

Parma, 11 October 2011
EFSA/CONTAM/1505 rev.1*

**MINUTES OF THE 47TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON
CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN (CONTAM) HELD FROM
4 TO 6 JULY 2011 IN PARMA**

Agreed on 19 August 2011

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Jan Alexander, Diane Benford (vice-chair), Alan Boobis¹, Sandra Ceccatelli, Jean-Pierre Cravedi, Bruce Cottrill, Alessandro Di Domenico², Daniel Doerge, Lutz Edler, Peter Farmer, Metka Filipič, Peter Fürst, Thierry Guérin, Helle Katrine Knutsen, Miroslav Machala, Antonio Mutti, Martin Rose, Josef Schlatter (chair), and Rolaf van Leeuwen (vice-chair)¹

EFSA:

Unit on Contaminants (CONTAM unit)

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia, Gina Cioacata, Carolina Di Bona, Mari Eskola (deputy head), Claudia Heppner (head), Silvia Nicolau Solano, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Doina Stoica, Natalie Thatcher and Elena Zeraschi

Unit on Dietary and Chemical Monitoring (DCM unit)

Elena Scaravelli, Liisa Valsta, Stefan Fabiansson (head)

Unit on IT and Operations

Marco Castaldini³

European Commission:

Marina Marini (DG Health and Consumers, unit 03), and Frans Verstraete (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3)⁴

¹ Present from 5 to 6 July 2011

² Present from 4 to 5 July 2011

³ Only present on 6 July 2011

⁴ Only present on 5 July 2011

* This revised version incorporates minor corrections of editorial nature and replaces the original version previously published on the web. To avoid confusion the original version of the minutes has been removed from the website but is available upon request, as is a version showing all the changes made.

1. WELCOME

The chair of the CONTAM Panel welcomed the members to the 47th CONTAM plenary meeting. Bruce Cottrill, a new CONTAM Panel member, introduced himself to the CONTAM Panel.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Johanna Fink-Gremmels, and Eugenia Dogliotti of the CONTAM Panel and from Almut Bitterhof and Frank Swartenbroux (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3) of the European Commission.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The draft agenda was adopted.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interests, EFSA screened the Annual Declaration of Interest (ADoI) and/or Specific Declaration of interest (SDoI) filled in by the experts invited for the present meeting. No conflicts of interests related to the issues discussed in this meeting were identified during the screening process or at the beginning of this meeting.

5. T-2 AND HT-2 TOXINS IN FOOD AND FEED. DISCUSSIONS.

The chair of the WG on *Fusarium* toxins gave an update on the status of the draft opinion on T-2 and HT-2 toxins in food (question number: EFSA-Q-2010-00962). The European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the potential risks for animal and public health due to the presence of T-2 and HT-2 toxins in feed and food. The WG chair presented in detail the derivation of the health-based guidance value. The CONTAM Panel recommended carrying out benchmark dose modelling using data from a pig study and to obtain further information on the interpretation of immunotoxic effects observed in this study. The outcome of the dose-response modelling will be presented to the 48th CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011).

6. OPIUM ALKALOIDS IN POPPY SEEDS. DISCUSSIONS.

The chair of the WG on poppy seeds gave an update on the status of the draft opinion on opium alkaloids (question number: EFSA-Q-2010-00961). The European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the potential risks for public health due to the presence of opium alkaloids in poppy seeds. The WG chair presented in detail the exposure assessment and the derivation of the health-based guidance value. The CONTAM Panel agreed on the proposed scenarios for the exposure assessment as well as to set an acute reference dose for morphine. The opinion will be presented for possible adoption at the 48th CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011).

7. DIOXINS AND DIOXIN-LIKE PCBs IN LIVER FROM SHEEP AND DEER. DRAFT OPINION

The chair of the CONTAM working group (WG) dioxins in sheep liver presented the draft opinion on dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in liver from sheep and deer (question number: EFSA-Q-2010-00959). The European Commission (EC) had asked EFSA to assess the risk for public health related to the high levels of dioxins and dioxin-like PCB concentrations found in liver of sheep and deer. The CONTAM Panel adopted this opinion subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation to the members of the WG Dioxins in Sheep Liver and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft opinion.

