

**Biological Hazards and Contaminants Unit (BIOCONTAM UNIT)**

**Network on BSE-TSE**  
**Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting**  
**Held on 07-08 October 2014, Parma**  
**(Agreed on 31 October 2014)**

**Participants**

- Network Representatives of Member States (including EFTA Countries):**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Name</b>
Austria	Hermann Schildorfer
Belgium	Stefan Roels
Bulgaria	Ilian Boykovski
Croatia	Branco Sostaric, Karmen Branovic
Cyprus	Penelope Papasavva-Stylianou
Czech Republic	Pavel Vodrážka
Estonia	Olga Piirik
Finland	Kitty Schulman
France	Stéphane Larreché
Greece	Dimitrios Dilaveris
Hungary	Zsusanna Szögyenyi
Ireland	Cecil Alexander
Italy	Giuseppe Ru, Daniela Meloni
Luxembourg	Stefan Roels
Netherlands	Olaf Stenvers
Poland	Miroslaw Polak
Slovakia	Lubomir Janiuk
Slovenia	Ivan Ambrozic, Polona Juntes
Spain	Soledad Collado Cortés
Sweden	Maria Noeremark
United Kingdom	James Hope
Switzerland	Yuval Tempelman

- European Commission:**

Lucie Carroué, Martial Plantady (DG SANCO)

- EFSA:**

BIOCONTAM Unit (Winy Messens - chair, Pietro Stella - secretariat)

AMU Unit (Fulvio Barizzone, Diane Lefebvre): participated in agenda point 5.9/5.13

- Others:**

Masatsugu Okita (OIE)

Thomas Hagenaars (External Expert)

## 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from Peter Lind (Denmark), Lueppo Ellerbroek (Germany), Edvins Olshevskis (Latvia), Marius Masiulis (Lithuania), Petras Maciulskis (Lithuania), Bjorn Nass (Norway), Maria Jose Pinto (Portugal), Theodora Vasile (Romania), and from representatives of EU Candidate and Potential candidate countries: Albania, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

## 3. Agreement of the minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Network on BSE-TSE held on 08-09 October 2013, Parma.

The minutes were agreed by written procedure on 07 November 2013 and published on the EFSA website on 14 November 2013.

## 4. Topics for discussion

### 4.1 Briefing on action points from previous meeting

The EFSA BIOCONTAM Secretariat updated the Network on the changes in the structure of the EFSA RASA Department and BIOCONTAM Unit since the beginning of 2014, and on the formal approval of the mandate and terms of reference for the Network following the discussions during the previous meeting. It also presented the action points accomplished since the last meeting of the Network, including the invitation of representatives from international organisations, the remit of the Network (i.e. BSE and other animal TSEs), and ensuring active participation of Network members and observers in the agenda of this year's meeting.

### 4.2 Round-the-table on Member and Observer activities in the field of BSE-TSE since previous meeting

The Members of the Network summarised to the group the scientific activities in the field of BSE-TSE, including risk assessment activities, which had been undertaken in their respective Member States (MSs).

### 4.3 BSE-TSE activities of EFSA BIOHAZ Panel and BIOCONTAM Unit

The EFSA BIOCONTAM Secretariat described the activities in the field of BSE-TSE finalised and ongoing since the last Network meeting. Finalised activities include two Scientific Opinions of the BIOHAZ Panel (on the BSE risk in bovine intestines and mesentery, and on the scrapie situation in the EU), and one Scientific Report of EFSA (on a protocol for further studies on Atypical BSE). Ongoing activities include an ongoing procurement activity on an experimental study on the infectivity of sheep embryos.

### 4.4 Breeding programmes for resistance to Classical scrapie: “ideal” characteristics and expected impact on Classical scrapie

Dr. Giuseppe Ru, representative for Italy, presented the objectives, main steps and challenges of breeding for resistance to Classical scrapie in sheep, including reference to the recent EFSA Scientific Opinion on the scrapie situation in the EU. He provided examples of the impact of breeding programmes on the Classical scrapie situation in Italy.

