

Management Board Meeting 19 June 2007

PROGRESS REPORT

April – May 2007: Highlights

Highlights

1. At the meeting of the Advisory Forum (AF) on 19 April the Forum discussed an EFSA working document proposing how Member States could establish focal points in order to provide the link between EFSA and the relevant partners in these Member States. The Strategy for Cooperation and Networking regards these focal points as national networks working in the areas covered by EFSA. It is envisaged that these focal points would keep EFSA and the AF informed about the developments as regards risk assessments and communications activities in the members states relevant to EFSA's activities and vice versa. It was clarified that these focal points should be seen as "collaborative centres" with the responsibility to support the Advisory Forum with data gathering and transfer of information to relevant bodies at national level. A document on focal points will be discussed with a view to possible endorsement by the Advisory Forum at its next meeting on 28 – 29 June in Bratislava. This development represents tangible progress towards implementing the Board's recommendation on developing active networking and stronger cooperation with Member States.
2. The Scientific Committee has received a request from the European Commission related to the implications of live cloned animals, obtained through somatic cell nucleus transfer (SCNT) on food safety, animal health, animal welfare and the environment. Due to the broad nature of the questions, the Scientific Committee has been allocated the question and started the preparation of the work.. The Advisory Forum and Scientific Panel members have been consulted in order to set up a well-balanced working group, consisting of 14 members and covering a broad range of expertise. The working group, which will have its first meeting in June 2007, will prepare a draft opinion by the end of the year. In addition EFSA launched a request for scientific contributions and peer reviewed data from Third Parties, which could be useful for the preparation of the opinion. A public consultation on the draft opinion from the Scientific Committee is foreseen in Autumn. EFSA's Stakeholder Consultative Platform will also be involved in the consultation process.
3. At the 27 March Management Board meeting, EFSA unveiled its new logo and launched its 5-year celebrations. These developments serve to strengthen the corporate identity of EFSA and set of a series of celebrations which will take place in Parma and Brussels during the course of the year. The first event of EFSA's celebrations was a joint conference with Europass in Reggio Emilia. Building on last year success around Emilia Romagna provinces, EFSA launched a new cycle of conferences under the title of "...Shall we talk about food safety?" The objective is to familiarise the people in the local area with EFSA's work as part of EFSA's strategy for a successful settlement in Italy. In Reggio Emilia the subject was "Animal wellness, food quality and

transformation strategies". The next conferences will take place on 15th and 21st June in Vignola and Piacenza respectively. The full programme of the anniversary celebrations is available on the website under www.efsa.europa.eu/en/about_efsa/efsa_5th_anniversary.html

4. On 4 April EFSA 's Executive Director visited the Portuguese authorities in Lisbon to discuss EFSA's cooperation during the period of the Presidency, the latter half of the year. During this time, EFSA will celebrate its 5-year anniversary and a scientific forum will be organised in Brussels on November 20 – 21. In addition EFSA will organize with a food safety summit meeting with the Portuguese presidency in close cooperation the European Commission.
5. EFSA senior officers participated at several Council meetings on invitation of the German Presidency. In particular, EFSA participated at an informal Chief Veterinary Officers (CVO) meeting in Dresden (Germany) on 11th May to present EFSA's work with regards to Blue Tongue and exchanged views with CVOs. On 24th May, EFSA was invited by the German Presidency to take part at the Council Working Group on Agriculture matters/Pesticides and present EFSA's work with regards to the peer-review risk assessment of pesticides, including the state of play of the evaluation review of pesticides and the proposed Regulation on plant protection products. Furthermore, EFSA's Executive Director will participate on 13th June, invited by the German Presidency, to a working lunch with the COREPER to present EFSA's Strategy for Networking and Scientific Co-operation with Member States that was endorsed by the Management Board last December.
6. On May 9th EFSA celebrated Schuman Day with the Commune, Province and School for Europe in Parma. In the morning Professor Giorgio Calabrese and Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle inaugurated an EFSA Exhibition at the Province in Parma in front of 150 guests. EFSA organized an exhibition jointly with the Commune in the town centre and EFSA was greeted by school children singing the European anthem. In the afternoon Professor Calabrese and Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle met local and provincial authorities at the School for Europe and after their speeches, Professor Calabrese answered questions from pupils on EFSA and on healthy nutrition.
7. On 21-22 May the Executive Director visited the Irish Food Safety Authority, the FSAI. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle made a presentation of EFSA and EFSA's work to FSAI staff and discussed with the Irish scientists on EFSA Panels their views on work conditions and work loads of the Panels. The visit was very fruitful and the Executive Director will continue her programme of visits to national authorities during the year.
8. Steps were taken to further enhance EFSA's organisation through the key appointment of the Head of Scientific Assistance and Cooperation in April. This lends further strength to the Science Directorate. The new Internal Auditor will take up post on 1 July. EFSA is expanding quickly and a big effort has been made to enhance the efficiency of recruitment. On June 6, there were 255 EFSA employees.

