



European Food Safety Authority

INTERNATIONAL & INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

Note for the Advisory Forum on recent EFSA's stakeholder events

This is a note for the Advisory Forum with regard to the inaugural meeting of the recent established EFSA's Stakeholder Consultative Platform and the 3rd annual Colloque with stakeholders¹.

▪ Stakeholder Consultative Platform – 6 & 7 October 2005

As announced at the last meeting of the Advisory Forum in Cyprus the inaugural meeting of the recent established Stakeholder Consultative Platform took place on 6 & 7 October in Parma. This first meeting of the Platform was very successful – not only in terms of participation but also with regards the quality of the discussions and the willingness of all participants to make full use of the Platform as a way to interact with EFSA. Nearly all members of the Platform attended the meeting. Since the meetings of the Platform are open to the public, several organisations followed the discussions as “observers”. The European Commission was also attending the meeting as an “observer”.

Despite the fact that the meeting was rather procedural – terms of reference, election of the Chair and Vice-Chairs, work programme - there were very good discussions with stakeholders with regards to EFSA's stakeholder policy, EFSA's scientific priorities and communication activities. In addition to that, stakeholder groups had the opportunity to present their main concerns to EFSA.

It may be noted that Members of the Platform will choose their own Chair and Vice-Chairs. The election of the chair is currently on-going. As agreed at the meeting the election of the Vice-Chairs will follow afterwards. It was a desire from Members of the platform to proceed with the election of the Chair first and only once the name was known to proceed with the election of the Vice-Chairs and that with the purpose of having a balance representation between these positions. However, the Chair and Vice-Chairs will be elected by his/her personal capacity and will chair in the interest of the whole Platform. Due to the fact that the Platform will run for an initial period of 1 year, the Chair and Vice-Chairs will be elected for this period as well. The work programme and working practices will be decided once the Chair takes up his/her position. EFSA will provide the secretariat of the Platform.

The minutes of the meeting will be available shortly and published on EFSA's website. The following points can be summarized as the main conclusions from the meeting:

- i) unanimously welcome of this initiative and the setting up a permanent Platform of stakeholders;
- ii) willingness of stakeholder to be more involved in EFSA's activities, such as providing input on EFSA's work programme, providing data in the context of scientific assessments, exchanging information with EFSA on emerging risks;

¹ http://www.efsa.eu.int/advisory_forum/adv_meetings/1153_en.html

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- iii) great support from stakeholders with regard to EFSA's self-tasking activities and great desire to explore ways to be able to input self-tasking activities and , if possible, to call on EFSA to initiate self-tasking activities in areas of concern for them and /or their constituencies;

Other interesting issues that emerged from the discussions were how uncertainties are addressed on EFSA's scientific assessments, criteria for consultation and EFSA's capacity together with others in the area of emerging risks.

Further information about the Stakeholder Consultative Platform, such as the Terms of Reference of the Platform, the list of Members, the agenda of the inaugural meeting, can be found on EFSA's website at:

http://www.efsa.eu.int/stakeholder_stakeholder_consultative_platform/consultative_platform/catin dex_en.html

The list of eligible "associated member" organisations that resulted from the public call from expression of interests will be published in this section very soon.

▪ **3rd Stakeholder Colloque – 9 & 10 November 2005**

A continuation of a series of annual Colloques with a wide range of stakeholder organisations EFSA held its 3rd annual Colloque on 9 & 10 November in Parma. Madame Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, Vice-Chair of EFSA's Management Board, opened the 3rd colloque where more than 50 organisations met for two-days meeting to discuss EFSA's plans for the future. Members of the Advisory Forum were invited to attend the Colloque and representatives from Denmark and Portugal joined the meeting.

The key topic of the Colloque this year was the Review of EFSA and in particular well known issues emerging from the Review. The purpose of the meeting was not to present the main conclusions or recommendation of the independent evaluation commissioned by EFSA, but to explore more in detail with stakeholders some of the issues that came out from the evaluation exercise. In this regard, the first part of the Colloque was confined to deal with 4 major areas that have been identified as being of relevance for stakeholders – nutrition, fees, communications and data input from stakeholder organisation on EFSA's scientific opinions. The audience was split into 4 working groups that were looking at each of the topics and were chaired by a stakeholder organisation. The outcome of the discussions was reported back in plenary session by the rapporteurs of each of the working groups. The main conclusions can be summarized as follows:

- i) stakeholder groups stressed their desire for EFSA to play a greater role on the nutritional debate and therefore underlined the need to extend its mandate on nutrition and nutrition related-areas, e.g. obesity debate, nutritional profiling;
- ii) stakeholder groups opposed to the feasibility of establishing a regime of fees for EFSA. If fees were to be established, they called on limiting the fees regime to certain areas and on a case-by-case basis;
- iii) participants highlighted the difficulty of communicating on risk associated to food. They pointed out that co-operation between the Commission, Member States and EFSA on risk communication should be improved;
- iv) stakeholder groups stressed their interest to provide EFSA with any relevant scientific data in the context of scientific assessments.

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The second day of the Colloque looked at the transparency of EFSA's opinions and also dealt with questions put forwarded by stakeholder groups ahead of the meeting. The structure of this last session was a Questions & Answer session with a member of the Management Board and members of EFSA's Management Team. This session was chaired by Hans Peter Jensen.

The full report of the Colloque will be available shortly and will be posted on EFSA's website. Presentations made at the Colloque will be posted very soon on EFSA's website.

http://www.efsa.eu.int/stakeholder_stakeholder_consultative_platform/annual_colloques/colloque_3/catindex_en.html

Further information about the Colloques organized by EFSA so far can be found at:

http://www.efsa.eu.int/stakeholder_stakeholder_consultative_platform/annual_colloques/catindex_en.html