European Food Safety Authority

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE UNIT

MINUTES OF THE 55TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE HELD ON 21-22 MAY 2012

Agreed by written procedure on 31 July 2012

PARTICIPANTS

Scientific Committee (SC):

Boris Antunovic, Sue Barlow, Andrew Chesson[1], Diane Benford, Albert Flynn, David Gott[2], Anthony Hardy, Michael Jeger[1], Ada Knaap, Harry Kuiper[1], David Lovell, Wim Mennes[1], Alicja Mortensen, Iona Pratt[3], Mike Sharp[1], Vittorio Silano, and Frans Smulders.

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA):

Per Bergman, Hubert Deluyker, Dirk Detken[4], Anne-Laure Gassin[5], Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, Claudia Heppner, Tobin Robinson[6], Elisabeth Waigmann[4].

Secretariat of the Scientific Committee:

Djien Liem, Bernard Bottex, Miriam Jacobs, Daniela Maurici, Theresa Mc Fadden, Francesca Piombini, Reinhilde Schoonjans.

European Commission (EC):

Michael Walsh

[1] Present on 21st May
[2] Present for agenda item 8, 11 and 12
[3] Present on 22nd May
[4] Present for agenda item 12
[5] Present in the morning of 22nd May
[6] Present for agenda item 9

1. OPENING, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Birgit Noerrung, Josef Schlatter who was replaced by Diane Benford and Philippe Vannier who was replaced by Mike Sharp. Wim Mennes replaced Iona Pratt who was absent the first day of the meeting.

2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The draft agenda was adopted.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. REPORT BACK ON ISSUES RELEVANT FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

- ***ENVI Committee visit to EFSA, 2-3- May 2012***

On 2-3 May 2012, a delegation of the European Parliament Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI Committee) visited EFSA as part of the biennial visits of the specialised committees in the European Parliament to EU Agencies. During the visit, various issues such as antimicrobial resistance, GMOs, pesticides, health claims, new technologies and independence were discussed.

The ENVI Committee Delegation was led by its Chair, Matthias Groote (S&D, Germany) and included the recently appointed liaison-MEP with EFSA from the ENVI Committee, Pilar Ayuso (PPE-DE, Spain).

- ***Update on recent developments in connection with EFSA's Management Board and discussions in the European Parliament***

The Executive Director informed the Scientific Committee about the resignation of Diána Bánáti as member and Chair of the Management Board. A new Chair will be elected at the Management Board meeting in October 2012.

The Scientific Committee was informed about the recent vote in the European Parliament to postpone EFSA's 2010 budgetary discharge. The European Parliament will vote on the discharge of the EFSA 2010 budget again in the autumn of this year.

5. EFSA PRELIMINARY DRAFT STATEMENT ON ANIMAL CLONING

In December 2011 EFSA received a request from the European Commission for an update on the state of play of the possible scientific developments on the issue of cloning of farmed animals for food production purposes.

The Scientific Committee discussed a preliminary draft of EFSA's statement on "Food safety, animal health and welfare of animals derived from cloning". The document follows the same structure as the SC opinion of 2008, as well as the EFSA statements released in 2009 and 2010. It will be based on a review of peer reviewed publications released since the last statement up to March 2012, information made available to EFSA between February and March 2012 following a call for data, and on discussions with experts in the field of animal cloning.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the draft document and made some comments which will be considered in the next revision. The Scientific Committee will be consulted in writing before the finalisation of the statement, which is foreseen in June 2012.

6. NANOTECHNOLOGY

- ***Follow up on the discussion held at the 54th SC plenary***

The Scientific Committee discussed a summary of the actions taken after the discussion at the last plenary in April 2012. In particular, the document provides a description of the scope of activities of different organisations working in the area of nanotechnologies and can be used as a starting point for prioritisation and timing of potential EFSA initiatives in this field. In order to follow up some of the relevant issues and to prepare the work for the new Scientific Committee, the Scientific Committee recommended the establishment of a small EFSA working group which would consider the possible need to revise the Scientific Committee guidance document released in 2010 on the basis of the definition of nanomaterials as provided in the Commission recommendation which was published in October 2011[7]. It was also suggested to verify with OECD which of their test protocols for nanomaterials can already be considered validated for assessing the toxic potency of nanomaterials.