SCIENCE DIRECTORATE

Risk assessment department

AFC Panel

9. In the period March – June 2007 the AFC Panel held 2 plenary meetings. The Panel held its 22nd Plenary around the middle of April in Parma. In the area of additives 1 opinion was adopted. In the field of nutrient sources 2 opinions were adopted as well as 3 opinions on revised Flavouring

Groups comprising 52 substances. On 15 and 16 May the Panel held an extraordinary plenary meeting in Brussels exclusively on the Flavouring Group Evaluations (FGE) to deal with the backlog and in view of the approaching legislative deadline to compose the positive list. At this meeting a total number of 6 FGE opinions were adopted of which 2 were revisions.

AHAW Panel

10. During this period the AHAW Panel held one Plenary Meeting (26-27 April). In April three opinions were adopted complying with DG SANCO requested deadlines: Blue tongue vaccines and vectors, Bluetongue self-mandate on origin and introduction, and Newcastle disease vaccines. On 11 May one additional opinion was adopted following the written procedure concerning Avian Influenza vaccines (H5H7).
11. The AHAW Panel and Unit activity can be also summarised as follows: 37 WG ad hoc meetings took place from March until May involving 17 different ad hoc Working groups corresponding to on going mandates. Two new mandates were received referring i) to Seals killing and skinning sent by DG ENV and ii) zoonoses self mandated by EFSA after the publication of the EFSA zoonoses report.
12. EFSA/AHAW had an important meeting with the Advisory Forum delegated experts of risk assessment on Blue tongue in Brussels on 19 April, in order to discuss and exchange of views of the final draft of the scientific opinion, before adoption at the plenary on 27 April. All delegations gave comments and proposals which were all considered by the Panel. Panel members, EFSA and experts agreed that this initiative should be repeated for other opinions as often as technically possible.
13. Dr Per Have presented his resignation as member of the AHAW panel, because he started his professional activities as senior scientist for animal diseases at the AHAW Unit. A replacement from the current reserve list will be suggested to the Board as soon as possible.
14. The AHAW Unit presented its activities in i) 13 March -London EMEA; ii) 16 March Brussels DG SANCO - CAHP policy; iii) 20-23 March Congress on Veterinarian Medicine Regulation in Prague; iv) 21 - 23 March Weymouth UK, PANDA project meeting v) 23 April Reims -Symposium on Animal diseases and control policies; vi) 27 April, Stakeholder Consultative Platform; vi) 9 May in the Forum of the European Advisory Council for Animal Welfare in Brussels; vii) 11 May CVO meeting in Dresden; viii) Varese-16 May in the Fish Welfare Cost project meeting; ix) 23-25 May in Stralsund Germany on AI and ND vaccines; x) 23 May Parma-Italy -Facolta di Medicina Veterinaria; xi) 24 May Parma - Utrecht Veterinary Medicine School visit xii) 27-30 May OIE Conference on Rabies in Paris; xiii) 31 May International Conference on AI Paris; xiv) 1 June XVII Congresso Nazionale di produzione animale, Alghero; xv) 4-5 June Workshop on RA in AW organised by EFSA in Wien; xvi) GVS Conference 2007 at the School of Veterinary Medicine in Glasgow on 4 / 5 June xvii) . 6th June IFAH Meeting in BXL.

BIOHAZ Panel

Adopted opinion

15. The opinion on “the assessment of the likelihood of the infectivity in SRM derived from cattle at different age groups estimated by back calculation modelling” was adopted at the BIOHAZ Plenary of 18-19 April and communicated through a press release.

