

ALPHA UNIT**Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare****Minutes of the 92nd plenary meeting****Held on 22-23 September 2015, Parma****(Agreed on 05 October 2015)****Participants****a) Panel Members:**

Dominique Bicot, Andrew Butterworth, Anette Bøtner, Paolo Calistri, Klaus Depner, Sandra Edwards, Bruno Garin-Bastuji, Margret Good, Christian Gortazar-Schmidt, Virginie Michel, Miguel Angel Miranda, Simon More, Søren Saxmose Nielsen, Mohan Raj, Liisa Sihvonen, Hans Spoolder, Jan Arend Stegeman, Hans-Hermann Thulke, Antonio Velarde, Preben Willeberg, Christoph Winckler

b) European Commission representatives:

None

c) EFSA:

ALPHA Unit: Francesca Baldinelli, Franck Berthe, Denise Candiani, Sofie Dhollander, Chiara Fabris, Andrea Gervelmeyer, Andrey Gogin, Renata Leuschner, Eliana Lima, Francesca Porta, Frank Verdonck, Matthew Watts, Gabriele Zancanaro

AMU Unit: Elisa Aiassa, Jose Cortinas-Abrahantes

BIOCONTAM Unit: Beatriz Guerra, Pietro Stella

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The chair welcomed the participants to the AHAW Panel plenary meeting. Apologies were received from Klaus Depner and Christoph Winckler.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of interest

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest², EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Scientific Panel Members invited for the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process or at the Oral Declaration of Interest at the beginning of this meeting.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 91st Plenary meeting held on 01-02 07 2015.

The minutes were agreed and published on the EFSA website on 13 07 2015.

5. New Mandates

5.1. Request for a Scientific opinion on animal welfare aspects of the slaughter or killing of pregnant livestock animals

The mandate – and its Terms of Reference - received by the 4 Member States was presented by German representatives (one of the requestors) to the Panel members. The Panel discussed and agreed to answer first to the third term of reference, requesting to assess at which age or developmental stage foetuses are able to experience pain. If it is demonstrated – through appraisal of scientific evidence – that foetuses are able to experience pain as of a certain developmental stage, then the remaining terms of reference will be answered. Virginie Michel gave an update on the related project on animal consciousness outsourced to INRA. The INRA group has started the assessment of scientific literature on foetal development, and preliminary results could be ready by the end of October.

5.2. Assessment of transmissible diseases in terrestrial and aquatic animals

The Panel was informed that a number of mandates to assess transmissible diseases in terrestrial and aquatic animals will be submitted to EFSA in the context of the future EU animal health law.

6. Scientific outputs presented for endorsement

6.1. Request for an update of the 2011 scientific opinion on hatchery waste as animal by-products (EFSA-Q-2014-00902)

The sections of the draft opinion relevant for animal health were discussed and endorsed unanimously.

7. Scientific outputs presented for discussion

5.1. Scientific Opinion on *Echinococcus multilocularis* infection in animals (EFSA-Q-2014-00728)

The Panel discussed the model on the probability of introduction and establishment of EM in free countries by means of domestic dogs and wild canids, the model on treatment efficacy, and the guidance to substantiate the estimation of the sensitivity of the tests used in the framework of the surveillance activities to demonstrate absence of EM in free countries. The

¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencypolicy.pdf>

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

Panel agreed with the conceptual model on introduction and establishment probability used in the opinion. It was suggested that the model parameters, the assumptions and the uncertainty, as well as the model-related conclusions should be described in more detail. Additional data from literature from France and Germany on fox infection rates and movements should be included in the model parameterization.

It was emphasized that diagnostic sensitivity is the key trait for the test sensitivity question, as the goal is to identify infected animals. Test sensitivity for each relevant test used in each relevant species should be estimated in endemic areas, where the entire range of different infection stages and intensities are represented. An alternative is to use qualified guestimates based on scientific literature to inform the freedom models. Ring trials are needed to ensure that tests are reproducible in different member states.

8. Feedback from the ad-hoc Working Groups of the AHAW Panel

8.1. Scientific opinion on entry routes into the EU of vector borne disease (EFSA-Q-2014-00187)

The Panel was updated on the data-collection for the assessment of the risk for entry, transmission, persistence and spread of vector borne diseases. A short demonstration of the functionalities of the Minrisk model/tool was given at the meeting, while a more detailed description of the model was provided in the briefing notes. The use of the Minrisk model for the risk assessment in this opinion was agreed upon.

A short overview of the different approaches used to assess the impact of diseases in previous mandates of the AHAW Panel was presented, and it was agreed that there is a need for a harmonised approach for disease impact assessment in the future. A more detailed presentation of a proposal for such a disease impact assessment framework will be provided at the October plenary meeting. It was suggested to seek feed-back from the European Commission on the expectations and needs regarding the scope of the disease impact assessment.

