

Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards

Minutes of the 120th Plenary meeting

Held on 6-7 June 2018, Parma (Italy)

(Agreed on 21 June 2018)

Participants

■ Panel Members:

Ana Allende, Declan Bolton, Marianne Chemaly, Robert Davies, Pablo S. Fernández-Escámez (for items 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 10), Rosina Gironés (7 June), Lieve Herman, Konstantinos Koutsoumanis, Birgit Nørrung, Antonia Ricci, Lucy Robertson, Giuseppe Ru, Moez Sanaa, Marion Simmons, Panagiotis Skandamis, Emma Snary, Niko Speybroeck, Benno Ter Kuile, John Threlfall, and Helene Wahlström.

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Ettore Amato (for items 6.4, 8.2.1, 9.1); Ángela Bolufer de Gea (for item 6.4); Pamina Mika Suzuki (for item 8.2.1).

■ EFSA:

BIOCONTAM Unit: Frank Boelaert, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felício, Michaela Hempen, Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Angel Ortiz Pelaez, Eleonora Sarno, Pietro Stella, Yves Van der Stede (Scientific staff).

AMU Unit: Elisa Aiassa (for item 10).

FIP Unit: Carla Martino (for items 8.1.2, 8.13)

EFSA guest scientist: Ben Daughtry

■ Observers: (In application of the guidelines for Observers¹)

Not applicable

■ Others:

Not Applicable

¹<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/stakeholders/observers.html>

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Roland Lindqvist (for 6-7 June), from Rosina Girones (for 6 June), from Pablo S. Fernández-Escámez (for 6 June morning and 7 June) and from Niko Speybroeck (for part of 7 June).

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without further changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Committee/Scientific Panel/ Members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the 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 119th Plenary meeting held on 18-19 April 2018, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 119th Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 3 May 2018.⁴

5. Scientific outputs submitted for possible adoption

5.1. Statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA. 8: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until March 2018⁵

The last web meeting was held on 2 and 3 May 2018 in Parma. The draft Panel Statement was presented to the Panel. The QPS notification list was updated with 46 applications, received from September 2017 and March 2018 for market authorisation: 28 biological agents already had QPS status and 15 were not included as they are filamentous fungi or

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

³<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁴<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180418-0>

⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00829>

bacteriophages. Two notifications of *Streptomyces albus* and one of *Escherichia coli* were not considered for the assessment as they belong to taxonomic units that were excluded from further evaluations within the current QPS mandate. Three TUs were (re)evaluated: *Paracoccus carotinifaciens*, and *Paenibacillus lentus* had been previously evaluated in 2008 and 2014, respectively, and were now re-evaluated within this mandate, and *Yarrowia lipolytica*, which was evaluated for the first time. The screening of possible safety concerns published in literature related to the taxonomic units included in the QPS list, for the period between June and December 2017, was finalised by experts and the summary included in this document. The Panel Statement was adopted by the Panel.

5.2. Request for a scientific opinion on an updated Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) of the BSE risk posed by Processed Animal Proteins (PAP)⁶

The last WG meeting took place on 26-27 April 2018 as a physical meeting in Parma. The WG chair presented the draft opinion for possible adoption. The Panel chair reminded that the section Assessment had been thoroughly reviewed in the previous plenary and that the two models have also been reviewed by members of the Panel. Thus the WG chair focused the presentation on the answers to the ToRs, recommendations, abstract and summary, which had not been discussed in previous plenaries in full. Overall the new sections were well received and the opinion was adopted by the Panel with minor suggestions.

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1. Scientific opinion on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA⁷

The last meeting was held in Parma on 2 and 3 May 2018. The screening of possible safety concerns published in literature related to the taxonomic units included in the QPS list, for the period between June and December 2017, was finalised by the experts. EFSA Units were invited to provide input to this meeting. The next meeting will be held by web conference on 19 September 2018. The deadline for the adoption of this opinion is scheduled for December 2019.

