



**MINUTES OF THE XXIIND PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL ON
ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE -**

(7 – 8 SEPTEMBER 2006)

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PARTICIPANTS

Bo Algers, Harry Blokhuis(7th September), Donald Broom, Patrizia Costa, Mariano Domingo, Matthias Greiner, Daniel Guemene, Joerg Hartung, Per Have, Frank Koenen, Christine Müller-Graf, Dirk Pfeiffer, Mo Salman, Moez Sanaa, Michael Sharp, Philippe Vannier, Martin Wierup and Marion Wooldridge.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (DG SANCO): Alberto Laddomada, Andrea Gavinelli on the 7th (11.30-16.00 pm), Sabine Osaer.

EFSA : R. Carfagnini, M. C. Addis (Administrative staff AHAW Panel); S. Correia, O. Ribó, A. Afonso, F. De Massis, J. Serratosa (Scientific Coordination AHAW Panel); H. Deluyker on the 8th September (SES); M. Bocchia (IT).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The chairman welcomed the participants and no member declared any conflict of interest on the items on the agenda.

Apologies were received from Trevor Hastings and David Morton. EFSA secretariat explained extensively the need to revise the annual declaration of interest which will be published in the web according to the guidance given by EFSA to all members of the Scientific Panels.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE NEW EFSA EXECUTIVE

The new Executive Director, Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle (CGL), presented herself and explained the main issues and priorities of EFSA. It was highlighted the need to further develop scientific cooperation and networking with Member States. CGL exchanged views of different aspects of EFSA's tasks with the Panel members including the need to discuss about the current events on Bluetongue and possible scientific support to the Commission and Member States.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted, however the timing of the different points needed to be rearranged according to the change of arrival time of DG SANCO officials (point 5 of the agenda). The first meeting day was extended until 18.30 pm. It was also agreed, due to the large number of issues to be discussed, to start the second meeting day at 8.30 am and finish at 15.30 pm without lunch break.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE XXI PLENARY MEETING

The minutes of the previous 21st Plenary Meeting held in Parma on 7-8th June, were unanimously adopted by the former Panel members by written procedure on 19th June 2006 and published on the web (<http://www.efsa.eu.int>).

5. FEEDBACK FROM COMMISSION SERVICES AND NEW MANDATES

5.1. Feedback from DG SANCO Units on Animal Health and Animal Welfare

DG SANCO officers responsible for Animal Health and Welfare were invited to present formal feedback to the previously adopted AHAW scientific opinions. In addition, a provision of the new requests for scientific advice was presented to the Panel. At the request of the Panel and its scientific secretariat, SANCO clarified its expectations with regard to opinions in the area of animal health and animal welfare and possible areas for improvement. A discussion was held on a number of issues such as the support of the Panel into the legislative process in the area of animal health and welfare, and on how the interaction between the risk manager and risk assessors could be further improved. It was concluded that such meeting could be held on a yearly basis.

5.2. New Mandates

SANCO officials announced that in addition to the two mandates already sent to EFSA on welfare of dairy cows and on Echinococcosis, the Commission is planning to send in a short term a new mandate on Avian Influenza vaccines, and in a medium term another question on Newcastle disease (Revision of the disease Directive 92/666/EC and the vaccination policy). In the area of AW Sanco officials informed that a new possible question could be sent on the welfare of broiler breeders. Furthermore it was announced the interest on developing an European Centre for Animal Welfare.

5.2.1. *Dairy Cows Welfare*

The mandate was explained by DG SANCO official and was accepted. The chairman and the rapporteur were elected. It was decided to proceed as usual with a preparatory meeting with Commission officials for clarification of the mandate and better definition of its scope in order to avoid a extremely long report.

5.2.2. *Echinococcosis*

The mandate was briefly discussed and accepted by the Panel. The chairman and the rapporteur were elected.

6. OPINIONS AND REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION/ACCEPTANCE

6.1. Rabies

The chairman of the WG presented a summary of the risk assessment developed in the scientific opinion. After discussion, several proposals will be sent to the WG for their consideration. The Panel agreed that the scientific opinion could be presented for possible adoption at the next Plenary meeting in October. The chairman of the panel requested, for efficiency reasons, to circulate for possible adoption a document with the main modifications emphasized by track changes.

6.2. Captive birds

The chairman presented the main outcomes of the transversal meeting which took place last 6 September in Parma. The main points of the mandate were discussed. A final meeting to prepare the document for possible adoption was agreed to take place on 19 September, The document is expected to be submitted for possible adoption at the next plenary meeting in October.