New Working Groups

16. Several new Working Groups (WG) were formed and met for the first time. Details on their scope and source of mandate are given below:

- Foodborne antimicrobial resistance
Self-tasking mandate from the BIOHAZ Panel
- The monitoring of verotoxigenic *Escherichia Coli* (VTEC) and the identification of human pathogenic VTEC types
Self-tasking mandate requested by EFSA's Zoonosis unit
- Monitoring and identification of human enteropathogenic *Yersinia* spp
Self-tasking mandate requested by EFSA's Zoonosis unit
- *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat foods and scientific advice on the establishment of criteria for *Listeria monocytogenes* at the global level
Mandate requested by the European Commission
- Feeding of non-ruminant MBM to chicken and pigs
Mandate requested by the European Parliament

TSE Testing

17. Work continued in the area of TSE Testing and draft opinions on small ruminants and post-mortem cattle will be presented for possible adoption at the next BIOHAZ Plenary of 5-6 June.

Call for grant proposals

18. EFSA's first call for grant proposals under Article 36 of its Founding Regulation was launched on "Quantitative microbiological risk assessment on Salmonella in slaughter and breeder pigs". The deadline for submission of proposals is 11 June 2007.

CONTAM Panel

19. The CONTAM Panel met once in plenary in the above mentioned period and one opinion was adopted: the opinion on heptachlor as an undesirable substance in animal feed. Ten working group meetings were held in the area of nitrate in vegetables, marine biotoxins, carry-over of coccidiostats in non-target animal feed, hormones in bovine meat, and undesirable substances in animal feed subsections persistent organic pollutants and mercury.

FEEDAP Panel

20. The FEEDAP Panel held 19 working group meetings and two plenary meetings during this period, where 9 opinions were adopted. In addition, the FEEDAP Panel and the Scientific Secretariat have again been invited to participate in the WG of the Standing Committee on Animal Nutrition, held on 30th of March, aiming at establishing new guidelines for the assessment of feed additives. The discussion focused on the safety for the target animal and efficacy. Another meeting was held early May with EMEA and some members of the Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary use (CVMP), with the aim to identify a harmonized approach for the establishment of MRLs for Monensin Sodium, taking into consideration the contribution from milk to the overall ADI and the potential reduction of the ionophoric activity of the metabolites, according to new scientific data.
21. The FEEDAP Panel is contributing with additional expertise in two newly established working groups by the BIOHAZ Panel on "Food-borne antimicrobial resistance as a biological hazard" and "Microbiological risk assessment in feedingstuffs for food-producing animals".

GMO Panel

22. The GMO Panel had two plenary meetings on 22-23 March in Parma and on 16 May 2007 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The plenary meeting in Ljubljana was organised back to back to the 2nd Meeting of the European Advisory Committees on Biosafety on the field of the deliberate release of

GMOs. At the March plenary meeting, the GMO Panel adopted its opinion on the risk assessment of the 59122 maize application within the framework of Regulation 1829/2003 and its part of a co-opinion (between the GMO Panel and the FEEDAP Panel) with regard to the risk assessment of the genetic modification aspect of the product Rovabio™ PHY AP/LC (3-phytase). The GMO Panel also adopted its guidance document for the risk assessment of GM plants containing stacked transformation events, and a statement on the safe use of the *np11* antibiotic resistance marker gene in GM plants.

23. Five working group meetings for the molecular characterization, the food/feed safety and the environmental risk assessment of applications for the placing on the market of GMOs within the framework of Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 were held in the period of 9 March – 9 June 2007. One working group meeting took place in April 2007 to discuss the risk assessment of the genetic modification aspect of feed additives' applications that have been submitted within the framework of Regulation (EC) 1831/2003.
24. Five working group meetings were organised within the framework of self tasking activities "animal feeding trials", "the assessment of allergenicity of GM food/feed", "statistical considerations in the safety evaluation of GMOs" and "Guidance for the risk assessment of GM plants for non food or non feed purposes".
25. A scientific hearing with applicants took place on 21 March 2007 by EFSA and its GMO Panel in order to be informed about forthcoming developments in the area of plant biotechnology which may lead to further issues to be addressed in risk assessments (e.g. guidance documents, self tasking activities). The meeting was organised in line with EFSA's policy on engaging with organisations with a legitimate interest in the work of EFSA. Previously, technical meetings between EFSA and stakeholders have been organised with national experts from Member States and with scientists from environmental non-governmental organisations.
26. A technical meeting was held in June 2007 between EFSA, some GMO Panel members and the authors of a recently published CRIIGEN study to discuss the statistical analysis of the GM maize MON 863 toxicological data.