6.2. Scientific opinion on public health risks associated with foodborne parasites⁸

The last WG meeting was held on 17 April 2018 in Parma. The WG chair informed the Panel about the progress. All chapters were developed further since the last Panel meeting and some detail was moved to the

⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00705>

⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00684>

⁸ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00460>

appendices. The Panel requested the WG to elaborate further on their interpretation of the expert knowledge elicitation estimates for the relative importance of foodborne transmission for *Echinococcus*. A short questionnaire was sent to the Network on Zoonosis Monitoring Data (ZMD) to obtain information on the notification system for the selected parasites in animals/food. Replies were received from 27 MS, and from Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. The results will be discussed during the next WG meeting on 12 June 2018. The deadline for this mandate is October 2018.

6.3. Scientific opinion on hazard analysis approaches for certain small retail establishments and food donations⁹

The 4th WG meeting was held on 13 March 2018 in Parma. The WG chair updated the panel on the progress made so far. A unified table for the simplified food safety management system (FSMS) was suggested which combines the FSMS of the retail establishments discussed in the draft opinion. Individual FSMS tables for the small food retail establishments (distribution centre, supermarket, restaurant, pub, catering) will be attached in the appendix to the draft opinion. The CONTAM panel will discuss the parts relevant to chemical hazards during their panel meeting in June 2018. The next WG meeting would be held on 7/8 June 2018. The deadline for this mandate is the end of September 2018.

6.4. Scientific opinion on *Salmonella* control in poultry flocks and its public health impact¹⁰

The third WG meeting took place on 20 April 2018 in Parma. The WG chair updated the Panel on the progress made and a discussion took place. The BIOHAZ Panel suggested in ToR 1 to consider the underreporting of human salmonellosis cases by MS for the ranking of the serovars at EU level and to check whether the prerequisites for correlation analysis are fulfilled. For ToR 2 it was reiterated to consider carefully the data gaps to perform the source attribution and discuss why the chosen “*Salmonella* attribution model” was selected. It was also suggested to re-run the model for the EU leaving out a country and to run it for one country only. The next meeting of the WG will take place on 6 July 2018 by teleconference. The deadline to deliver the scientific opinion is 31 January 2019.

6.5. Scientific opinion on the pathogenicity assessment of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and the public health risk posed by contamination of food with STEC¹¹

On 13 April 2018, a new request for a Scientific Opinion on the pathogenicity assessment of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*

⁹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00565>

¹⁰ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00692>

¹¹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00293>

(STEC) and the public health risk posed by contamination of food with STEC was received in EFSA from the European Commission. EFSA has liaised with ECDC to ensure that all relevant human monitoring data are made available to support this mandate. The support from ECDC side to produce actively analysis of human monitoring data will only be available as soon as the ECDC activities linked to EUSR end. Due to the arrival of the urgent request on scientific and technical assistance for *L. monocytogenes* (UR Lm) the EC agreed to postpone the deadline by a period equivalent to the duration of the UR Lm mandate, i.e. 2 months. The deadline for this mandate is therefore the end of November 2019.

6.6. Scientific Opinion on the application and use of next generation sequencing (including whole genome sequencing) for risk assessment for foodborne microorganisms¹²

Lieve Herman was nominated Chair of the *ad hoc* WG which will be established for this mandate (conditional to screening and approval of her declaration of interests). A brief update was provided on the progress of work of EFSA's ongoing procurement activities on whole genome sequencing (GenCamp, ENGAGE and INNUENDO). Due to the arrival of the urgent request on scientific and technical assistance for *L. monocytogenes* the next-generation sequencing self-task mandate is foreseen to start in autumn 2018, and end by November 2019.

7. New Mandates

No new mandates were assigned to the BIOHAZ Panel.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission

8.1. Scientific Committee and/or Scientific Panel(s) including their Working Groups

8.1.1. Scientific Committee

The 89th Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) took place in Parma on 28-29 May 2018.¹³ Kostas Koutsoumanis, BIOHAZ Panel vice-Chair, reported the discussions held at the SC, in particular as regards proposals for research needs as collected from the EFSA Panels. The proposals collected from the members of the BIOHAZ Panel, some in collaboration with the AHAW Panel, were taken into account by the Scientific Committee.

