

Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards

Minutes of the 121th Plenary meeting

Held on 4-5 July 2018, Parma (Italy)

(Agreed on 19 July 2018)

Participants

■ Panel Members:

Ana Allende, Avelino Alvarez-Ordóñez, Declan Bolton, Sara Bover-Cid, Marianne Chemaly, Robert Davies, Lieve Herman, Friederike Hilbert, Konstantinos Koutsoumanis, Roland Lindqvist, Maarten Nauta, Luisa Peixe, Mirko Rossi, Giuseppe Ru, Marion Simmons, Panagiotis Skandamis, Elisabetta Suffredini.

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Ettore Amato (for items 10.7, 13.1); Verena Heider (for items 12.1.2, 12.1.3, 13.3).

■ EFSA:

BIOCONTAM Unit: Frank Boelaert, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa da Silva Felício, Beatriz Guerra, Michaela Hempen, Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Angel Ortiz Pelaez, Eleonora Sarno, Pietro Stella, Yves Van der Stede (scientific staff), Bianca Bottoni, Cristiana Ventura (administrative staff).

AMU Unit: Marios Georgiadis (for item 15).

■ 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

No apologies were received.

2. Tour de table

Panel members and EFSA staff introduced themselves and their background.

3. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without further changes.

4. 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 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.

5. Election of chair and two vice-Chairs

Election of the BIOHAZ Panel chair and two vice-chairs were carried out according to the Decision of the EFSA Management Board concerning the establishment and operations of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups.

Kostas Koutsoumanis was elected BIOHAZ Panel Chair.

Ana Allende and Lieve Herman were elected BIOHAZ Panel vice-Chairs.

6. Presentation of the BIOHAZ Panel and BIOHAZ Team; summary of activities in the previous Panel mandate and future work programme; agreement on "best practices" for the Panel and its Working Groups

EFSA Secretariat addressed the Panel with a presentation in relation to the remit and areas of activity of the BIOHAZ Panel and Team, the main

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

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

outputs originated from the former mandate of the BIOHAZ Panel (2015-2018), the ongoing and future planned work for the current Panel, and a number of best practices for the work of the Panel, e.g. organisation of plenary meetings, setting up of working groups (WG), discussion, adoption and endorsement of draft opinions and rules on experts presenting EFSA work.

7. Presentation of the activities of the BIOMO Team

EFSA Secretariat addressed the Panel with a presentation of the areas of work of the BIOMO Team.

8. Ceasing, confirmation, update of on-going Working Groups. Appointment of Working Group Chairs

All ongoing BIOHAZ Panel WG were confirmed. For further details see agenda items 10.1-10.5.

9. Scientific outputs submitted for possible adoption

No scientific outputs were submitted for possible adoption.

10. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

10.1. Scientific opinion on hazard analysis approaches for certain small retail establishments and food donations⁴

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate. The WG working on this mandate was confirmed, with no updates in its composition, including chairmanship.

The last WG meeting was held on 7/8 June 2018 in Parma, no other meeting is planned. The WG chair introduced the approach for the development of a simplified food safety management system for the selected small food retail establishments (distribution centre, supermarket, restaurant, pub, catering) and food donation. He then presented the draft opinion with focus on the flow diagrams of the small retail enterprises and the unified table for the simplified food safety management system (FSMS). This table still needs to be refined and checked for consistency. The establishment-specific FSMS tables in the appendix will be edited based on the final version of the combined table in the main text. The conclusions and recommendations were discussed. The CONTAM Panel has endorsed the parts relevant to chemical hazards during their Panel meeting in June 2018. Some comments were received

⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00565>

from the EC and they will be addressed by the WG. The deadline for this mandate is the end of September 2018.

10.2. Scientific opinion on public health risks associated with foodborne parasites⁵

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate. The WG, and all WG members, working on this mandate were confirmed. Kostas Koutsoumanis was appointed as new WG Chair.

The last WG meeting was held on 12 June 2018. The BIOHAZ secretariat introduced the draft opinion to the Panel. The draft opinion is already well developed. Discussion arose around the relative importance of foodborne transmission pathways. Especially the *Echinococcus* spp. estimates generated by expert knowledge elicitation (EKE) are accompanied by large uncertainties and the panel concluded that the graphic representations of these estimates may give them too much importance. Therefore, the Panel suggested removing the EKE graphs and describe the results in a few sentences instead, highlighting their limitations. The next WG meeting will be in August 2018. The deadline for this mandate is October 2018.

10.3. Scientific opinion on *Salmonella* control in poultry flocks and its public health impact⁶

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate. The WG working on this mandate was confirmed, with no updates in its composition, including chairmanship.

No WG meeting was held since the previous plenary meeting. The WG chair introduced the approach that would be used to answer to the five terms of reference (ToR). Considering the comments received at the previous plenary meeting, a new approach was proposed for ToR1 and preliminary results shown. For ToR 2, a source attribution based on the microbial subtyping approach will be used. For ToR 3-5, an extensive literature review is ongoing and a request has been sent to the Microbial Risk Assessment Network for data on the occurrence of (a) the regulated *Salmonella* serovars in laying hen production flocks or broiler flocks in different housing systems and (2) of *Salmonella* spp. or *Campylobacter* spp. for any broiler flocks and broiler batches at the farm or slaughterhouse level that have been tested for both pathogens. 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.

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

⁵ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00460>

⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00692>

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this self-task mandate. The WG working on this mandate was confirmed, with no updates in its composition, including chairmanship.