NDA Panel

27. Following two meetings of the Working Group (WG) on Food Allergies in the reporting period, the NDA Panel met in early May 2007 and adopted eight opinions on ingredients/substances submitted in the framework of the procedure laid down in Article 6, paragraph 11 of Directive 2000/13/EC based on the information provided by the applicants, particularly considering the likelihood of adverse reactions triggered in susceptible individuals by the consumption of the following ingredients/substances used under the conditions specified by the applicants: mustard seed oil; distillates made from cereals, distillates made from whey; distillates made with nuts; natural mixed tocopherols, D-alpha tocopherol acetate, and D-alpha tocopherol succinate; vegetable oils-derived phytosterols and phytosterol esters from soybean sources; wheat-based maltodextrins; and wheat-based glucose syrups, including dextrose.
28. In addition, the NDA Panel released its draft opinion on the "Scientific and technical guidance for preparation and presentation of the application for authorization of a health claim" for public consultation on the EFSA Website, which was launched on May 16 and will end on June 17. In order to receive as much feedback as possible and comments from stakeholders and all interested parties, a technical meeting with EFSA's Stakeholder Consultative Platform and experts from the NDA Panel on this guidance document has been planned to take place in Parma on June 11.
29. The NDA WG on Population Reference Intakes continued its tasks on recommendations for macronutrients for the European Population and the WG on Novel Foods is currently evaluating 6 dossiers.

PPR Panel

30. The PPR Panel held a plenary meeting on 18-19th April and adopted one opinion on the acute dietary intake assessment of pesticides in fruit and vegetables, at the request of Commission. From mid March to end of May, nine Working Group meetings took place in Ecotoxicology, Residues, Fate and Toxicology. Three WGs were devoted to the revision of the Guidance Document on risk assessment for birds and mammals and a Workshop took place in Valencia (Spain) from 8 to 11th May on the use of focal species and ecological parameters in risk assessment refinement, gathering about 50 participants including 24 representatives of the Member States' competent authorities and representatives from industry.

PLH Panel

31. The Panel on Plant Health held its 5th plenary meeting on 23-24 May. Three opinions (on *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*, an invasive alien aquatic plant and on requests from Poland and Lithuania regarding *Ambrosia* species) were adopted by written procedure and are being prepared for publication. Six meetings of working groups for 30 questions related to pest risk assessment dossiers prepared by France for the French Departments d'outre mer (DOM) took place. Also a joint meeting of the WGs on DOMs was organised in order to unify the review approaches. A proposal for a new task by the Panel initiative was submitted to the EFSA management, requesting a mandate for development of a protocol for scientific review of pest risk assessment dossiers on regular basis.

Scientific Cooperation and Assistance Department

Pesticide Risk Assessment (PRAPeR) Unit

32. The peer review of the 3rd stage continued by distributing the draft assessment reports of 6 substances to the respective applicant(s) and Member States. For three substances, the public version of the report has been produced and made available on the EFSA website, initiating a 40-day public consultation period. Several other substances are either in the process of having the public report being finalised or await confirmation by the EU-Commission of the preliminary prioritisation and will be processed accordingly.
33. The consultation of MS experts in the PRAPeR meetings continued in March with 5 meetings (sections physical/chemical properties and analytical methods, toxicology, residues, environmental fate and behaviour, and ecotoxicology) to discuss the identified issues for 8 active substances. In May/June another round of 5 meetings took place to discuss further 6 substances. The respective EFSA conclusions summarising the outcome of the consultation of experts and the risk assessment for the 14 substances is expected to be finalized in the 3rd quarter.
34. The assessment of the safety of proposed temporary Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) to be set at EU level was completed within the time limits agreed with the EU-Commission. On 15 March, the report of the assessment of more than 62.000 individual MRLs for 236 active substances was presented to the EU-Commission, the Member States and the public. According to the risk assessment conducted, 92 active substances MRLs were unlikely to present a chronic or acute risk to consumers. For the remaining 144 substances, the first screening could not exclude a potential consumer risk and therefore further scientific assessment and/or risk management considerations

were considered necessary. Meanwhile, PRAPeR continued to provide scientific advice to the EU-Commission and Member States in harmonising temporary MRLs for pesticides at EU level.

