

Parma, 17 May 2019
EFSA/CONTAM/3707

Scientific Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain

Minutes of the 98th Plenary meeting

Held on 14-16 May 2019, Parma (Italy)
(Agreed on 3 June 2019)

Participants

- **Panel Members:**

Margherita Bignami, Laurent Bodin, Kevin Chipman¹, Jesús Del Mazo, Bettina Grasl-Kraupp¹, Christer Hogstrand, Ron Hoogenboom, Jean-Charles Leblanc, Carlo Nebbia², Elsa Nielsen, Evangelia Ntzani, Annette Petersen, Salomon Sand, Dieter Schrenk, Tanja Schwerdtle, Christiane Vleminckx and Heather Wallace.

- **Hearing Experts³:**

Henk van Loveren (for Item 8.2)

- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

Frans Verstraete (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, Unit E2)

- **EFSA:**

- **BIOCONTAM Unit:**

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia, Anna Christodoulidou, Ernesto Liebana Criado, Karen Mackay, Kelly Niermans, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Elena Rovesti and Hans Steinkellner.

- **DATA Unit:**

¹ Attendance on 14-15 May only.

² Attendance on 15-16 May only.

³ As defined in Article 11 of the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest:
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

Zsuzsanna Horvath (for item 8.1), Davide Arcella and Claudia Cascio (for Item 8.3), Petra Gergelova (for item 9)

- **FEED Unit:**

Matteo Innocenti and Gloria López Gálvez (for Item 9)

- **Observers:**

See Annex I

- **Others:**

Not applicable

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair of the CONTAM Panel welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Marina Marini (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, unit D1) and Veerle Vanheusden (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, Unit E2).

2. Brief introduction of Panel members and Observers

The CONTAM Panel welcomed the Observers and the meeting participants introduced themselves.

3. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

4. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes⁴ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest⁵, EFSA screened the Annual 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 had been identified during the screening process or at the Oral Declaration of Interest at the beginning of this meeting.

⁴ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/corporate/pub/policyonindependence>

⁵ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf

5. Presentation of Guidelines for observers

The CONTAM Team Leader presented the EFSA Guidelines for Observers attending the open plenary meeting.

6. Agreement of the minutes of the 97th Plenary meeting held on 18-20 March 2019

The minutes of the 97th Plenary meeting held on 18-20 March 2019 were agreed on 10 April 2019.

7. Report on written procedures since 97th Plenary meeting

The following request from the European Commission was discussed by written procedure:

- Request for an update of the EFSA scientific opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of nickel in food and drinking water (EFSA-Q-2019-00214⁶).

The Panel agreed to set up an *ad hoc* Working Group (WG). Several Panel Members expressed the interest to join the WG. The set-up of the WG will start following the appointment of the WG chair.

8. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

8.1. Draft Scientific opinion on the health risks for animal and human health related to the presence of chlorinated paraffins in feed and food (EFSA-Q-2016-00801)⁷

The Chair of the WG on Chlorinated paraffins in feed and food presented for discussion and possible endorsement of some sections the draft opinion on chlorinated paraffins in feed and food. The Panel endorsed the sections on supporting information, toxicokinetics, toxicity in experimental animals and mode of action for liver toxicity, and made suggestions to other sections as well. The draft opinion will be presented again at the next Plenary meeting.

8.2. Draft Scientific opinion on the risk to human health related to the presence of perfluoroalkyl substances in food (EFSA-Q-2017-00549)⁸

The Chair of the WG on Perfluoroalkyl substances in food presented further information in relation to the approach to take. The Panel

⁶ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2019-00214>

⁷ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00801>

⁸ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00549>

agreed that a margin of exposure approach would be used for PFOS based on the endpoint vaccination response in humans, which would be supported by studies in experimental animals showing immunotoxic effects (decreased plaque forming cell response). For PFOA, a delay in mammary gland development noted in experimental animal studies was discussed as a possible critical endpoint. However, the Panel agreed that a further review on this endpoint would be required before conclusions could be made. With regards to increased alanine aminotransferase (ALT) (above the reference limit), the Panel questioned the relevance of this possible endpoint, noting that ALT increases following exposure to PFOA were not evident in occupational studies nor experimental studies in monkeys. It was noted that monkeys may not be a suitable model for changes in ALT levels and the WG chair proposed a further review of this possible endpoint. For the other PFASs under evaluation in this assessment, developmental effects in experimental animals may be considered as possible endpoints for PFHxS and PFNA and for the remaining PFASs where there is a lack of data, these will be critically reviewed and prioritised, taking into account exposure and biomonitoring data. There was not enough time to discuss the sections of the opinion sent for discussion and/or endorsement.