- ***FDA public consultation on the guidance documents for industry on safety of nanomaterials in cosmetic products and food***

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) launched a public consultation on two guidance documents to address uses of nanotechnologies in food and cosmetic products in April 2012. The Scientific Committee was invited to submit comments before the closing date of the public consultation (24 July 2012).

7. DRAFT GUIDANCE ON SUBMISSION FOR FOOD ADDITIVES EVALUATIONS

The Vice Chair of the ANS Panel presented the draft guidance on submission for food additive evaluations. The final adoption of the guidance by the Panel is foreseen for adoption in the beginning of June 2012. The guidance has been drafted taking into consideration the opinions of the Scientific Committee, in particular on the TTC approach and on the use of the Margin of Exposure for impurities that are genotoxic and carcinogenic.

[7] Commission Recommendation of 18 October 2011 on the definition of nanomaterial (2011/696/EU), EN L 275/40 Official Journal of the European Union 20.10.2011

The draft guidance was published for public consultation in November 2011 and had been subsequently revised in the light of the comments received. The Scientific Committee had already been consulted prior to the launch of the public consultation.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the document and made some comments that will be considered for the finalisation of the opinion. The revised draft will be sent for final comments to the Scientific Committee by the end of May 2012.

It was pointed out that, for the future work of the renewed Scientific Committee, it would be desirable to establish a standing Scientific Committee working group in charge of reviewing Panels' guidance documents being updated to ensure better consistency and harmonisation among the various areas of EFSA's activity.

8. NOTE TO THE ATTENTION OF THE EFSA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON GUIDANCE ON A HARMONISED APPROACH TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF OVERALL EXPOSURE ESTIMATES IN ASSESSING THE SAFE USE OF CMR SUBSTANCES IN COSMETIC PRODUCTS

EFSA received a note from the Director General of DG Health and Consumers with the request to formalise the consideration of exchange of data between the EFSA and the Commission's Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) for estimating overall exposure in the safety assessment of substances classified as carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction (CMR) for use in cosmetic products, in view of fulfilling the obligations laid down under article 15 of Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 on cosmetic products. The Cosmetics Regulation requires the Commission to ensure that such a guidance is developed with the aim to enable a harmonised approach.

The draft guidance was presented to the Scientific Committee. It was agreed that, upon request from the European Commission, EFSA would provide, if available, data on exposure (i.e. dietary intake) to CMR substances from food or any other relevant data. However, the Scientific Committee did not consider further the draft guidance as far as it concerns the development of overall exposure estimates expressed through systemic availability and the use of the overall estimates by the SCCS. Such an agreement on data sharing should be based on a scientific review of the procedural and, particularly, the methodological aspects of the proposed guidance which requires considerably more time. A letter will be drafted to seek clarification on this point with the SCCS.

9. DRAFT MANDATE FOR A STANDING SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP ON EMERGING RISKS

In 2011, a working group was established to support EFSA in the further development of a transparent framework for emerging risk identification, to assess the performance of the current procedure and to provide recommendations for improvement. The working group recognised that emerging risk identification requires a high level of expertise due to important data gaps and uncertainties in the evaluation process, as well as knowledge of other ongoing EFSA's activities. Thus, it was recommended that the entire emerging risk identification process to be coordinated by EMRISK Unit with the support of the Scientific Committee.

In order to implement this process, the Scientific Committee discussed a draft mandate for the establishment of a multidisciplinary standing working group of experts from the EFSA Scientific Committee and Panels. The working group will provide scientific support to EFSA throughout the entire emerging risk identification process. The outcome of the discussions of this working group will be regularly presented to the Scientific Committee for endorsement and possible recommendation for further actions, if any. Close collaboration with EFSA's Scientific Panels will be ensured.

The Scientific Committee welcomed the creation of this standing working group on Emerging Risks and made some comments on the draft mandate. The working group will be established once the renewal of the eight Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee has been finalised (July 2012).

10. DRAFT OPINION ON THRESHOLD OF TOXICOLOGICAL CONCERN (TTC)

In April 2012 the Scientific Committee endorsed its opinion on TTC for a final additional consultation with EMA and ECHA and EC non-food Scientific Committees. EFSA received feedback from both EU agencies in which no further issues for consideration by the Scientific Committee were raised. In addition, EFSA received from the EC non-food Scientific Committees' secretariat, the final draft of the TTC opinion of the non-food Scientific Committees. There was no divergence of views between the opinions of the EFSA Scientific Committee and the EC non-food Scientific Committees. The Scientific Committee adopted its TTC opinion on " Exploring options for providing advice about possible human health risks based on the concept of the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC)" on 22 May 2012.

