

Note to the Management Board

International Scientific Cooperation Work Plan 2017-2020

EFSA is developing a work plan for international scientific cooperation (ISC) for the period 2017-2020. It builds on the achievements and lessons learned from EFSA's international activities between 2002 and 2016 and is aligned with the five strategic objectives in EFSA Strategy 2020.

The objectives of EFSA's international cooperation activities will be:

- 1) provide scientific and technical support to the European Commission (EC) to meet its international commitments and to promote a coherent European voice;
- 2) widen EFSA's evidence base and optimise access to data;
- 3) increase international scientific assessment capacity and knowledge community;
- 4) contribute to international efforts aimed at development, validation, implementation and harmonisation of methodologies, tools and approaches in risk assessment and risk communication; and
- 5) increase EFSA's visibility and reputation as a competent and innovative regulatory risk assessment agency operating at international level.

EFSA devotes a significant amount of resources to the provision of support to the EU in Codex related activities. Based on positive feedback from DG SANTE on the level and quality of the support provided, this work will remain a main component of EFSA's international engagement.

EFSA will continue the cooperation with the WHO and FAO Secretariats to JECFA and JMPR. The aim will be to develop multi-annual cooperation plans on specific substances of priority for EU and Codex to avoid duplication of work, to facilitate data sharing on substances of common concern and to avoid unnecessary divergence due to differences in datasets or lack of harmonisation of assessment methodologies.

EFSA's plan includes a gradual shift from bilateral to more multilateral engagements, organised, where possible, with a stronger involvement of Member States agencies and international organisations such as FAO and WHO.

Based on the positive experience with the International Food Chemical Safety Liaison Group, the International Microbiological Food Safety Liaison Group and the Global Coalition for Regulatory Science Research, EFSA will establish an International Risk Communication Liaison Group for the development and implementation of harmonised risk communication practices, and an International Food Safety Risk Assessment Liaison Group for the harmonisation of chemical risk assessment methodologies.

In bilateral relations with third countries, EFSA will build on its cooperation with established risk assessment bodies in Australia, Canada, China, Chile, Japan, New Zealand and the USA and intensify the current exchange of scientific information and data with short term visits of staff to facilitate cooperation activities on topics of strategic nature, such as open data, collection and sharing of harmonised chemical occurrence and food consumption data, harmonisation and innovation in risk assessment methodologies, as well as the identification of emerging risks and the introduction of effective tools for risk communication.

In 2017-2020, EFSA will expand its risk assessment capacity building initiatives in selected countries in South-East Asia, South America and the Arabian region. In the planning and prioritising of these bilateral activities, EFSA will work closely with the EC, EU agencies and institutions, food safety organisations in and outside EU and international organisations to optimise the use of available resources, expertise, existing frameworks and funding schemes.

EFSA is seeking the views of the Members of the Management Board on the key objectives and main directions of the ISC work plan 2017-2020.