

Parma, 17 March 2012
EFSA/CONTAM/1604

**MINUTES OF THE 49TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON
CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN (CONTAM) HELD FROM
29 NOVEMBER TO 1 DECEMBER 2011 IN PARMA**

Agreed on 29 March 2012

PARTICIPANTS.

CONTAM Panel Members:

Jan Alexander, Diane Benford (vice-chair), Alan Boobis, Sandra Ceccatelli, Bruce Cottrill, Jean-Pierre Cravedi, Alessandro Di Domenico, Daniel Doerge, Eugenia Dogliotti, Lutz Edler, Peter Farmer, Metka Filipič, Johanna Fink-Gremmels¹, Peter Fürst, Thierry Guérin, Helle Katrine Knutsen, Miroslav Machala, Antonio Mutti¹, Martin Rose, Josef Schlatter (chair), and Rolaf van Leeuwen (vice-chair)

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA):

Unit on Contaminants (CONTAM unit)

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia (acting deputy head of unit), Gina Cioacata, Carolina Di Bona, Mari Eskola (acting head of unit), Nicklas Gustavsson (trainee), Silvia Nicolau Solano, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Doina Stoica, Natalie Thatcher and Elena Zeraschi.

Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance Directorate (RASA directorate)

Claudia Heppner (acting director)

Unit on Dietary and Chemical Monitoring (DCM unit)

Elena Scaravelli, Valeriu Curtui and Stefan Fabiansson (head of unit)

Unit on Scientific Assessment Support (SAS unit)

Gabriele Zancanaro

European Commission (EC):

Frans Verstraete (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3) and Almut Bitterhof (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3)²

¹ Present from 29 to 30 November 2011

² Present on 1 December 2011 by phone only.

1. WELCOME.

The chair of the CONTAM Panel welcomed the members to the 49th CONTAM plenary meeting. Nicklas Gustavsson, who had recently joined the Unit on Contaminants at EFSA as a trainee, was introduced to the members of the CONTAM Panel.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Marina Marini (DG Health and Consumers, unit 03) and Frank Swartenbroux (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3).

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. DRAFT OPINION.

The chair of the CONTAM WG on *Fusarium* toxins presented the draft opinion on T-2 and HT-2 toxins in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-00962) where the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of T-2 and HT-2 toxins in food and feed. 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 *Fusarium* toxins and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft opinion.

6. TETRABROMOBISPHENOL A (TBBPA) AND ITS DERIVATIVES IN FOOD. DRAFT OPINION.

The chair of the CONTAM WG on brominated flame retardants presented the draft opinion on tetrabromobisphenol A (TBBPA) and its derivatives in food (EFSA-Q-2010-00220) where the European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the risk for public health related to the presence of TBBPA and its derivatives 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 on BFRs and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft opinion.

7. EVALUATION OF THE SUBSTANCES CURRENTLY ON THE LIST IN THE ANNEX TO COMMISSION DIRECTIVE 1996/3/EC AS ACCEPTABLE PREVIOUS CARGOES FOR EDIBLE FATS AND OILS – PART I OF III. DRAFT OPINION.

The chair of the CONTAM WG on Previous Cargoes – re-evaluation presented the draft opinion on the re-evaluation of the substances in the Annex to Commission Directive 1996/3/EC as acceptable previous cargoes Part I of III (EFSA-Q-2010-01002) where the European Commission had asked EFSA to re-evaluate the substances in the above-mentioned annex according to the review of the criteria performed by EFSA in 2009. In this first opinion (Part I of III), a total of 13 substances were re-evaluated. 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 Previous Cargoes – re-evaluation and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft opinion.

8. SCOM OPINION ON CLARIFYING DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS RELATED TO “STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND BIOLOGICAL RELEVANCE”. PRESENTATION.

The recently adopted Scientific Opinion of the Scientific Committee (SC) on “Statistical significance and biological relevance” was presented to the CONTAM Panel by Gabriele Zancanaro (SAS Unit). The presentation gave an overview of the assessment of biologically relevant effects by considering the distinction between the concepts of biological relevance and statistical significance.

9. FSAI LETTER AND REPORT ON CADMIUM EXPOSURE OF THE IRISH POPULATION. DISCUSSION.

Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) had sent a letter on “Cadmium exposure of the Irish population” to EFSA to inform their report on “Study on urinary Cadmium in a subset of the Irish adult population”. The CONTAM Panel discussed the outcome of the report in the light of the conclusions of the Scientific Opinion on Cadmium in food (EFSA-Q-2007-138) (adopted in 30 January 2009 by the CONTAM Panel). It was concluded that cadmium can be found in many food commodities due to its ubiquitous nature, and that as low consumption of certain food commodities are most likely compensated with higher consumption of other foods there is no difference in overall dietary exposure to cadmium. In addition it was concluded that the data of the Swedish Cohort Study from 2009, used by the CONTAM Panel in the pharmacokinetic model to derive a cadmium intake from a urinary cadmium concentration, are still the best available data. The CONTAM Panel asked EFSA to prepare a reply letter for FSAI.