6.3. Zoonoses

The chairman presented the main conclusions and recommendations of this opinion and the main issues were discussed. The opinion was unanimously adopted. EFSA secretariat took note of all proposed editorial changes and the final adopted opinion will be published.

The panel was informed by EFSA that the current request for an opinion on the Community Summary Report on trends and sources of zoonoses was expected to be repeated annually and an opinion on each Summary Report should be prepared on a regular basis. The Panel was also informed that this opinion, naturally was to be produced in close cooperation between the AHW and the BIOHAZ Panels so that both panels would consider all the zoonotic agents and patterns of antimicrobial resistance within their area of responsibility and would also cover overlapping areas between them.

The panel suggested that a joint working group with members from both panels should be formed to prepare the report for the opinion. The panel therefore emphasizes the importance that this procedure to be followed in the future in order to avoid the administrative disadvantages of the procedures applied for the current opinion when the zoonotic diseases were split up between the panels.

7. AI -MIGRATORY BIRDS OPINION: DISCUSSION FOR POSSIBLE REVISION

The chairman of the WG after having met on the 31 August with all WG experts stated that there is no substantial new information in the DG ENV report on Migratory Birds; therefore there is no need to modify the adopted Conclusions and recommendations. However recommendations for surveillance could be enlarged and given with some more details in an addendum.

8. STATE OF PLAY OF THE SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS AND REPORTS.

8.1. Pig Welfare; 1 Tail biting; 2) Sows and Boars 3) Fattening

The chairman and coordinator of the 3 working groups (i) Sows and Boars ii) Fattening and iii) Tail biting, briefly reported the situation of the first WG meeting which took place in Brussels last 30th August. A coordination meeting concerning the risk assessment approach for the 3 mandates will take place on the 21st September. A precise calendar for the following meetings has been established and the deadlines will be respected.

8.2. Fish Welfare 1)Atlantic Salmon; 2) Trout species; 3) carp species; 4)sea bass and gilthead seabream ; 5) European eel.

The first meeting for the WG dealing with Atlantic Salmon is scheduled for the 12th September in Parma.

8.3. Update of the risk assessment on Avian Influenza

The scientific opinion will start as soon as migratory birds &AI opinion is revised.

8.4. Brucellosis

The chairman of the WG presented extensively the main outcomes of this scientific opinion. A discussion was established and different point of views shared among the panel members. A final WG meeting will take place on 21 September in Parma.

8.5. EFSA Guidance Document On the conduct of Risk assessments in food producing animals

Due to the lack of time this issue was proposed to be discussed at the next plenary meeting.

9. MISCELLANEOUS

9.1. Discussion on how to Improve work methodology in order to increase plenary meetings efficiency

Due to the lack of time, this issue could not be discussed. It will be raised and extensively discussed at the next plenary meeting.

9.2. Bluetongue

EFSA staff presented a short PowerPoint presentation with the evolution of the outbreaks in EU since 17 August. The issue was discussed and it was decided to write a statement/note addressed to EFSA in order to give some recommendations of future tasks in order to support Commission and member states.

9.3. Extranet

Extranet system was presented by the external consultant as a tool to improve the communication and the sharing of documents between experts and EFSA secretariat. After some questions it was proposed that on a first stage, the system will be applied experimentally on a WG in order to be adapted on the best way to fit the needs of the secretariat and Panel members.

9.4. Discussion about the Royal Society and Eurogroup documents related with the laboratory animal welfare AHAW Sc Opinion

The panel decided to postpone the discussion of this issue because of the absence of the Working Group Chairman.

9.5. Dates for 2007 plenary meetings and next Plenary meeting

The following dates were accepted for future plenary meetings:

26-27/10/2006	Plenary XXIII
11-12/12/2006	Plenary XXIV
31/1- and 1/2/2007	Plenary XXV
8-9/03/2007	Plenary XXVI
26-27/04/2007	Plenary XXVII
27-28/06/2007	Plenary XXVIII

5-6/09/2007	Plenary XXIX
10-11/10/2007	Plenary XXX
5-6/12/2007	Plenary XXXI

Additionally it was decided that the second day meeting of all future plenary meetings will start at 8:30 and finish at 15:30 without lunch break.

9.6. Indemnities and boarding passes

The chairman of the AHAW Panel explained his position concerning the indemnities to be discussed at the next Scientific Committee. The members of the panel supported his views of a possible equal treatment concerning the payments carried out in DG RTD.

A discussion on administrative issues was postponed to the next plenary meeting due to the lack of time.