The report summarising the comments received during the public consultation of the EFSA draft opinion held in 2011 was also endorsed and will be published together with the opinion.

11. FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION FROM THE 54TH SC PLENARY ON EFSA IMPLEMENTING EFSA'S POLICY ON INDEPENDENCE AND SCIENTIFIC DECISION MAKING PROCESS REGARDING DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Scientific Committee was informed of a letter sent by the EFSA Executive Director to the members of the European Parliament[8], in which EFSA's policy on independence together with the commitment of the organisation to openness, transparency and dialogue was re-iterated. In the letter, the Executive Director expressed her full confidence in the impartiality of the scientific advice and integrity of the over 1500 experts whose expertise contributed to ensure that EFSA delivered scientific outputs of the highest quality to support EU policy makers and regulators.

In addition, the Scientific Committee was informed of EFSA's letter to ILSI[9]. With this letter, EFSA's Executive Director reacted to ILSI's concerns over the implementation of the new EFSA policy on independence and decision making process regarding the declaration of interests that would affect the involvement of EFSA's experts in ILSI expert groups or task forces. The SC requested clarification in relation to the new policy on independence as they

[8] Available at http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/120516.htm
[9] Available at http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/120516a.htm

felt that application of the revised rules could exclude large number of competent experts to EFSA activities.

The EFSA Executive Director clarified that the new rules strengthen the procedures in place for screening and managing interests declared by those involved in EFSA's activities. The new rules are not intended to imply restrictions on the selection of experts but to demonstrate the expert's independence and transparency of the assessment of procedure. By the end of 2013, EFSA will prepare a report that will be presented to the Scientific Committee to summarise how the new rules have been implemented and how possible difficulties have been addressed.

12. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PANELS AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE IN 2009-2012

Panel on animal health and animal welfare (AHAW)

The vice chair of the Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW) panel summarised the overall achievements over the last term of the panel. This panel deals with animal health and animal welfare questions, primarily related to food producing animals, at the human-animal-environment interface. Over the past three years, the AHAW panel has delivered a number of scientific opinions related to animal health and animal welfare, providing scientific advice and technical support to risk managers on a broad variety of issues. AHAW has also demonstrated its capacity to respond rapidly to urgent requests, thus becoming a prominent partner of risk managers in response to crisis. The development of robust methodological frameworks for the assessment of risks related to animal health and welfare remains a long haul effort of the AHAW panel. Its main achievement however has been to establish a unique multidisciplinary capacity, blending expertise in addressing animal health and welfare issues.

Panel on food additives and nutrient sources added to food (ANS)

The Chair of the ANS Panel summarised the achievements over the last 4 years of activity, since its inception in 2008. The Panel finalised the risk assessment of the nutrient sources for food supplements and set up the strategy for the re-evaluation of all permitted food additives. All synthetic food colours and a number of natural food colours were re-evaluated. A new guidance was developed for applicants submitting dossiers on food additives; another guidance on the development and formalisation of the exposure assessment methodology for food additives (re-evaluation and assessment of new applications) was initiated and will be finalised in the coming months.

The ANS Panel received a mandate from the European Commission to re-evaluate the safety of aspartame; an opinion is expected in September 2012.

The Chair highlighted issues of possible future interest for the ANS Panel that might be relevant for the Scientific Committee, among which the further development of the risk assessment methodologies for engineered nanomaterials, the establishment of scientific consensus on low dose non-monotonic response and its implication for risk assessment methodology, and a proposal to refine the exposure assessment methodologies used by the Panel.

The ANS Panel will complete its second mandate in 2014.

Panel on biological hazards (BIOHAZ)

The Scientific Committee was informed that Professor John Daniel Collins, former chair of the BIOHAZ Panel, sadly passed away in April 2012. A letter expressing the condolences of the Scientific Committee will be sent to Prof. Collins' family.