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<sup>1</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

#### **4.5 Minimum ARR allele frequency in a sheep population required for fade out of Classical scrapie: model analyses for The Netherlands and for case-studies in the framework of the EFSA Opinion on the scrapie situation in the EU**

Dr. Thomas Hagenaars, *ad hoc* external expert for the meeting, presented the concept of a minimum ARR allele frequency to observe fade out of Classical scrapie in a sheep population. He explained the scientific basis for estimating such frequency and the mathematical modelling developed in his studies in the Netherlands. He also explained the approach followed by the BIOHAZ Panel and its *ad hoc* Working Group within the recent EFSA Scientific Opinion on the scrapie situation in the EU to estimate this value in some sheep populations used as case-studies in the EU.

#### **4.6 Is the control programme for Classical scrapie in Finland (2006-2012) sufficient to show negligible risk?**

Dr. Kitty Schulman, representative for Finland, updated the Network on a recent risk assessment carried out to assess the risk of Classical scrapie in Finland, and the ability of the current surveillance system to detect the disease in small ruminants in this country.

#### **4.7 Epidemiological situation of scrapie in Poland**

Dr. Miroslaw Polak, representative for Poland, presented the epidemiological situation of Classical and Atypical scrapie in his country, and how it has evolved along the years, including the genotypes of the cases of disease detected.

#### **4.8 Update on the studies on genetic resistance to Classical scrapie in goats in Cyprus**

Dr. Penelope Papasavva-Stylianou, representative for Cyprus, updated the Network on the progress in the studies on genetic resistance to Classical scrapie in goats in her country, presenting the background to the studies and the results obtained in intracerebral and oral challenge of goats and in herd cull studies, in particular in relation to the different goat genotypes.

**08 October 2014**

#### **5. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed the participants to the second day of the meeting.

#### **6. Topics for discussion**

##### **6.1 The EFSA TSE Infectivity Model (TSEi)**

EFSA's AMU Unit presented the EFSA TSE Infectivity Model (TSEi), its structure, input parameters needed, and outputs that can be obtained. He gave a practical demonstration of how the TSEi Model works in practice through specific case-studies. The model, developed for EFSA by a contractor (UK Animal and Plant Health Agency, APHA) is available at EFSA upon request.

##### **6.2 Update on activities of the OIE in the field of BSE and other animal TSEs**

Dr. Masatsugu Okita, representative for the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), presented the global BSE situation based on OIE data, and explained the structure and working methods in the OIE, including procedures for recognition of disease status and standard setting procedures. He provided information about specific chapters in OIE Codes in relation to BSE and scrapie.

### **6.3 The Belgian experience with decommissioning a TSE lab**

Dr. Stefan Roels, representative for Belgium/Luxemburg, presented the evolution in Belgium of the number of TSE diagnostic laboratories and the Belgian experience with decommissioning a laboratory previously used for TSE diagnostics. He explained in detail the decontamination procedures followed and related recommendations.

### **6.4 Update on activities of the European Commission in the field of BSE-TSE**

The representative from the European Commission (DG SANCO) updated the Network on the recent (completed and ongoing) risk-management activities in the field of BSE-TSE which are coordinated by DG SANCO. She also provided preliminary information related to the 2013 Report on the monitoring of TSEs in the EU, and on expected future requests for scientific advise to EFSA.

### **6.5 The EFSA Document Management System**

The Network was informed about ongoing changes in the EFSA Document Management System (DMS); a new tool (OpenText) will be available in future to share meeting documents.

### **6.6 Round-the-table discussion on the EFSA Scientific Network on BSE-TSE**

The Network Members expressed interest and support for the activities of the Network and for the opportunities offered to discuss and share experiences in the field of BSE-TSE among EU MSs. Suggestions on possible future topics of interest were formulated, including the opportunity to share experiences with countries outside the EU. It was agreed to consider those comments when preparing topics for discussion in future meetings of the Network.

The Network members agreed that for next meetings, presentations will be uploaded before the meeting through the DMS tool and print-outs of the presentations will only be provided upon request.

## **7. Any other business**

### **7.1 Date for next meeting**

The next meeting of the EFSA Network on BSE-TSE will be organised during the third quarter of 2015. Exact date and venue will be confirmed in due course.

## **8. Closure of the meeting**

The Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting.