

Parma, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014  
EFSA/FP/M/2014/131/PUB

## FINAL MINUTES

### TWENTY FIRST MEETING BETWEEN FOCAL POINTS AND EFSA BERLIN (GERMANY), 8<sup>TH</sup>-9<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014

#### Members

Chair: Stef Bronzwaer

Austria	<i>Melanie Kuffner</i>	Italy	<i>Luca Busani</i>
Bulgaria	<i>Donka Popova-Mincheva</i>	Latvia	<i>Aija Melngaile</i>
Croatia	<i>Sanja Miloš</i>	Lithuania	<i>Giedrė Čiuberkytė</i>
Cyprus	<i>Eleni Ioannou-Kakouri</i>	Luxembourg	<i>Elisa Barillozzi</i>
Czech Republic	<i>Petr Beneš</i>	Malta	<i>Ingrid Busuttil</i>
Denmark	<i>Karsten Kryger</i>	Netherlands	<i>Hubert Noteborn</i>
Estonia	<i>Piret Priisalu</i>	Norway	<i>Gisle Solstad</i>
Finland	<i>Kirsi-Maarit Siekkinen</i>	Poland	<i>Iwona Wisniewska</i>
France	<i>Adrienne Pittman</i>	Portugal	<i>Cristina Baptista Rodrigues</i>
Germany	<i>Lea Herges</i> <i>Susanne Kaus</i>	Romania	<i>Dida Cozachievi</i>
Greece	<i>Gorgias Garofalakis</i>	Slovak Republic	<i>Marica Theiszová</i>
Hungary	<i>Judit Sali</i>	Slovenia	<i>Blaža Nahtigal</i>
Iceland	<i>Àstfríður Sigurðardóttir</i>	Spain	<i>Cristina Alonso-Andicoberry</i>
Ireland	<i>Edel Smyth</i>	Sweden	<i>Melle Sävje Söderberg</i>

#### Observers

Switzerland	<i>Barbara Engeli</i>		
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#### Apologies:

Belgium, United Kingdom and Observers from the Candidate Countries

## Staff of the European Food Safety Authority

<i>Stef Bronzwaer</i>	<i>Mary Gilsenan</i>
<i>Julia Finger</i>	<i>Jeff Moon (teleconference)</i>
<i>Kerstin Gross-Helmert</i>	<i>Ilias Papatryfon (teleconference)</i>

### 1 WELCOME BY CHAIR

Stef Bronzwaer from EFSA's Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation (AFSCO) Unit and Chair of the meeting opened the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting between Focal Points (FPs) and EFSA.

The Chair welcomed the FP representatives, in particular those attending a FP meeting for the first time: Karsten Kryger (Denmark), Gisle Solstad (Norway) and Cristina Baptista Rodrigues (Portugal).

### 2 WELCOME AND CURRENT BfR ACTIVITIES

The Chair gave the floor to Dr. Mark Lohmann from the BfR, taking over for Prof. Dr. Reiner Wittkowski, Vice-President of the BfR, who apologized for not being present. Dr. Lohmann, Head of the Unit Risk Research, Perception, Early Detection and Impact Assessment in the BfR's Department for Risk Communication welcomed the participants on behalf of the BfR and gave a presentation about the BfR and its recent activities in risk assessment and risk communication.

### 3 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair informed participants that the final draft agenda is included in the paper folder of each participant. Among other topics, the first day focuses on the new FP Agreements, the new Scientific Roadmap and innovations in Data collection. The second day will be dedicated to updates from both EFSA and the Member States (MS). Several issues were raised by the FPs, which have been included on the Agenda for the second day, namely:

- Improving risk assessment capabilities in MS via Grants & Procurement - the case of IMPRORISK Model (CY)
- Dutch approach to the risk assessment of insect-derived food and proteins (NL)
- Nutrivigilance in ANSES (FR)
- Reorganisation of the Swedish National Food Agency (SE)
- Feedback on the III Workshop on Scientific Cooperation with EFSA (ES)
- Upcoming conferences co-organised by ANSES (FR)

The Finnish FP asked to inform about a Seminar on Uncertainty in Risk Assessment within the Finnish Food Safety Authority EVIRA, which was included under "Any Other Business".

The Chair then adopted the final Agenda.

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interests, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoIs) of meeting participants. The Chair informed the participants that the policy on DoI in EFSA has changed, taking effect as of 31

September 2014. Changes on the DoI tool will take place in October but this should not affect the process of the regular update of the ADOIs.

For the present meeting there is an interest to declare by all FPs, as the issues related with the new FP Agreements touch upon the financial contribution FPs will receive. FPs were asked if they wish to declare any other interest. No additional interests were declared.

The minutes of the 20<sup>th</sup> FP meeting had been approved by written procedure and published on EFSA's website, as well as on ScienceNet, on 16.07.2014.

#### **4 DATA COLLECTION AND RELATED HARMONISATION INITIATIVES**

Mary Gilsonan, Head of EFSA's Evidence Management Unit (DATA), presented an overview of data collection and related harmonisation initiatives at EFSA. Her presentation included an overview of the Standard Sample Description (SSD), the EFSA standard for transmission of occurrence data from European data providers to EFSA, as well as developments in the area of food classification (FoodEx). She explained that SSD has been implemented in all MS in the area of pesticides and in almost all MS in the area of contaminants. With its standard data format, as well as in built business rules, the SSD has contributed greatly to the improvement in the quality of data which EFSA receives for risk assessment purposes. Mary also acknowledged that EFSA is investing in more training and support to MS on the use of FoodEx2 and that a dedicated chemical occurrence network meeting in November will focus on capacity building in this regards.

The Scientific Network on Zoonoses Data Collection will have four instead of seven meetings a year with a greater focus on training and capacity building in MS, in particular regarding data reporting. The Network on Chemical Occurrence Data will have two meetings instead of one per year from now on, also with more focus on training and capacity building. In addition to the Data Collection Networks, the Stakeholder Platform Discussion Group on food chemical occurrence data, whose members include consumer groups and industry, meets annually to discuss and exchange information on the practical aspects and challenges regarding provision and usage of occurrence data to/by EFSA from these stakeholders.

Special emphasis was given to the EFSA Data Warehouse and to the development of its draft Access Rules, which is currently shared with the Commission, and to the draft Data Roadmap, which outlines three key objectives for data where EFSA plans to focus in the coming years: open data, data quality and data interoperability. Within this framework, the Data Warehouse will allow data providers and other stakeholders to access data (e.g. contaminants, food consumption, pesticides, zoonoses) at different level of granularity. The aim is to make data more accessible, particularly to the owners of data, so that not only EFSA can use such data. Mary underlined that, in most cases, MS are the owners of the data. The draft Data Roadmap frames the drive towards more "open data" following the demand for more transparency in EFSA's risk assessments as well as the general recognition of the "open data" movement and re-use of public sector data.

The draft Data Roadmap and the Data Warehouse access rules generated many questions and a fruitful discussion of the plenary in particular regarding data access. Mary explained that, for now, the data will only be visible to the data provider, but further development and improved access are envisaged as the Data Warehouse evolves. She

stated that it is not foreseen that data provided by the industry will be accessible. It was emphasised that in some MS the data providers are not always the owners of the data. The Netherlands appreciated an increased opening of data and stressed the benefits of getting measurement results for certain contaminants. All questions were duly noted to be taken on board when updating the Data Access rules.

Finally, Mary pointed out that the DATA Unit would be glad to receive expressions of interests from Seconded National Experts (SNEs). These SNEs should have experience in Data collection and/or Dietary exposure, as these will be the fields they will work in.

*Action Point 1: DATA Unit to share Data Warehouse Access Rules and Data Roadmap with FPs for their comments.*

*Action Point 2: MS wishing to participate in the “open data pilot project on chemical occurrence” to contact the DATA Unit.*

*Action Point 3: FPs to distribute information about SNE positions in DATA Unit.*

## **5 FOCAL POINT REPORTING 2014**

The Chair introduced Kerstin Gross-Helmert, Senior Scientific Officer in the AFSCO Unit. Kerstin briefed FPs on the launch and current state-of-play of the 2014 FP reporting process. This year the reporting period was initiated on 10.09.2014 and will conclude on 14.11.2014. FPs are reminded to submit their annual reports of activities ideally ahead of the timeline.

“Miscellaneous costs” cover for example subcontracting, translation of documents and the printing of national brochures. Services, for example IT services, can be bought from the FP budget and declared under “miscellaneous” if linked to FPs’ work, for example IT services for the FP website. It has to be checked if EFSA rules or national rules apply for the purchase of new equipment, in situations when equipment is broken (RO).

*Action Point 4: AFSCO to check rules and timeline for purchase of equipment and inform Romanian FP accordingly.*

## **6 FOCAL POINT AGREEMENTS IN 2015**

While the FP reporting (see point 5) refers to the current, hence “old” FP Agreements, from 2015 onwards new FP Agreements will be in force. The Chair explained the new framework for these FP Agreements. Article 36 of EFSA’s founding Regulation 178/2002 will be the operational framework of the FP network. Financial support will be given through subsidies (Grants) to the designated FP organisations, which shall be included in the Art. 36 List. The new Grant grants, “Lump Sum Grants”, were explained. These new Grant Agreements can exclusively be signed with organisations on the Art. 36 List and will be multi-annual. The new FP Agreements will be ready by December. EFSA’s financial contribution to the FP network will see an overall increase as from 2015 onwards.

*Action Point 5: AFSCO to confirm with FP the designated FP organisation and the name and title of the competent person to sign the FP Agreement.*

## **7 EXTERNAL REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF SCIENTIFIC GRANT AND PROCUREMENT PROJECTS ON DELIVERING EFSA'S TASKS**

The Chair gave the floor to Kerstin Gross-Helmert who briefed FPs about the main conclusions arising from the external review of the impact of scientific Grant and Procurement programmes, and recommendations for future outsourcing of scientific work.

*Action Point 6: AFSCO to inform FPs when the External Review of Grant and Procurement Projects is published, and inform them to whom EFSA already will send the report.*

*Action Point 7: FPs to disseminate the published External Review Report.*

## **8 SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION ROADMAP**

Following up the topic regarding the external review, the Chair presented EFSA's new Scientific Cooperation Roadmap, taking up all results of different reviews that have been incorporated into a strategic document that lays out specific actions to strengthen scientific cooperation while making optimal use of available resources. The overall idea of the roadmap is to move beyond mere tools and have a common agenda of cooperation to ensure food safety across Europe. The presentation also mentioned the EU Risk Assessment Agenda, which makes up a big block of the Scientific Cooperation Roadmap.

The discussion centred on the importance and methods of cooperation at EU and also international level. The Chair underlined the importance of the document. The Greek FP asked if there is a concrete plan for advanced Risk Assessment courses yet. Indeed a new circle of advanced Risk Assessment courses is about to start with posts for the MS' participation. FPs will be asked to help with the selection of participants. The Portuguese FP asked for a definition of "Twinning Projects" that was mentioned in the presentation. The Chair explained that there is no detailed information on these projects yet, but will be worked out over 2015.

Regarding the timeline, the Chair pointed out that the Scientific Cooperation Roadmap will be published by end of October 2014. EFSA will then come back to FPs on its implementation and also visit MS in order to present it.

## **9 EFSA'S GRANTS AND PROCUREMENT SCHEMES**

The Chair gave the floor to Kerstin Gross-Helmert, who briefed FPs on EFSA's plans to foster higher interest in Grant projects, allowing for a more continuous collaboration with MS' organisations particularly through developing longer-term projects. New tools will be available including new FP Grant Agreements, Framework Partnership Agreements and Thematic Grants.

Kerstin explained the difference between Grants and Procurements: while Procurement projects enable EFSA to buy the services it needs, with no regard to possible profit of the contracted organisation, Grants are a strictly a non-profit, co-financing tool and are only applicable to organisations on the Art. 36 List. EFSA is broadening the use of Grants, in particular Thematic Grants, Specific EFSA Grants and Framework Partnership Agreements. Kerstin explained in more detail the Thematic Grants and the Framework Partnership Agreements. An important difference of both framework and normal Grants compared to Procurement is the ownership, which for Grants remains with the

beneficiary, while for Procurements relies with EFSA. The first Thematic Grants will be launched by November 2014 and FPs will be asked to disseminate information on them.

## **10 UPDATE ON GRANTS AND PROCUREMENT & WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015**

The Chair introduced Ilias Papatryfon, Team Leader of the P&M Team of the RASA Department, who, via teleconference, provided an update on upcoming Grant and Procurement calls. Reference was made to the main calls included on the 2015 Annual Work Programme for Scientific Grants and Procurements.

The Danish FP noted that the work plan does not include any project in the field of Nanotechnologies, as this would be of great importance in Denmark. Ilias mentioned that, though Nanotechnologies are not foreseen in the work plan for now, future changes in accordance to new needs and new priorities are possible.

The German FP asked if the data that will be collected in some of the projects mentioned will also be made available in the data warehouse. Mary explained that data that will be agreed to be shared will be found in the data warehouse. The Dutch FP pointed out that it is of great importance for the MS to have an accessible database of stored data. For the Netherlands it would particularly important data from the Bee Risk Assessments.

## **11 RELEVANT ISSUES FROM THE LAST ADVISORY FORUM MEETING**

The Chair introduced Jeff Moon, Deputy Head of the AFSCO Unit, who provided an overview on key issues discussed at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Advisory Forum meeting that took place in Venice on 24-25 September 2014. Jeff particularly referred to the discussions concerning the implementation of the new framework for the 2015 FP Agreements (see Point 6).

## **12 PROVIDING FURTHER SUPPORT IN PREPARATION OF ADVISORY FORUM MEETINGS INCLUDING BREAK-OUT SESSIONS**

To further discuss the possibilities of support in the preparation of Advisory Forum meetings, FPs then split up into three break-out groups and afterwards each group reported back to the plenary. All groups stressed that access of FPs to Advisory Forum documents is crucial for supporting the preparation of Advisory Forum meetings. Obviously, some countries, mainly the “smaller” countries, with less administrative burden, already have informal or occasional meetings of the Advisory Forum and FP member, and sometimes also with Network Experts or Working Group members, and find this very helpful. However, FPs generally pointed out that the meeting preparation should be a dialogue between Advisory Forum and FP members, with an information flow and feedback vice-versa. A common meeting of the Advisory Forum and the FP network could help to agree common rules for this information flow.

The spread sheet presented by Jeff was acknowledged as an important and helpful tool; however more experience would be needed to evaluate it. FPs also commented that the guidelines for the spread sheet are very short and could be improved.

The Chair finally closed the meeting of the first day.

## **13 EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD PROGRAMME – OPPORTUNITY FOR INVOLVEMENT**

The Chair introduced Julia Finger, Officer in the AFSCO Unit, who presented opportunities for involvement of MS in EFSA’s Neighbourhood Programme (ENP). The



ENP aims to forge closer ties between the EU and countries to the South and the East of its borders. The presentation provided ideas for possible cooperation activities between MS and ENP countries under EFSA's coordination.

FPs showed their interest in future cooperation and had various questions about the programme: The Portuguese FP mentioned that Portugal has various programmes with former colonial countries, i.e. East Timor, Angola, Mozambique; however since the ENP countries are defined, other countries cannot be included. The difference between lead and other countries in the programme was explained. It was also mentioned that the European Commission, who is funding the programme, is planning a follow-up of the programme for those countries that want to continue cooperation. The Cypriot FP informed about a BTSF training that had taken place in Cyprus in which ENP countries were involved and which was very fruitful. The Greek FP reported a meeting targeted for Mediterranean countries, organised by the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Zaragoza (10-11 June 2014, Zaragoza, Spain). The meeting was organised within the SAMEFOOD network initiative, under which further training events with relevance to the interest of risk assessors will be planned.

*Action Point 8: FPs to inform AFSCO about food safety related projects or working relations of their countries with ENP countries by end of October 2014.*

## **14 ISSUES RAISED BY EFSA & FOCAL POINTS**

### **14.1 IMPROVING RISK ASSESSMENT CAPABILITIES IN MEMBER STATES VIA GRANTS & PROCUREMENT - THE CASE OF IMPRORISK MODEL**

The Chair introduced Eleni Iannou-Kakouri, FP from Cyprus, who informed participants about the IMPRORISK model, an empirical distribution model, similar to EFSA models concerning exposure assessment of contaminants and widely applicable in chemical risk assessment.

### **14.2 DUTCH APPROACH TO THE RISK ASSESSMENT OF INSECT-DERIVED FOOD AND PROTEINS**

The Chair gave the floor to Hub Noteborn, FP from the Netherlands, who presented the Dutch approach to the Risk Assessment of insect-derived food and proteins. This approach is particularly relevant in the context of the current EFSA request for data on Risk Assessments regarding "safety risks arising from the production and consumption of insects as food and feed".

FPs showed a high interest in this risk assessment, and, in fact, ANSES is currently working on insects and will deliver an opinion by year end. Switzerland would favour a harmonized approach particularly for the inspection (guidelines) of legally sold insects.

The presentation also led to other questions: participants wanted to know if the conversion of toxins and residues on the raw material was being considered (EL). It was also asked if it is legal to sell insects on the Dutch market (CH) and if the respective companies are registered as food business operators (ES). The question on whether insects are novel foods (CZ) was discussed.

*Action Point 9: Dutch FP to share the link to published risk assessments of microbiological, chemical and parasitological risks arising from the consumption of mass-reared insects as food and feed.*

*Action Point 10: EFSA to share the request for an initial scientific opinion on the safety risks arising from the production and consumption of insects as food and feed and the respective acceptance letters.*

#### **14.3 THE NEW WEB-BASED ENVIRONMENT FOR SHARING OF INFORMATION – DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Julia Finger briefed the participants on the new protected web environment for exchange of information, called Document Management System (DMS) which will replace ScienceNet during October 2014. Training has been offered by an external provider and FPs were asked if they participated in the training. It became clear that most FPs could not take the training opportunity as they did not receive the e-mail sent by EFSA's CORSER Unit. The German Focal Point joined the DMS training session via telephone and was reasonably satisfied with the information provided. The French FP reported the feedback given by the other FP member who, in fact, attended the training but found it too theoretical, not very useful, and instead would have preferred a more applied training. FPs were informed that there will be other training opportunities in the future.

*Action Point 11: German FP to share the slides from the online training on Open Text with other FPs; EFSA to check if further training materials are available and share them with FPs.*

#### **14.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE EFSA DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ON THE INFORMATION EXCHANGE PLATFORM**

As a follow-up of the previous point, the Chair informed FPs on the current plans for phasing out the Information Exchange Platform (IEP) from ScienceNet. On a first stage, all information stored on the IEP will remain available for downloading and at the same time be migrated (copied) into a similar structure on the new DMS.

#### **14.5 NUTRIVIGILANCE IN ANSES**

The Chair introduced Adrienne Pittman, FP from France, who presented to FPs the current activities in Nutrivigilance in ANSES, in particular the feedback from the Nutrivigilance experts' meeting held in June in ANSES.

#### **14.6 REORGANISATION OF THE SWEDISH NATIONAL FOOD SAFETY AGENCY**

The Chair introduced Melle Säve-Söderbergh, FP from Sweden, who informed FPs about the on-going reorganisation of the Swedish National Food Agency.

### **15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **15.1 NEW BTSF TRAINING COURSES IN RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Chair gave the floor to Julia Finger, who informed FPs about the state of play of the implementation of the new edition of the BTSF training courses in risk assessment. After the presentation the Chair summed up the key activities FPs can carry out in this context. In particular, FPs should contact the BTSF Contact Points at national level and offer their support. This support may include the promotion of the courses to the relevant target audiences via their national FP network and help with the selection of the best candidates for the courses.



Some FPs mentioned that the information about the first courses was sent late both to the BTSF Contact Point and to the FP and thus did not leave them much time for the provision of such support.

