



## European Food Safety Authority

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### **PLAN OF ACTION RELATED TO THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND PANELS**

1. At its meeting on 29 March 2006 the Management Board addressed document MB29.03.2006-7 entitled: “Proposal from the Secretariat on the Functioning of the EFSA Scientific Committee and Panels” and the attached “Position paper by EFSA’s Scientific Committee”. As an introduction to the discussions Professor Silano, Chair of the Scientific Committee, presented the position paper of the Scientific Committee and the Acting Director of Science presented the proposal for changes of the various functions of the Scientific Committee and Panels. The proposals made by the Scientific Committee and EFSA Secretariat were grouped as follows:

- A. Measures to facilitate the management of the workload and further increase the efficiency and transparency of the various scientific functions of the Authority;
- B. Measures in relation to expert meetings in Parma (e.g. reducing expert travel time, clarifying EFSA’s rules with respect to compensation of experts);
- C. Implementation of tools to provide a professional and/or moral recognition of the work carried out by the experts for EFSA.

2. The Management Board expressed its appreciation for the proposals made by the Scientific Committee and the Secretariat and agreed with the measures proposed with one exception: the proposed raise of the special indemnity would need further discussion. The Management Board agreed that this issue should be rediscussed at a future meeting of the Management Board.

3. The Management Board agreed that the EFSA Secretariat should prepare a Plan of Action for the implementation of the various measures. This document comprises the requested Plan of Action. The Management Board is invited to approve the nature, details and the timing of the various actions.

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**PLAN OF ACTIONS RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES OF SCIENTIFIC FUNCTIONS OF EFSA TO FURTHER INCREASE EFFICIENCY, TRANSPARENCY AND WORKING CLIMATE**

**a) Management of the workflow**

The current workload has already reached (or exceeded) the maximum capacity of the Scientific Panels, the Scientific Committee and the other Scientific Expert Working Groups (e.g. BSE/TSE, Zoonoses and PRAPeR). In line with the suggestions made by the Scientific Committee, EFSA will take the following measures to facilitate the management of the workload, and further increase efficiency and transparency of the various scientific functions of the Authority:

<i>Measure to be implemented</i>	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Target date for implementation</i>
Introduction of time-management tools to objectively monitor the work load of the Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EFSA to define its policy and the system requirements;</li> <li>• EFSA to choose an appropriate system that could meet the requirements;</li> <li>• EFSA to implement a time-management system</li> </ul>	Pilot phase: Autumn 2006  Fully operational system: Spring 2007
Consider steps to achieve a more even distribution of work in the area of the AFC and CONTAM Panels by the creation of three new out of the 2 existing Panels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion with the Chairs of the new AFC and CONTAM Panels of possible options to divide the work over three panels and consider mission and tasks of each new panel;</li> <li>• Legal services of EFSA and Commission to liaise to examine the feasibility of such a proposal from a legal point-of-view;</li> <li>• Consultation of MB on a plan of action</li> </ul>	End of 2006 (go/no-go decision) by MB
Increase the size of the Scientific Committee and one or two Panels to achieve the objectives indicated in the position paper of the Scientific Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of the need for increase of the maximum size by the Scientific Committee and Panels with up to 2 additional members</li> <li>• Selection of up to 2 additional members for the SC/Panels as appropriate from the reserve list for consideration by the MB</li> </ul>	Early Autumn 2006  Autumn 2006

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provisional approval of the additional experts by the MB</li> <li>• Invitation of the additional experts as “permanent invited experts” until formal appointment following necessary changes in Rules and/or Regulations</li> <li>• Formal appointment of additional experts to the SC/Panels by the MB</li> </ul>	<p>December 2006</p> <p>December 2006</p> <p>End 2007</p>
Consider jointly with the Commission when it would be appropriate for EFSA to provide scientific advice in other ways than as a Scientific Opinion of the SC/Panel and which could also be dealt with by EFSA experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a proposal from EFSA</li> <li>• Discussion with the Commission services</li> <li>• Implementation of agreed changes in current procedures of the Commission for the preparation of requests for scientific and technical advice and in EFSA’s procedure for the handling of incoming questions</li> </ul>	<p>October 2006</p> <p>October 2006</p> <p>End 2006</p>
Establishment of the network of institutions in Member States competent for systematically collaborating with EFSA in the context of Article 36 of the Founding Regulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the list of organisations by the MB</li> <li>• Preparation of proposals for outsourcing of work/tendering various activities</li> <li>• Starting outsourcing of work as appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>June 2006</p> <p>June/July 2006</p> <p>August/September 2006</p>
Improve and make more transparent EFSA’s current procedures for handling and acceptance of questions, and for adoption of opinions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing an internal Task Force to reconsider handling and acceptance of questions</li> <li>• Feedback from Commission on a proposal for modification of current approaches</li> <li>• Implementation of the revised approach and informing the MB of the changes made</li> </ul>	<p>Summer of 2006</p> <p>Autumn 2006</p> <p>Before end of 2006</p>

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**b) Operational strategy for expert meetings in Parma**

In view of the current high workload and to ensure that the Authority would maintain to be sufficiently capable of handling emerging issues in the future, EFSA will implement the following measures as suggested by the Scientific Panels and Scientific Committee in relation to expert meetings in Parma:

<i>Measure to be implemented</i>	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Target date for implementation</i>
Improving clarity about the financial compensation of experts working for EFSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulation and introduction of the Expert Compensation Guide to the members of the new Scientific Panels and Committee and their WGs</li> </ul>	June 2006
Update EFSA's policy for expert meetings in order to further facilitate and optimise expert contributions to the scientific work in the most efficient manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compilation and update of current policies; circulation of a detailed document on co-ordinated and harmonised expert involvement and scientific contributions to SC/Panels to all experts working for the Scientific Panels, Committee and their WGs</li> </ul>	July- August 2006
Reconsidering financial expert compensation policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation for discussion by the MB</li> </ul>	Spring 2007

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**c) Implementation of tools to provide a professional and/or moral recognition of the work carried out by the experts for EFSA**

EFSA endorses the proposals made by the Scientific Committee to show its appreciation for the energy and time spent by experts in their work for EFSA as follows:

<i>Measure to be implemented</i>	<i>Plan</i>	<i>Target date for implementation</i>
Issue a harmonized certificate, on request, for any interested expert working for the Scientific Panels, Committee or their working groups, explaining the duration and nature of the work carried out by that expert for EFSA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a harmonized certificate to be used upon request</li> </ul>	June 2006
Develop appropriate tools for further dissemination of EFSA’s scientific opinions and reports in line with the plans outlined in the Management Plan 2006 and with consideration of the proposals made by the Scientific Committee in its position paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of EFSA’s publication policy</li> <li>• Consultation of the Scientific Committee on EFSA’s draft policy</li> <li>• Adoption of the EFSA policy on dissemination of EFSA’s scientific work</li> </ul>	Summer of 2006  September/October 2006 October/November 2006
Continue, jointly with the Commission, the formalisation of the use of a template for feedback from the risk managers on the usefulness of EFSA’s scientific opinions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion with Commission services on a plan of implementation</li> <li>• Agreement on best approach</li> </ul>	Work started in May 2006 October 2006