> *A minute of silence was held in commemoration of Professor John Daniel Collins who served nine years as chair of the EFSA's Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards and member of the Scientific Committee.*

The BIOHAZ Panel has worked in the following areas during the period 2009-2012, Food hygiene/microbiology, foodborne zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance, transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), meat inspection, alternative methods for the treatment of animal by products (ABPs) and carcass decontamination.
The BIOHAZ Panel adopted 74 opinions (including guidance documents and statements) in total between 2009 and 2012.

Panel on food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings and processing aids (CEF)

The Chair of the CEF Panel summarised the main achievements of the Panel since it was established in 2008. Guidance documents were published on: data submission for the evaluation of flavourings, submission of dossiers for safety evaluation of active or intelligent substance present in active and intelligent materials, and submission of dossiers for safety evaluation of food enzymes.

The Panel has started working on a new risk assessment of bisphenol A (BPA), looking at dietary and non-dietary exposure to BPA and focussing on the exposure of vulnerable groups. Stakeholders have been invited to submit data on BPA, in particular concerning its occurrence in food and beverages, migration from food contact materials, and occurrence in food contact materials. The opinion is expected to be completed in May 2013.

205 opinions were published in the area of safety assessment of food contact materials, food ingredients and food processes and processing aids over the period, and the Panel also developed a number of statements, including a statement on the 2011 ANSES report on Bisphenol A. The CEF Panel will complete its second mandate in 2014.

Panel on contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)

The Vice Chair of the CONTAM Panel highlighted the activities of the Panel from 2009 to 2012. The Panel work included several opinions each on marine biotoxins, metals and brominated flame retardants in food and various opinions on mycotoxins in food and feed. In addition, a number of opinions were prepared on acceptable previous cargoes. Shipping of edible fats and oils into Europe is permitted in bulk tanks, in which substances, included in a positive list, had been previously transported. The Panel is requested to evaluate substances listed in an Annex to Commission Directive 96/3/EC as acceptable previous cargoes for edible fats and oils.

Two opinions on meat inspection (swine and poultry) were co-adopted with the BIOHAZ Panel. Four other opinions on meat inspections are in preparation and will be finalised

between end of 2012 and beginning of 2013. In total, the CONTAM Panel has adopted 105 scientific outputs from 2003 until 2012.

Panel on additives and products of substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP)

The Chair of the Panel summarised the achievements over the last 3 years. During the present mandate, 18 guidance documents were produced or updated. As for feed additives, Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 establishes a Community procedure for authorising their placing on the market and their use. Moreover, Directive 70/524 prescribes that for existing products, application shall be submitted at least one year before the expiry date of the authorisation. As a result of this process, EFSA received about 2000 notifications ending in about 500 applications to be evaluated by the FEEDAP Panel. The evaluation started in 2011 and it is still ongoing.

The Commission informed EFSA that the opinions of the FEEDAP Panel contributed to about 120 new legislations produced in the last few years.

The Panel reported back on difficulties with the evaluation of feed flavours; limited data are available, and the fact that flavours are used by the feed industry at much higher concentrations than in food may lead to diverging conclusions on the safety of a product used both in food and feed.

Panel on genetically modified organisms (GMO)

The Head of the GMO Unit presented the achievements in the last 3 years of the Panel mandate. Between 2009 and 2012, 38 opinions were published in relation to applications of Regulation 1829/2003 for GM plants and microorganisms including food and feed use and 17 were published in relation to authorisation of GM microorganisms following Regulation 1831/2003.

Guidance documents were developed among which, a guidance in relation to risk assessment of food and feed from GM plants (including guidance on allergenicity, statistics, stacked events and selection of comparators) and another one on post market environmental monitoring of GM plants. Finalisation of guidance document on food and feed risk assessment from GM animals and GM animal health and welfare is expected in 2012 together with a guidance document on environmental risk assessment of GM animals.

Other activities related to EC mandates on safeguard clauses and on new techniques applied to develop GM plants are currently ongoing.

Panel on dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA)

The Chair of the NDA Panel presented the activities and the achievements in the years from 2009 to 2012. The Panel is responsible for the provision of scientific advice in the area of novel foods, population reference intakes, health claims, food allergy, tolerable upper intake levels of nutrients, and the safety and suitability of infant formulae and opinions have been adopted on each of these areas during this mandate. The majority of the work in the last 3 years was concentrated on the scientific substantiation of health claims: for article 13.5 and 14 claims, 85 opinions were published and for article 13.1 claims, 2237 claims were assessed and compiled in 247 opinions. Around 90 article 13.1 claims considered eligible for further

assessment by the Commission have been submitted and it is planned to complete assessment of these by June 2012.