8.2. Request for a joint EFSA and EMA scientific opinion on measures to reduce the need to use antimicrobial agents in animal husbandry in the European Union and the resulting impacts on food safety (EFSA-Q-2015-00216)

The RONAFAs (Reduction Of Need of Antimicrobials in Food producing Animals) working group, composed by EFSA (BIOHAZ, FEEDAP and AHAW Panels) and EMA experts, met physically for the first time in September 15. The WG's interpretation of the ToRs was presented to the Panel as well as the draft table of contents. Particular attention was given to the proposed 3.2 – "Possible alternatives to reduce the need for and use of antimicrobials in animal husbandry in the EU and their potential impact on AMR in bacteria from food animals and food (ToRs 3 and 4)" – since the AHAW Panel is expected to draft this chapter. Feedback on the table of contents is expected by October 15, prior to next RONAFAs WG meeting. The Panel confirmed its interest in drafting a complementary self-task. While for the RONAFAs scientific opinion the AHAW contribution would be a chapter on guiding principles and high level considerations of on-farm health management aimed at reducing the need for use of antimicrobials, the self-task would detail in depth the application of the principles, addressing also species-specific issues.

8.3. Scientific opinion concerning the risk of survival, establishment and spread of the small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) in the EU (EFSA-Q-2014-00938)

The background and the Terms of Reference were explained to the Panel members to facilitate review of the draft opinion that will be circulated before the October Plenary meeting. The absence of data on apiaries and bee movements were highlighted. The remaining items to be discussed with the WG are the outputs of the modelling work, transformation of air temperature into soil temperature and inclusion of data on the very recent SHB detections. Detailed information on soil types is only available for some (e.g. Calabria) EU regions. Liisa, Miguel and Paolo volunteered to act as deep readers.

8.4. Scientific opinion on health of honey bee colonies (EFSA-Q-2015-00047)

The Panel was updated on the methodology used to address TORs 2-3 on the identification of factors/indicators and how to measure/report factors/indicators, respectively. A brainstorming on TOR4 within the WG generated the idea to develop a 'health status index' to analyse data collected on bee health and allowing comparison between different studies. This idea will be further discussed within the HEALTHY-B and MUST-B WGs before presenting a possible approach to the Panel at the December plenary meeting.

8.5. Scientific opinion on Avian Influenza (EFSA-Q-2015-00160)

The Panel was informed on the proposal for outsourced support for the opinion that EFSA received. An award letter has been sent and the contract signing procedure is ongoing. Based on an overview of previous EFSA opinions on avian influenza and methodologies suggested by the contractor, the WG will discuss the methodologies and data needs required to answer the TORs at its next meeting. A follow-up discussion during the October plenary meeting is foreseen.

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1. Discussion on potential emerging risks to AHAW

9.1.1. Comparison between lesions found at meat inspection in finishing pigs raised under organic/free-range and conventional, indoor conditions in Denmark

The panel provided feedback on the paper and discussed options to continue and further consolidate its work on potential emerging risks.

9.1.2. Technical assistance for an update on the risk of transmission of Ebola Virus (EBOV) via the food chain (ToR 4) – Drivers for occasional spillover event of Ebola virus (EFSA-Q-2014-00706)

The EFSA report on drivers for occasional spill-overs of Ebola was presented, with a special emphasis on the conceptual framework applied in the report, using e.g. cosmograms and spidergrams to visualize connections and links between drivers.

9.2. Scientific Committee and Scientific Committee Working Groups

The Panel was informed that SC member Tony Hart will present the SC guidance on uncertainty in risk assessment at the October plenary meeting. The Panel chair invited Panel members to volunteer to represent the AHAW Panel in the SC WG on “Weight of evidence”.

9.3. Principles and process for dealing with data and evidence in scientific assessments PROMETHEUS

Elisa Aiassa presented the EFSA document “Principles and process for dealing with data and evidence in scientific assessments PROMETHEUS”. Potential needs of support for implementing Prometheus, e.g. templates, guidelines, such as a document explaining the role of WG experts in the production of an opinion or a guidance for protocol development and useful protocol elements, will be discussed at the December plenary meeting.

9.4. Feedback on the procurement project “MAPRA – modeling animal pathogens: Review and Adaptation”

Matthew Denwood, as representative of the contractor, gave a brief overview on Phase 1 of the MAPRA project (inventory of models / frameworks developed in domains not related to food and feed safety) and described the remaining tasks of Phase 2 (adaptation of existing models from other domains to issues related to food and feed safety). The Panel members provided suggestions on how to achieve the objectives of the project.

10. Any other business

The plenary meeting of March 2016 will be organized as an open plenary meeting on 9-10 March 2016 in Brussels.