8. HEXABROMOCYCLODODECANES IN FOOD. DRAFT OPINION

The chair of the CONTAM WG on brominated flame retardants presented the draft opinion on hexabromocyclododecanes (HBCDDs) in food (EFSA-Q-2010-00218) where the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risk for public health from the presence of HBCDDs in food. The CONTAM Panel adopted this opinion subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation to the members of the WG BFRs and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft opinion.

9. FEEDBACK FROM EFSA

- **ESS tool**

A colleague from the IT department informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that EFSA will implement a new tool called “expert support system” (ESS) in August 2011. Within this context the experts were informed about the way specific declarations of interests have to be declared using the ESS tool. The main difference compared to the current system is that the question number of the mandate will be linked to the agenda item.

- **Other matters**

The deputy head of unit informed the members of the CONTAM Panel on the following matters:

- EFSA has recently published two urgent statements on the *E. coli* event, one statement is on the outbreak itself and one giving advice to the general public.
- Riitta Maijala has resigned from her director position from the REPRO directorate. She leaves EFSA at the end of September. Per Bergman, the unit head of GMO unit, will be the acting director of the REPRO directorate and the deputy unit head of the GMO unit will act as the unit head of the GMO unit.
- EFSA’s management board had a meeting in June and it endorsed the draft policy on independence and scientific decision-making process. The objective is to further strengthen the policy on independence and scientific decision-making process and facilitate its implementation: rules will be simplified and the aspects clarified, such as providing greater explanation on how conclusions over conflicts of interests are reached. This paper will be launched for public consultation in July 2011. The members of the CONTAM Panel flagged that they would appreciate to be informed when

the document is available on the EFSA webpage. In addition, the management board adopted the code of conduct for the management board and reviewed the EFSA's scientific strategy.

10. FEEDBACK FROM SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (SC) MEETING

The vice-chair of the CONTAM Panel who attended the 49th plenary meeting of the SC meeting in June 2011 reported that the SC endorsed the following outputs for public consultation i) draft guidance on "Default assumptions used by the EFSA Scientific Panels and Committee, and EFSA Units in the absence of actual measured data"⁵ (targeted consultation), ii) draft opinion on "Exploring options for providing preliminary advice about possible human health risks based on the concept of Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC)"⁶ and iii) draft guidance on "Repeated-dose 90-day oral toxicity studies on food/feed in rodents"⁷ The minutes of the meeting will be available on the EFSA webpage in the near future.

11. WORKING PROGRAMME

11.1. OFFICIAL REQUEST TO EFSA FOR CONTAM PANEL

No official requests falling within the remit of the CONTAM Panel were received.

11.2. UPDATE FROM WG ALKALOIDS

The chair of the WG on alkaloids informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the opinion on pyrrolizidine alkaloids in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01004) will be presented for possible adoption at the 48th CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011). The work on the opinion on ergot alkaloids in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01000) has started, but the WG has also to take into account occurrence data on ergot alkaloids in feed and food which are currently being obtained in an Art. 36 grant project. Thus the original agreed deadline of October 2011 cannot be met, and an extension of the deadline to deliver this opinion will be asked to the EC.

11.3. UPDATE FROM WG ALTERNARIA TOXINS INCLUDING APPROACH DISCUSSION

The chair of the WG on Alternaria toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the opinion on Alternaria toxins in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-00960) will most likely not be a full risk assessment as the toxicological database is incomplete and many occurrence data are below the limit of detection. The opinion will be scheduled for possible adoption to the 48th CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011).

⁵ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/consultations/call/110707a.htm>

⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/consultations/call/110712a.htm>

⁷ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2140.htm>

11.4. UPDATE FROM WG ASPERGILLUS TOXINS

The chair of the WG on Aspergillus toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the opinion on citrinin in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01009) is progressing well. The WG is currently discussing how to tackle the aspects of co-exposure with e.g. Ochratoxin A.