8.1.2. Scientific opinion on the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of lactic acid to reduce microbiological surface

¹² <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00397>

¹³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180528>

contamination on carcasses from wild game and small stock¹⁴

No update.

8.1.3. Scientific opinion on the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of the organic acids lactic and acetic acid to reduce microbiological surface contamination on pork carcasses and pork cuts¹⁵

The last WG meetings were held on 16 May 2108 by teleconference and on 4-5 June 2018 in Parma. The vice-Chair of the WG provided feedback to the BIOHAZ panel on the discussion held on 4-5 June 2018. The current deadline for adoption of the Scientific Opinion is 11 November 2018.

8.2. EFSA including its Working Groups /Task Forces

8.2.1. Request for urgent scientific and technical assistance to provide recommendations for sampling and testing in the processing plants of frozen vegetables aiming at detecting *Listeria monocytogenes*¹⁶

A request from EC for urgent scientific and technical assistance to provide recommendations for sampling and testing in the processing plants of frozen vegetables aiming at detecting *Listeria monocytogenes* resulted from the ongoing multi-state listeriosis outbreak. The mandate started being discussed with EFSA on 24 April and arrived officially in EFSA on 7 May 2018. A technical report will be delivered to EC by 29 June 2018. This report will not undergo adoption nor endorsement by the BIOHAZ Panel nor external peer-review. An *ad hoc* WG has been established chaired by Maria Teresa Da Silva Felicio.

8.2.2. Scientific and technical assistance on harmonized monitoring of antimicrobial resistance in bacteria transmitted through food¹⁷

The *ad hoc* working group is progressing in drafting the report aimed at updating the technical specifications for harmonised monitoring of antimicrobial resistance in bacteria transmitted through food. The deadline for the delivery of the scientific report is March 2019. The BIOHAZ Panel will be kept informed on the progress of the mandate.

8.2.3. Scientific Networks on BSE-TSE and MRA

¹⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00667>

¹⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00666>

¹⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00347>

¹⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00051>

The minutes of the last MRA network meeting on 24-25 April 2018 are published on the EFSA website.¹⁸ The next meeting of the MRA Network will be held in spring 2019.

The next meeting of the BSE-TSE Network is scheduled for 15-16 October 2018.

8.2.4. Emerging Risks

Nothing to report under this agenda item.

8.3. European Commission

Nothing to report under this agenda item.

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1. Topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards and possible priorities for BIOHAZ Panel self-tasking work in the future

The Panel discussed a list of topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards and possible priorities for BIOHAZ Panel self-tasking work in the future. After discussion, the Panel identified some priorities for future consideration, like for example the role of environment in the spread of antimicrobial resistance, risks related to drinking water and to the use of water in processing of fruits and vegetables, and a review of options to control *Campylobacter*. Other topics were considered of relevance in the field of biological hazards and will be transmitted for consideration and possible further discussion to the future BIOHAZ Panel (2018-2021).

10. Any other business

EFSA Secretariat and Pablo S. Fernández-Escámez and EFSA Secretariat informed the Panel that a letter, in reply to the request for clarification of certain aspects of the scientific opinion on the evaluation of the Application for new alternative biodiesel production process for rendered fat of Cat 1 (BDI-RepCat process, AT), was finalised. The related scientific opinion has been amended to improve its clarity, and the new version has been published on EFSA website on 25 May 2018.¹⁹

EFSA Secretariat (Assessment and Methodological Support (AMU) Unit) updated the Panel on the results of the EFSA PROMETHEUS project (promoting methods for evidence use in scientific assessments), and related technical report recently published.²⁰

¹⁸ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180424>

¹⁹ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/5053>

²⁰ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/en-1395>