10. WORK PROGRAMME.

10.1. OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA FOR CONTAM PANEL.

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

10.2. 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 started the preparation of the last BFR opinions on (i) brominated phenols in food (EFSA-Q-2010-00219) and on (ii) emerging and novel BFRs in food (EFSA-Q-2010-00220). The draft opinions will be presented for possible adoption within the first half of 2012.

10.3. UPDATE FROM WG MEAT INSPECTION INCLUDING THE EFSA OVERARCHING WG.

The CONTAM Panel was informed that the WG on meat inspection – contaminants is in the process of finalising the draft Opinion on Poultry Meat Inspection (EFSA-Q-2010-00110) and work has started on the draft opinion on Bovine Meat (EFSA-Q-2010-00111). The remaining species comprise small ruminants (domestic sheep and goats) (EFSA-Q-2011-00960), domestic solipeds (EFSA-Q-2011-00962) and farmed game (including wild boar, deer, ostrich, hares and rabbits) (EFSA-Q-2011-00961).

10.4. UPDATE FROM WG MINERAL HYDROCARBONS.

The chair of the WG on mineral oil informed the CONTAM Panel that the WG has started to finalise the draft opinion on mineral hydrocarbons in food (EFSA-Q-2010-00170). Further work is still needed on the sections on toxicology. The opinion will be presented for discussion at the 50th CONTAM Panel meeting (31 January to 2 February 2012) and for possible adoption at the 51st CONTAM Panel meeting (21 to 23 March 2012). EFSA informed the CONTAM Panel that in view of new occurrence data, the CEF Panel is evaluating the option of co-adopting the opinion limited to the occurrence and exposure estimation of mineral hydrocarbons migrating from food contact materials. A clarification with the CEF Panel on co-adoption is needed.

10.5. UPDATE FROM WG PREVIOUS CARGOES – RE-EVALUATION.

The chair of the WG on Previous Cargoes – re-evaluation informed the CONTAM Panel that the WG will start the re-evaluation of the substances to be included in the second opinion (Part II of III) (EFSA-Q-2010-01463) following the same approach as for Part I.

10.6. UPDATE FROM WGS ON REFERENCE POINTS FOR ACTION.

The chair of the WG on reference points for action (RPA) informed the CONTAM Panel that the WG has started the work on the draft opinion on the methodological principles and scientific methods to be taken into account when

establishing a reference point for action (EFSA-Q-2011-00149) by having discussions how best to address the mandate.

10.7. UPDATE FROM WG ALKALOIDS.

The chair of the WG on alkaloids informed the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on ergot alkaloids in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01000) is progressing well. Due to the finalisation of the Article 36 project CFP/EFSA/CONTAM/2010/01 “Survey on ergot alkaloids in cereals intended for human consumption and animal feeding” new occurrence data have become available which are included in the opinion. Therefore the EC has been asked for an extension of the deadline to deliver this opinion.

10.8. UPDATE FROM WG *ASPERGILLUS* TOXINS.

The chair of the WG on *Aspergillus* toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on citrinin in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01009) is progressing well and the draft opinion will be presented for possible adoption at the 50th CONTAM Panel meeting (31 January to 2 February 2012).

10.9. UPDATE FROM WG *FUSARIUM* TOXINS.

The chair of the WG on *Fusarium* toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the WG has started the work on the draft opinion on nivalenol in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01003) which is the second opinion of the series of the opinions on *Fusarium* toxins.

10.10. UPDATE FROM WG PHOMOPSINS.

The chair of the WG on phomopsins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that the draft opinion on phomopsins in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01001) is progressing well and will be presented for possible adoption at the 50th CONTAM Panel meeting (31 January to 2 February 2012).

10.11. UPDATE FROM WG CLEAN SEA WATER (BIOHAZ WG).

The member of the CONTAM Panel serving as a member of the BIOHAZ WG informed the CONTAM Panel on the draft opinion on the minimum hygiene criteria to be applied to clean seawater and on the public health risks and hygiene criteria for bottled seawater intended for domestic use (EFSA-Q-2011-00274). The BIOHAZ Panel established a WG on this matter including a member of the CONTAM Panel. This opinion will be prepared by both Panels. The draft chapters within in the remit of the CONTAM Panel will be presented for possible adoption at the 50th CONTAM Panel meeting (31 January to 2 February 2012).

10.12. FEEDBACK FROM SC MEETING.

The chair of the CONTAM Panel, who attended the 51st plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) on 8-9 November 2011, reported that the public

consultation for the draft opinion on Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) was closed and the received comments will be taken into consideration in preparation of the final opinion. The Panel was also informed that a standing WG on Emerging risks will be established under SC to identify emerging risks. The Panels' inputs are required. Comments from public consultation for the opinion on Default Assumptions have been received and they have been taken into consideration. The opinion is scheduled for adoption by SC in December 2011. In addition, the SC adopted the guidance on repeated-dose 90-day oral toxicity study on whole food and feed in rodents³, together with a technical report on the outcome of the public consultation on the guidance for 90-day study on whole feed/feed in rodents.⁴ The SC also discussed the risk assessment of regulated compounds with allergenic properties and the use of the margin of exposure approach for genotoxic and carcinogenic contaminants or residuals of food additives. Additionally, the overview on mandates concerning cumulative risk assessment of pesticides, the update on the risk assessment of pesticides and the overview report of the procedures used at EFSA for the assessment of dietary exposure to the different chemical substances were presented to the SC. The SC was also updated on the preparation of EFSA's Science Strategy 2012-2016 and informed about the EFSA preliminary management plan 2012. The minutes of the meeting are available on the EFSA website⁵.

10.13. FEEDBACK FROM EFSA.

Refined cadmium dietary exposure assessment

Stefan Fabiansson, head of the DCM unit, presented the outcome of the refined cadmium dietary exposure assessment prepared by the DCM unit. The CONTAM Panel welcomed the report and was invited to provide additional comments, if any, to Stefan Fabiansson directly.

Other matters

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

Management Board meeting 20 October 2011

During the Management Board meeting in Parma the Science Strategy was agreed to publish for public consultation (this closed 21 November 2011), the revised Management Board Rules of Procedure were adopted, the process for the renewal of the Stakeholder consultative platform was endorsed and the mandate of current platform extended. The minutes of the meeting are available on the EFSA website⁶.

³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2438.htm>

⁴ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/doc/205e.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/111108-m.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/mb111020/docs/mb201011-m.pdf>

Advisory Forum meeting 30 November to 1 December 2011

During the Advisory forum meeting in Wiesbaden (Germany) national perspectives on data collection regarding food safety and emerging risk exchange network were discussed. The minutes of the meeting are available on the EFSA website⁷.

Outsourcing activities

The procurement to collate the literature on toxicity data on mercury in experimental animals and human has been awarded to Forschungs- und Beratungsinstitut Gefahrstoffe GmbH (FoBIG). The signing of the contract is in progress.

The experimental phase of the *in vitro* study on alkanes (negotiated procedure awarded to INRA) is concluded and the draft report is currently under preparation. The outcome of this study will be included in the draft opinion on mineral hydrocarbons (EFSA-Q-2010-00170).

The Art 36 grant report on occurrence of ergot alkaloids in cereals intended for human and animal consumption was finalised and will be published by the end of the year. The results of this study will be included in the draft opinion on ergot alkaloids in food and feed (EFSA-Q-2010-01000).

The Art 36 grant project on experimental study on uptake of coccidiostats in vegetables is in the final stage. The draft final report is expected to be delivered shortly and the final meeting will take place at the beginning of January 2012.

Procurement on toxicokinetics, toxicity and allergenicity data on substances to be evaluated as acceptable previous cargoes for edible fats and oils is ongoing. In December 2011 the final report covering the substances in Batch II will be received. The third and last report for Batch III is due in February 2012.

Achievements of the CONTAM Panel 2011

The acting head of the CONTAM unit presented the achievements of the CONTAM Panel in 2011. In total 14 scientific outputs (12 scientific opinions and 2 Panel statements) were published. The members of the CONTAM Panel were also informed on the number of WG and plenary meetings held in 2011 and the amount of money spent for these meetings and outsourcing activities (Article 36 projects and procurements). The acting head of unit thanked the members of the CONTAM Panel for their valuable work in 2011, expressed seasonal greetings and welcomed to meet everyone again in the new EFSA seat in 2012. The chair of the CONTAM Panel also thanked the Panel members for their contributions during 2011 and looked forward to meet in the new EFSA building with the new challenges in 2012.

⁷ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/111130-m.pdf>

10.14. UPDATE FROM WGs OF SC OF INTEREST TO CONTAM PANEL.

The members of the CONTAM Panel were informed about the outcomes of the SC WG on TTC Approaches and the SC WG on Default Assumptions (see 10.12).

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

The CONTAM Panel received the written half-yearly feedback from European Commission on the requests for scientific advice. The EC outlined the follow up of risk management in relation to the following CONTAM Panel opinions: cadmium in food, arsenic in food, opium alkaloids in poppy seeds, pyrrolizidine alkaloids in food and feed, *Alternaria* toxins in food and feed, and T-2 and HT-2 toxins in food and feed.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

The chair of the CONTAM Panel raised issues regarding EFSA's plan to open panel meetings for observers and the current EFSA's policy on declarations of interest. As a conclusion of the discussion, the members of the CONTAM Panel agreed to prepare two letters to address the concerns and views of the CONTAM Panel and to send these letters to the Executive Director of EFSA by mid-December 2011.