8.3. Draft scientific opinion on the risks for animal and human health related to the presence of quinolizidine alkaloids in feed and food, in particular in lupins and lupin-derived products (EFSA-Q-2016-00239)⁹

The Chair of the WG on quinolizidine alkaloids in feed and food presented the draft opinion for possible endorsement for public consultation. The Panel discussed the draft opinion and, pending insertion of minor changes, endorsed it for public consultation that will indicatively take place between the end of May and the beginning of July 2019.

8.4. Draft Scientific Opinion on the risks on public health related to the presence of aflatoxins in food (EFSA-Q-2018-00698)¹⁰

The Chair of the WG on aflatoxins in food presented, for discussion, the sections of the draft opinion on supporting information, toxicity in experimental animals and observations in humans. The Panel made suggestions to those sections and the draft opinion will be presented again at the next Plenary meeting.

⁹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2016-00239>

¹⁰ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00698>

9. Scientific report on occurrence data of nickel in feed and animal exposure assessment (EFSA-Q-2018-00730)¹¹

The draft report, peer reviewed by two members of the CONTAM Panel, was presented by the Scientific Officer of the DATA Unit. The Panel endorsed the approach and conclusions of the DATA report with minor comments.

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

10.1. European Commission

The European Commission representative gave an update on the activities of the European Commission in relation to the scientific opinions of the CONTAM Panel. Several amendments of current legislation are under discussion with the Member States as an outcome of the CONTAM Panel scientific opinions.

10.2. CONTAM Panel Working Groups

- **Update from WG on Chlorinated paraffins in food and feed**

See Item 8.1.

- **Update from WG on Ochratoxin A in food**

The Chair of the WG informed the Panel that the issue of mode of action for underlying the genotoxicity of ochratoxin A will be discussed at a teleconference of the SC cross cutting WG on genotoxicity. The other parts of the opinion are progressing well and it is planned to present text for endorsement at the Plenary meeting.

- **Update from WG on Aflatoxins in food**

See Item 8.4.

- **Update from the WG on Glycoalkaloids in food and feed**

The WG coordinator informed the Panel that the draft opinion on glycoalkaloids is progressing well, and that the draft will be presented to the Panel for discussion and possible endorsement of some section at the September Plenary meeting.

¹¹ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2018-00730>

- **Update from WG on Quinolizidine alkaloids in food and feed**

See item 8.3.

- **Update from WG on Perfluoroalkyl substances in food**

See item 8.2.

- **Update from WG on Brominated Flame Retardants (BFRs) in food**

The Chair of the WG informed the Panel that the WG on BFRs has started its activities, focusing first on the development of the draft opinion on hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD) in food.

- **WG on Nitrates and nitrites in feed**

The WG Chair informed the Panel that the draft opinion on nitrates and nitrites in feed is progressing well.

- **Update from WG on Previous cargoes**

The WG Chair informed the Panel that the draft opinion on the re-evaluation of calcium lignosulfonate as acceptable previous cargo is progressing well.

10.3. EFSA

The CONTAM Team Leader informed the Panel that an EFSA technical report on the current practices for farm and companion animal dietary exposure assessment is under development. The report focuses to describe the approaches and default feed consumption levels applied in the EFSA sector involved in the risk assessment of animal feed. The approach developed by the CONTAM Panel will be included in this report, which will be presented for discussion and possible endorsement at the 99th CONTAM Panel meeting.

The training of the CONTAM Panel on the new guidance of the EFSA Scientific Committee on the uncertainty analysis in scientific assessment has been postponed to November 2019. The preparation of the case studies to be used for the training will start at the beginning of June.

The CONTAM Team Leader informed the Panel on the scheduled dates for the plenary meetings to be held in 2020:

- 102nd meeting 28-30 Jan 2020
- 103rd meeting 24-26 Mar 2020

- 104th meeting 18-20 May 2020
- 105th meeting 7-9 Jul 2020
- 106th meeting 22-24 Sep 2020
- 107th meeting 24-26 Nov 2020

10.4. Scientific Committee and Working Groups of interest to the CONTAM Panel

The CONTAM Panel Chair reported the main points discussed at the 93rd meeting of the EFSA Scientific Committee¹². In particular the adoption of the Scientific Committee Guidance on Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) approach and the discussions on the proposed follow-up activities in the area of cumulative chemical risk assessment and on the draft 2020-2027 EFSA strategy for chemical risk assessment were mentioned. An update was given on the activity of the WG on Genotoxicity.

11. Answers to questions from Observers

Two written questions were submitted in advance to the meeting and were addressed by the CONTAM Team Leader and by Chair of the WG on PFAS in food.

Q.1 (Elin Lavonen): How much of PFAS exposure could be allocated to drinking water consumption in the revised version of the drinking water directive?

Answer to Q.1 (CONTAM Team Leader): Since the drinking water directive does not fall under the remit of EFSA it is not possible to reply to this question.

