

# PROGRESS WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT APPROACH (SEA)

The aim of this document is to provide the Management Board with an update on progress with implementation of activities envisaged under the framework of EFSA's Stakeholder Engagement Approach since it was adopted by the Management Board in June 2016.

## A. Background

The Stakeholder Engagement Approach was adopted by the Board at the meeting of 15 June 2016.<sup>1</sup>

Stakeholders have been contributing to EFSA's work since the Authority was established in 2002. Now, as part of the five-year strategy 2020, EFSA is committed to prioritising public and stakeholder involvement in the process of risk assessment.

The new approach is linked to a broader set of transparency and engagement policies, which are currently subject to a major transformation process under the umbrella of EFSA's Transparency and Engagement in Risk Assessment Initiative (TERA). The stakeholder engagement approach is intended to complement the effective implementation of TERA actions and measures.

The Stakeholder Engagement approach firmly adheres to the principles of authenticity, inclusiveness and balanced representation of views addressing interests of various stakeholder communities in an equal manner. The approach will see EFSA interacting with a larger range of stakeholders through a greater variety of permanent and targeted platforms. Representatives of food industry and business, farmer organisations, consumer and environment NGOs, distributors, practitioners and academia would have opportunity to engage with EFSA and provide input within different stages of risk assessment process and communications.

## B. Progress on implementation

As defined by the Decision of the Management Board, in order to allow a broader range of interests, perspectives and technical knowledge to be represented, a registration of all parties interested to interact with EFSA has been carried out according to the set of eligibility criteria. The registration included an on-line based application process, followed by screening of the applications and the establishment of a list of registered stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority on the criteria for establishing a list stakeholders and the establishment of the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau, mb160316-a3

## 1. Open call for registration

With a view to establish a list of registered stakeholders, EFSA has published an open call for applications on 23 September 2016. EFSA's stakeholder engagement approach

is based on a continuous registration process. However, in order to establish a list of registered Stakeholders and to set up the permanent and targeted engagement platforms, an initial selection of registered Stakeholders has been carried out eight weeks upon the opening of the registration process. A dedicated promotional campaign was launched targeting wide range of stakeholder groups, using common communication tools and existing EFSA networks. In total, eighty applications have been received.

**Table 1. Overview of the submitted applications by categories**

	Stakeholder Category	No. of Applications
1.	Consumers	2
2.	Environmental/Health NGOs and Advocacy groups	14
3.	Farmers and primary producers	5
4.	Business and Food industry	49
5.	Distributors and HORECA	4
6.	Associations of Practitioners	4
7.	Academia	2

## 2. Selection and Establishment of list of registered stakeholders

The selection process was carried out following the principles established in the Management Board Decision and according to the procedure set up by an internal Working Instructions on Stakeholder Registration<sup>2</sup>. All the personal data collected and further processed in the context of EFSA stakeholder registration are treated according to the Regulation (EC) No 45/2001<sup>3</sup>.

A registration process for stakeholders allows a broader range of interests, perspectives and technical knowledge to be represented among EFSA stakeholders.

The stakeholder applicants have been duly informed on the outcome of the selection procedure and the list of registered stakeholders was published on the EFSA web by 9 December 2016.

The list of registered stakeholders can be found at the following web link:

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/engage/stakeholders>

<sup>2</sup> Working Instruction on Stakeholder Registration, WIN No.35, 14 October 2016

<sup>3</sup> Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data

### **3. Permanent mechanisms for engagement**

The Stakeholder Forum and the Stakeholder Bureau are the two permanent mechanisms for engagement. In order to define practical aspects on how they will operate, draft documents outlining a Framework for Interaction between EFSA and the Stakeholder Forum and Stakeholder Bureau have been prepared. Both documents will be discussed at the first meeting of the Stakeholder Forum in order to get input from registered Stakeholders and finalise the documents.

#### **3.1. Annual meeting of the Stakeholder Forum**

First meeting of the Stakeholder Forum is foreseen to take place in Parma in Q1 of 2017. The event will be structured as a two-half-day interactive conference with external facilitator and 2 parallel breakout sessions.

The themes and topics of annual forum will be determined in line with the priority areas identified by EFSA Strategy 2020 and following input by stakeholders in advance of the Forum, addressing their needs and expectations. The final agenda of the Forum shall cover the full breadth of interests of stakeholders. EFSA shall ensure the relevance of the topics and balanced representativeness of all stakeholder groups.

The forum is expected to produce recommendations for EFSA in particular regarding strategic planning and activity implementation, the development of horizontal policies and processes, and on how the various engagement platforms function.

The Forum will be chaired by EFSA's Executive Director. The proceedings and outcome of the Forum shall be made public. Representatives from EFSA's Management Board, EFSA's Advisory Forum, and Scientific Committee shall be invited to attend the Forum.

#### **3.2. Establishment of Stakeholder Bureau**

The Bureau is a permanent collaboration mechanism that will act as EFSA's adviser on stakeholder engagement and in particular on how to ensure a balanced representation of views and interest of all the registered stakeholders.

Selection of the members of the Bureau will be carried out according to the Article 6 of the Decision of the Management Board. The process for selection of members of the Bureau will last for two months and will be launched in December 2016.

The chair of the Management Board will be invited to attend the annual session of the Bureau. The first meeting of the Bureau will be arranged in Q2 2017.

### **4. Targeted engagement mechanisms**

EFSA's Discussion Groups with Stakeholders are targeted collaborative mechanisms that are inherited from the previous stakeholder engagement framework (Stakeholder Consultative Platform), and have proved to be useful to engage with stakeholders in order to address specific technical issues. EFSA has continued to interact with stakeholders, throughout 2016 by organising discussion groups on topics such as Chemical Occurrence Data, Emerging Risks and E-submission of Applications. EFSA will consider establishing new discussion groups under SEA following needs and demand identified by EFSA itself or by

stakeholders. Subjects under consideration include pesticides, feed additives and bee health).

## 5. Innovative tools and communication technology

As envisaged by SEA, engagement with Stakeholders will be established via combination of traditional channels (conferences and meetings) and modern, integrated digital tools as mechanism for continuous multidirectional communication. In this respect, SEA activities will be integrated in the framework of the EFSA Digital Collaboration Project to be launched in Q1 2017.

This project will promote remote collaboration with stakeholders both within the permanent and the targeted mechanisms. Expected benefits of such approach are an increase of productivity, cost saving and improved people engagement.

### Next steps

	Activity	Time
1.	<b>First meeting of Stakeholder Forum</b>	Q1 2017
2.	<b>First meeting of Stakeholder Bureau</b>	Q2 2017
3.	<b>Kick-off of Targeted Modalities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion Groups</li> <li>- Mandate Working Group</li> <li>- Communicator Lab</li> <li>- Info sessions</li> </ul>	Q1-Q4 Q2 Q3 Q4
4.	<b>Innovative communication tools</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SEA integration with the Digital Collaboration Project</li> </ul>	Q1
5.	<b>Promotion of SEA</b> Since the registration of stakeholders is open-ended, EFSA will continue to invest in promotion of SEA in order to encourage applications from stakeholder categories that are at the moment less represented (i.e. consumers, academia). Particular attention should be given to Academia as it is a newly created stakeholder category and there is no historical record in EFSA of similar engagement.	Continuous
6.	<b>Update to MB on implementation of SEA including a review on effectiveness of operations, Dec 2017</b>	Q4 2017