## **15.2 MEETING WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – COUNTRY VISITS**

The Chair informed FPs about the plans of EFSA's Executive Director to visit all MS in the upcoming two years. The Executive Director aims to meet Advisory Forum and FP members as well as other institutional representatives on his visits to discuss areas of common interest for possible scientific cooperation activities.

## **15.3 FEEDBACK ON THE III WORKSHOP ON SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION WITH EFSA**

The Chair introduced Cristina Alonso Andicoberry, FP from Spain, who provided feedback on the III Workshop on Scientific Cooperation with EFSA.

## **15.4 UPCOMING CONFERENCES CO-ORGANIZED BY ANSES**

The Chair gave the floor to Adrienne Pittman, who briefed FPs on upcoming conferences co-organised by ANSES.

## **15.5 UPDATE FROM THE FINISH FOCAL POINT ABOUT A SEMINAR ON UNCERTAINTY IN RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Finish FP informed participants through printed hand-outs about a Seminar on Uncertainty in Risk Assessment organised by the Finnish Food Safety Authority.

*Action Point 12: FPs to share information on upcoming events occurring in their countries with other FPs.*

*Action Point 13: AFSCO & FPs to think of means to share information on relevant national events (until further notice, sharing should be done via e-mail).*

## **15.6 UPDATE FROM THE CROATIAN FOCAL POINT ON THE ROUND TABLE ENTITLED “GMO IN FOOD PRODUCTION”**

The Chair gave the floor to Sanja Miloš, Croatian FP, to briefly announce the round table “GMO in Food Production”, occurring in Opatija, Croatia on the 23<sup>RD</sup> of October 2014. The event was organised in the context of the “8<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Food Technologists, Biotechnologists and Nutritionists” as national FP event, with the aim to present and promote the role of EFSA in that specific scientific area.

## **15.7 FOCAL POINT MEETINGS IN 2015**

The dates scheduled for the 2015 FP meetings are:

- 22<sup>nd</sup> FP meeting: 11-12 February, Brussels, Belgium.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> FP meeting: 6-7 May, Palma de Mallorca, Spain.
- 24<sup>th</sup> FP meeting (jointly with the Advisory Forum): 13 October, Milan, Italy (in conjunction with and before Scientific the Conference at EXPO 2015).
- 25<sup>th</sup> FP meeting: 18-19 November, Parma, Italy.

## **CLOSURE OF MEETING**

The Chair closed the meeting, thanking participants for their attendance and active contributions in the various discussions. He also thanked the German FP for the opportunity to have this meeting in Berlin.

## SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Reference	Who	What
Action 1	DATA	Share latest version of the Data Warehouse Access Rules and Data Roadmap
Action 2	FPs	MS wishing to participate in the “open data pilot project on chemical occurrence to contact the DATA Unit
Action 3	FPs	Spread information on SNE positions in the DATA Unit
Action 4	AFSCO	Check rules for purchase of equipment and inform Romanian FP accordingly
Action 5	AFSCO & FPs	AFSCO to confirm with FPs the designated FP organisation and the name and title of the competent person to sign the new FP Agreement
Action 6	AFSCO	Inform FPs when the External Review of Grant and Procurement Projects is published, and inform them to whom EFSA will send the report
Action 7	FPs	Disseminate the published External Review Report
Action 8	FPs	Inform AFSCO about relevant food safety related projects or working relations of their country with ENP countries by the end of October 2014
Action 9	NL FP	Share link to published risk assessments of microbiological, chemical and parasitological risks arising from the consumption of mass-reared insects as food and feed
Action 10	AFSCO	Share the request for an initial scientific opinion on the safety risks arising from the production and consumption of insects as food and feed and the respective acceptance letters
Action 11	DE FP & EFSA	Share the slides from online training on Open Text with other FPs; EFSA to check if further training materials are available and share them with FPs
Action 12	FPs	Share information on upcoming events occurring in their countries with other FPs
Action 13	FPs & AFSCO	Think of means to share information on relevant national events (until further notice, sharing should be done via e-mail)