Q.2 (Edyta Lam): Do you have temporal trends related to perfluoroalkylated substances available?

Answer to Q.2 (Tanja Schwerdtle, Chair WG on PFAS): data on temporal trends of PFAS levels in the environment and data from human biomonitoring are available and will be summarized in the opinion under development.

Questions and clarifications asked during the meeting were addressed by the meeting participants. Details are available in Annex II.

¹² <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/events/event/190219>

12. Any other business

Not applicable.

Annex I

List of registered Observers at the 98th CONTAM Panel meeting

Registered for physical attendance to the meeting		
Observer	Affiliation	Country
Ivano Battaglia	Private sector	Italy
Stefano Del Frate ¹	Private sector	Italy
Akram Hijazi ¹	Private sector	Palestinian Territories
Edyta Lam	Private sector	United Kingdom
Vittoria Obici	University/public research institute	Italy
Elvedin Guzina	University/public research institute	Italy
Sara Lista ¹	University/public research institute	Italy
Neil Buck	Private sector	Switzerland
Nesrine Gharbi ¹	National Authority	Tunisia
Yerim Diop ¹	Private sector	Italy
Giovanni Guanti	University/public research institute	Italy

^[1] Registered Observer not attending the meeting

Registered for attendance by web-streaming		
Observer	Affiliation	Country
Charlotte Legind	National authority	Denmark
Giovanna Soviero	Consultancy	Italy
Sonia Ancuta Socaci ¹	University/public research	Romania
Alejandro Rodarte	Industry association	Belgium
Elin Lavonen	Industry	Sweden
Kristina Jakobsson ¹	University/public research	Sweden
akram hijazi ¹	Other	Palestinian Territories
Myriam Coulet ¹	Industry	Switzerland
Katrin Holmström ¹	Consultancy	Sweden
ingrid oviedo ¹	University/public research	Colombia
Stefanie Geiser	Consultancy	Belgium
Martyn Shenton	Industry	United Kingdom
Toke Winther	National authority	Denmark
Angela Gargani ¹	Industry	Italy
Henrique Anselmo ¹	Industry	Netherlands
Snehal Tawde ¹	Industry	Belgium
Ulrich Wimmer	National authority	Sweden
Marie Syren ¹	Other	Sweden
Ulrike Pabel	National authority	Germany
Karl Lilja ¹	National authority	Sweden
Kerstin Winkens Pütz ¹	National authority	Sweden
Line Småstuen Haug	University/public research	Norway
Marijana Curcic ¹	University/public research	Serbia
Hannah Hoehn	Consultancy	Belgium
Francesca Ercoli ¹	Consultancy	Italy
Gabriele Scholz ¹	Industry	Switzerland
Kalila Hajjar	Industry association	Belgium
Jorge Numata	National authority	Germany
Kettil Svensson	National authority	Sweden
Annick van den Brand ¹	National authority	Netherlands
Verim diop ¹	Consultancy	Italy
Daniel Borg ¹	National authority	Sweden

^[1] Registered Observer not attending the meeting

Annex II

Answers to questions from Observers

Q.3 (Edyta Lam): Has the panel considered the possible presence of PFOA as an impurity in the experimental animal toxicology data of other PFAS?

Answers to Q.3

(Tanja Schwerdtle, Chair of the WG on PFAS): The appraisal of toxicological studies performed by the WG includes the evaluation of the degree of purity of the tested substances.

(Dieter Schrenk, Chair CONTAM Panel Chair): The issue of possible impurities contributing of the toxicity of substances tested in experimental toxicity studies is well known to toxicologists.

Q.4 (Neil Buck): The observers asked several questions in relation to the way the CONTAM Panel perform the uncertainty analysis and the impact of this analysis in the conclusions of the risk assessments.

Answers to Q.4

(Dieter Schrenk, Chair CONTAM Panel Chair): The CONTAM Panel has a well-established experience in judging the impact of uncertainties in the conclusions of the risk assessment. This mainly relies in the expertise of the Panel Members in their scientific fields.

Marco Binaglia (CONTAM Team Leader): The Scientific Committee guidance on uncertainty analysis in scientific assessment recommends the quantification of the uncertainties and a clear conclusion on how the risk assessment is affected by the overall uncertainty. It will be essential to see how to adapt the application of the guidance in the area of food and feed contaminants.

Q.5 (Stefanie Geiser): What is the expected timing for the public consultation on the draft EFSA opinion and final negotiated deadline on the final EFSA Aflatoxin opinion?

Katleen Baert (Scientific Coordinator of the WG on Aflatoxins in food): The negotiated deadline agreed with the European Commission is end of May 2020. The plan is to launch the public consultation on the draft opinion by the end of 2019.