The last meeting was held in Parma on 2 and 3 May 2018. The screening of possible safety concerns published in literature (extensive literature search – ELS) related to the taxonomic units included in the QPS list, for the period between June and December 2017, was finalised by the experts and was included in the Panel Statement part 8 that was adopted at June's BIOHAZ plenary. A new ELS will be launched in July for the period January to June 2018. EFSA Units (Pesticides, Feed, FIP and Nutrition) were invited to provide input to this meeting. An expert on resistance to antimycotics used for medical treatment of yeast infections will be contacted in order to support the WG experts to improve the current QPS qualification on this aspect. The next meeting will be held by web conference on 17 September 2018. The deadline for the adoption of this opinion is scheduled for December 2019.

10.5. Statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA. 9: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until September 2018⁸

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate. The same WG dealing with the QPS opinion (see agenda item 10.4) is also in charge of the QPS Panel Statements.

The last web meeting was held on 2 and 3 May 2018 in Parma. The QPS notification list was updated with the applications received for market authorisation from April until September 2018. A new Panel Statement (part 9) will be prepared for the inclusion of the evaluation of the new notifications received between April and September 2018 as well the summary of the new ELS results (possible safety concerns related to the QPS list taxonomic units). The deadline for the adoption of this Panel Statement is scheduled for December 2018.

10.6. Scientific opinion on the pathogenicity assessment of Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC) and the public health risk posed by contamination of food with STEC⁹

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate. The WG chair already appointed in the past by the BIOHAZ Panel was confirmed. The WG working on this mandate will be set up shortly. EFSA has liaised with ECDC to ensure that all relevant human monitoring data are made available to support this mandate. The original deadline for this mandate (end of September 2019) is being

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

⁸ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00829>

⁹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00293>

extended, due to the arrival of an urgent request on scientific and technical assistance for *L. monocytogenes* (UR Lm).

10.7. Scientific Opinion on the application and use of next generation sequencing (including whole genome sequencing) for risk assessment for foodborne microorganisms¹⁰

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate. The WG chair already appointed in the past by the BIOHAZ Panel was confirmed. The WG working on this mandate will be set up shortly. The deadline for this mandate is end of November 2019.

11. New Mandates

No new mandates were assigned to the BIOHAZ Panel.

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

12.1. Scientific Committee and other Scientific Panels

12.1.1. Scientific Committee

The 90th Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) will take place in Parma on 17 September 2018.

12.1.2. 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 cuts¹¹

EFSA Secretariat presented to the Panel the background and terms of reference of this mandate. The former CEF Panel standing WG "Evaluation of substances used to reduce microbial contamination from products of animal origin" dealing with this mandate was closed, and is to be re-established by the CEP Panel shortly.

No WG meeting was held since the previous plenary meeting. The vice-Chair of the WG presented the approach taken and introduced the draft opinion to the BIOHAZ panel. The WG requested the applicant for additional information. The scientific evaluation was suspended awaiting the submission of this information. Therefore the current deadline for adoption of the Scientific Opinion was extended until 14 November 2018. The next WG meeting will be held in September 2018.

¹⁰ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00397>

¹¹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00666>

12.1.3. Scientific opinion on the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of lactic acid to reduce microbiological surface contamination on carcasses from wild game and small stock¹²

No update.

12.2. EFSA including its Working Groups and Networks

12.2.1. Scientific Networks on BSE-TSE and MRA

No update. Presentation of the Networks on BSE-TSE and MRA was postponed to the next plenary meeting.

12.3. European Commission

EFSA Secretariat informed the Panel that, when possible, colleagues from the European Commission (EC) will join the plenary meeting to update the Panel on EC work related to the remit of the Panel and follow-up of outputs produced by the Panel.

13. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

13.1. EFSA activities on whole genome sequencing

EFSA Secretariat addressed the Panel with a presentation in relation to the ongoing activities on whole genome sequencing (WGS). These activities include participation in rapid outbreak investigation analysis (ROAs), support to the European Summary Report on antimicrobial resistance (EURL-AR reference testing), funding projects and procurements (Liseq, INNUENDO, ENGAGE, GENCAMP), EC and/or BIOHAZ Panel mandates (ECDC-EFSA Joint data collection, AMR Monitoring, application and use of next genome sequencing) as well as communication activities. All these activities are grouped under the WGS Umbrella Project.

13.2. EFSA activities on qualified presumption of safety

EFSA Secretariat addressed the Panel with a presentation in relation to the concept of qualified presumption of safety (QPS) and ongoing EFSA activities on the topic. EFSA asked the BIOHAZ Panel to maintain the list of QPS biological agents intentionally added to food or feed in the frame of market authorisations (feed additives, food enzymes, food additives and flavourings, novel foods or plant protection products). QPS was developed to provide a harmonised generic pre-evaluation procedure to support safety risk assessments of biological agents performed by EFSA's Scientific Panels. The identity, body of knowledge, safety concerns and antimicrobial resistance of valid taxonomic units are the basis of this assessment. The evaluation is undertaken every 3 years in a scientific

¹² <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00667>

Opinion of the BIOHAZ Panel. Meanwhile, the list of microorganisms is maintained and re-evaluated approximately every 6 months in a Panel Statement which also includes the evaluation of microbiological agents notified to EFSA within the 6-month period.

13.3. EFSA activities on the assessment of applications for substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of foods of animal origin

EFSA Secretariat addressed the Panel with a presentation in relation to the legal and scientific framework for the assessment of applications for substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination in foods of animal origin. This information can be retrieved at <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/applications/biologicalhazard>.

14. Plenary meeting dates 2018-2019

EFSA Secretariat shared dates for BIOHAZ plenaries for 2018 and 2019. These will be re-circulated to the BIOHAZ for comments and agreement.

15. Any other business

EFSA Secretariat (Assessment and Methodological Support (AMU) Unit) updated the Panel on the possible organisation of a training on a QMRA food and feed safety model repository, in collaboration with an EFSA contractor, in October 2018. Further information will be shared with the Panel shortly to explore interest in participating.