11.5. UPDATE FROM WG BROMINATED FLAME RETARDANTS

The chair of the WG on brominated flame retardants (BFRs) informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the WG had just started with the preparation of the last two BFR opinions on (i) tetrabromobisphenol A (TBBP-A) and other phenols (EFSA-Q-2010-00219) in food and on (ii) BFRs other than the ones already tackled, including emerging BFR, in food.

11.6. UPDATE FROM WG FUSARIUM TOXINS

The current work is addressed under item 5.

11.7. UPDATE FROM WG MEAT INSPECTION - CONTAMINANTS

EFSA informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the WG meat inspection – contaminants has started to work on the draft opinion on meat inspection of poultry. The work is progressing well. In relation to the draft opinion on meat inspection for domestic swine (EFSA-M-2010-0232) the Panel members were informed that the technical meeting with stakeholders - as indicated during the 46th CONTAM Panel meeting - will not take place in order to meet the original deadline of September 2011. As a consequence, the Panel members will be invited to adopt by written procedure the CONTAM draft chapter (EFSA-Q-2010-01019) as well as the overall abstract and summary over the summer period.

11.8. UPDATE FROM WG MINERAL HYDROCARBONS

The chair of the WG on mineral oil informed the CONTAM Panel that work on the draft opinion on mineral hydrocarbons in food (EFSA-2010-00170) is now progressing very well in relation to the toxicological aspects of the opinion. However, the original agreed deadline of September 2011 can not be met and an extension of the deadline to deliver this opinion will be asked to the EC.

11.9. UPDATE FROM WG PHOMOPSINS

The chair of the WG on phomopsins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the opinion on phomopsins in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01001) is progressing well. The WG had some quite fruitful discussions despite the fact that this WG meets mainly by conference call due to the geographical distribution of its members. It was pointed out that the toxicological database is incomplete and a full risk assessment might not be possible.

11.10. UPDATE FROM WG PREVIOUS CARGOES – RE-EVALUATION

The chair of the WG on previous cargoes – re-evaluation informed the CONTAM Panel that the WG has to re-evaluate approximately 100 substances which are currently in the European list of acceptable previous cargoes (EFSA-M-2010-0308) based on the review of the SCF and CCFO criteria performed by the CONTAM Panel in 2009. For this purpose the work was split into three different batches. The WG started with the assessment of batch I (EFSA-Q-2010-1002) which comprises, among others, substances where an ADI or TDI has been established. In addition, EFSA has outsourced some pre-preparatory work in relation to toxicological aspects for the substances in question in order to facilitate the work of the WG. However, the completion of this mandate within the given time is rather challenging.

11.11. UPDATE FROM WGS ON REFERENCE POINTS FOR ACTION

The chair of the WG on reference points for action informed the CONTAM Panel that the WG has been set up and a first WG meeting is scheduled in August 2011. An informal brainstorming meeting was held between EFSA and the EC in view of the first WG meeting in order to better understand the mandate.

11.12. UPDATE FROM WGS OF SC OF INTEREST TO CONTAM PANEL

The members of the CONTAM Panel were informed that the SC WG on genotoxicity is in the process of completing the draft opinion “Genotoxicity testing strategies applicable to food and feed safety assessment” taking into account the comments received during the public consultation process. The SC will be invited to adopt this opinion in September 2011.

12. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION SERVICES ON MATTERS RELATING TO CONTAM

The members of the CONTAM Panel received the European Commission’s 6-monthly written feedback in relation to requests for scientific advice. The EC outlined the follow up of risk management in relation to the following CONTAM opinions: marine biotoxins, arsenic in food, lead in food, cadmium in food, melamine in food and feed, ochratoxin A, safety and efficacy of using recycled hot water as a decontamination technique for meat carcasses, polybrominated biphenyls, and smoked “skin-on” sheep meat.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No any other business was raised.