure on medium-term planning aims to help raise awareness amongst the various organisations and potential partners in the EU Member States about the need to consolidate risk assessment resources and to further strengthen scientific cooperation with EFSA. Anne-Laure Gassin

also mentioned that this brochure was created to help support the Advisory Forum to communicate at the national level why cooperation with EFSA is important.

12.2. She asked the members if they could liaise with the Advisory Forum members and Focal Points regarding promotion of this document in their Member States. She also pointed out that members should discuss with the Advisory Forum and Focal Points how to use the document and whom to send it to and asked to provide feedback to EFSA.

Action 21: *Medium term planning brochure: Members to liaise with AF members and FPs regarding promotion of this document in their MS; discuss with AF and FPs how to use the document and to whom to send it and provide feedback to EFSA.*

13. COMMUNICATIONS: INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND FORWARD PLANNING

13.1. Laura Smillie provided an overview of upcoming scientific issues for which future communications are foreseen. These included: safety assessment of advantame for use as a sweetener; re-evaluation of two smoke flavourings – fumokomp and zesti smoke code 10; publications of the 5th and 6th series of general function health claims, revision of the guidance document on dermal absorption of active substances used in pesticides; and use of animal-based measures to assess the welfare of dairy cows. Furthermore, she reported on re-assessment of safety of GM maize Bt 1507; assessment of plants developed through new techniques – cisgenesis; guidance on post-market environmental monitoring of GM plants; the MON810 post-market monitoring report; and guidance on the risk assessment of GM animals including animal health and welfare aspects. Other topics for which communication is planned included: review of the latest scientific knowledge on food-borne viruses; report on salmonella infections in the EU; EU summary report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic agents in 2009; total diet studies; report of ESCO working group on isoflavones; evaluation of meat inspection; dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs; guidelines for 90-day feeding trials. She also informed the group about the EFSA media visit of 20 Bulgarian journalists organised in cooperation with EC representation in Bulgaria.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1. Anne-Laure Gassin informed the group that the next meeting will take place in Bucharest on 12-13 October (NB: the date has been subsequently changed to 13-14 October). Members were invited to propose agenda topics for the upcoming meetings. The Chair thanked the members for their presence as well as the EFSA staff and the interpreters for their work. As no other points were raised, Anne-Laure Gassin closed the meeting at 13h00.

Action 22: *EFSA to circulate the 2012 dates of AFCWG meetings*