A general guidance covering the principles applied by the NDA Panel in the evaluation of the health claims was published in 2009 and revised in 2011. Six additional guidance documents have been prepared on scientific requirements for health claims in specific areas (e.g. gut and immune function; anti-oxidants, oxidative damage and cardiovascular health) and all will be completed by June 2012.

Panel on plant health (PLH)

The Chair of the PLH Panel presented the achievements over the last few years of activity. The PLH Panel was established in 2006 and since then became the EU reference body for risk assessment in the plant health area. During its second mandate (2009-2012), PLH produced more than 30 outputs, of which 7 were full pest risk assessment. The Panel published in 2011 a guidance document on environmental risk assessment of plant pests with the aim of developing a methodology for assessing the environmental risks posed by harmful organisms that may enter, establish and spread in the European Union.

The Panel received also an increasing number of requests for evaluation of technical dossiers relating to options proposed to reduce pest risk and was asked to identify and/or compare options that reduce the risk of introduction and spread of harmful organisms in the EU territory. Some of the requests required an urgent response from the Panel. A guidance was produced on methodology for the evaluation of the effectiveness of options for plants and plant products to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of harmful organisms in the EU territory.

The whole plant health regime in EU is currently being revised. The new revised EU legal framework should consider the need for a balance between international trade, agriculture and the protection of natural resources and the environment, whilst at the same time ensuring pragmatic expectations and creative ways of utilising human and financial resources. The Panel is currently contributing to the revision of the Annexes of the present plant health regime by conducting pest risk assessment of plant pests already present in the EU.

Panel on plant protection products and their residues (PPR)

The Chair of the PPR Panel presented its activities of the last 3 years. Guidance documents were developed in the area of human exposure (e.g. guidance for assessment of dermal absorption; guidance for pesticide exposure assessment for workers, operators, bystanders and residents) and ecotoxicology (e.g. risk assessment for aquatic organisms, assessment of exposure of organisms to substances in soil, the importance of the soil litter layer in agricultural areas and good modelling practices for effect models).

In the framework of Regulation (EC) 396/2005, with a view to setting maximum residue levels, opinions were developed to test possible methodologies to assess cumulative risk assessment of pesticides and pesticide residues.

An opinion is in preparation on clustering and ranking emissions from protected crops (greenhouses and crops grown under cover) to the relevant environmental compartments.

Finally, the Chair proposed the following topics for possible consideration by the next Scientific Committee: endocrine-mediated effects of chemicals, chemical mixtures and multiple exposures, evaluation and reporting of uncertainties in risk assessment.

Feedback from workshops organised in Washington D.C., April 2012

The Chair of the CEF Panel provided feedback on two workshops she attended in the US in April 2012. The first workshop with the title *"Enhancing FDA's food additives programme to ensure the safety of substances added to food"* was organised by the PEW Charity Health Group on food additives in the USA in April 2012. The PEW Health Group is a charity with the goal to reduce risks to the health, safety, and well-being of American consumers. Participants to the workshop were experts from governmental, industrial, academic and public interests groups. The aim of the workshop was to find potential policy solutions to strengthen the USA food additives regulatory programme. A number of topics were discussed in breakout sessions: transparency in the decision making process, pre-market activity, re-assessment of food additives and post market activity, general safety assessment standards and guidelines, hazard and toxicity assessment standards. A meeting report summarising the outcome of the workshop will be published.

The second workshop she attended was dealing with *"Non-monotonic dose responses"*, and was also held under the auspices of the PEW Health Group. The discussion was based on a paper published in 2012 (Vandenberg et al., 2012) on *"Hormones and Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals: Low dose effects and non-monotonic dose responses"* and focused on the debate regarding the importance of low dose effects and non-monotonic dose responses in hazard identification and the implications for food safety and risk assessment, specifically focusing on "endocrine disruptors" (endocrine-active substances) and their interactions with natural hormone systems. Presentations at the workshop were made by representatives of the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). The EFSA low-dose colloquium in June 2012 will build on this discussion.

The Scientific Committee thanked the chair of the CEF Panel for the interesting presentation and is now looking forward to the EFSA colloquium on low doses that will be held in Parma on the same subject on 14-15 June 2012.

13. TAKING STOCK AND REFLECTION ON POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE NEXT SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (2012-2015)

Scientific Committee's achievements in 2009-2012 mandate

The Chair of the Scientific Committee introduced a draft paper presenting the achievements of the Scientific Committee. The paper will be part of a special issue of the EFSA Journal that will be published at the occasion of EFSA's 10th Anniversary.

The Scientific Committee devoted most of its work to innovating risk assessment methodologies in the food and feed chain and in ensuring transparency and improving quality of specific components of risk assessment. Several opinions have been published to provide guidance on the horizontal issues across the different sectors and addressing consistency and transparency to improve the risk assessment process in the European Union. Opinions were

also developed in relation to specific EC mandates, as in the case of animal cloning for food production, guidance to improve the performance and the statistical analysis of a 90-day toxicity test on GM whole food and feed, and on potential risk arising from nanoscience and nanotechnologies in food and feed.

Possible future activities of the Scientific Committee

The results achieved by the SC during the first 10 years of EFSA clearly lead on to some of the future priorities in relation to further work to develop risk assessment methodologies in areas already addressed in the past (e.g. nanomaterials). Moreover, a new mandate for botanical food supplements has already been approved by the SC and further work will probably be needed in other thematic areas such as uncertainties in risk assessment, identifying emerging risks, harmonizing risk assessment terminologies and risk assessment of allergens.

The main challenge for the Scientific Committee in the future will be to support the implementation of the Science Strategy for 2012-2016 adopted by the EFSA Management Board in December 2011. The renewed Scientific Committee will be also expected to contribute to the systematic identification of priority areas for the promotion of scientific cooperation between EFSA and Member States.

The renewed Scientific Committee will consider the prioritisation of topics to be considered in its work programme at its first (inaugural) meeting at the end of July.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- ***Network on harmonisation in risk assessment methodologies, 7-8 June 2012***

  The first meeting of the network on harmonisation in risk assessment methodologies will be held on 7-8 June 2012 in Parma. The main overall goals of the network will be to build mutual understanding of risk assessment principles and methodologies between competent risk assessment authorities in Member States, EFSA and its main partners. The draft agenda will soon be published on the EFSA website.

- ***Scientific Colloquium on low-doses response in toxicology and risk assessment, 14-15 June 2012***

  A colloquium will be organised in June 2012 in Parma for an open scientific debate on the most recent scientific evidence of low-dose response in toxicology, and current and future challenges for food and feed risk assessment in the European Union. The draft programme is available on the EFSA website.

- ***EFSA visits to WHO and ECHA, 26 and 29 June 2012***

  An EFSA delegation will visit WHO and ECHA in the end of June 2012 to discuss topics of mutual interest and opportunities for strengthening cooperation.

- ***EFSA's 10th Anniversary: 7-8 November 2012***

  A Scientific Conference will be held in November 2012 to celebrate EFSA's 10th anniversary. The draft programme was presented to the Scientific Committee. Registration for the event will become possible in June. A special issue of the EFSA

Journal is in preparation to celebrate this milestone. It will focus on methodologies and will contain around 15 articles covering the whole range of activities of EFSA.

- ***Possible Emerging Risks in the Eurozone***

  A member of the SC questioned the ability of EFSA to detect and address signals related to emerging risks in Europe. The particular example of the preparedness of EFSA in the event of a break-up of the Eurozone was given.

  EFSA reassured the members of the SC that measures are in hand to mitigate the risks to the safety of food and feed, and illustrated it with the example of the study on Exogenous microRNAs by Lin Zhang et al. published on Cell Research in Sept 2011; the issue was picked up and led to a question from a Member of the European Parliament, and forwarded by the European Commission to EFSA. The question was allocated to the GMO Panel who reviewed the findings of the study and provided advice on possible future developments of this issue.

- ***Final meeting of the SC 2009-2012***

  On the occasion of the last plenary of the Scientific Committee mandate 2009-2012, the Chair expressed his appreciation and gratitude to all members of the Committee and thanked them for the work done throughout this term.

  EFSA also thanked the Committee, its Chair and vice-Chairs for their excellent achievements.