Assessment Methodology Unit

35. The unit delivered a final report on the global epidemiological analysis of the 2006 bluetongue virus outbreak investigating factors associated with introduction, establishment and spread of BTV-8 in north-western Europe.
36. The Assessment Methodology Unit (AMU) completed a review to evaluate the epidemiological analysis and reporting of surveillance data on Avian Influenza carried out under the responsibility of the CRL. This review proposes additional analyses to be made and provides suggestions how to improve the collection, collation and analysis of surveillance data.
37. Another report delivered was the Summary Report of EFSA's 7th Scientific Colloquium on Cumulative Risk Assessment of pesticides to human health: The Way forward. Preparations started on the next 3 Scientific Colloquia all scheduled to take place in Parma (20-21 June on Environmental Risk Assessment of Genetically Modified Plants – Challenges and Approaches, 11-12 October on Nutrient profiling and 6-7 December on Plant Health).
38. Furthermore, the AMU provided assistance to a number of EFSA Units:
 - Zoonoses unit: providing statistical support for prevalence analysis and design evaluation as well as on risk indicators analysis. Assistance in developing a proposal for improving the reporting of food-borne outbreaks.
 - BioHAZ unit: assistance on the opinion on the age specific risk of Specified Risk Materials in Bovines. Providing help in writing the technical annex of the call to carry out a quantitative microbiological risk assessment (QMRA) on *Salmonella* in slaughter (fattening) and breeder pigs.
 - AHAW unit: contribute to quantitative aspects of tuberculosis testing in deer such as statistical approaches in test validation and freedom of disease calculation.
 - GMO unit: data supplied by the applicant for a transgenic glufosinate-tolerant soybean (A2704-12) was transformed into a dataset suitable for statistical analysis. Advice was provided as to the appropriate statistical techniques to measure year and location of effects. Currently members of the unit are busy evaluating newly available statistical results and analyses of the MON863 toxicological data.
 - PRAPeR unit: in the creation of a database to hold ADI, ARfD and AOEL values for assessment of temporary maximum residue levels to enable exposure assessment for the application of pesticides in an agricultural setting.
 - DATEX unit: assistance in the collation and summary of measurements of PAH in food samples supplied by Member States in Excel format.

Data Collection and Exposure Unit (DATEX)

39. A new staff member joined the Unit to speed up progress on food consumption data collection. The ethyl carbamate exposure assessment was finalised and submitted to CONTAM. It proved very difficult to get hold of detailed consumption figures for different types of spirits so assumptions had to be made for scenario development. A presentation of the aflatoxin exposure assessment was made to the 5th Fresenius Conference in Cologne in early May. The Unit also represented EFSA at a workshop on data collection organised by the German presidency in Berlin in May and presented challenges facing EU wide data collections. Food composition data has been collected from five Member States to form the basis for a test basket for the NDA Panel to run nutritional profiling models to test eligibility for making health claims. Progress in the phytosterol project was reported to the Commission Expert Group for Novel Foods.

Zoonoses

40. The Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection had one meeting, and there were 2 working group meetings under the Task Force. Three reports were adopted between 8 March – 29 May. During the reporting period the Zoonoses Task Force held one meeting and adopted three reports: one on analysis of the Salmonella baseline survey in broilers, one on a reporting manual for zoonoses and one regarding technical specifications for Salmonella baseline survey in breeding pigs. The Member States started to input their annual zoonoses data through the reporting web application in April supported by the scientific helpdesk run by the Zoonoses unit. By end of the period already two national reports were submitted. The work on harmonisation of the reporting on food-borne was continued and a call under Article 36 on development of harmonised monitoring schemes for parasites was launched. Two country visits were carried out to Estonia and Latvia to enhance the reporting on zoonoses at the national level.

Scientific Committee and Advisory Forum

Scientific Committee

41. The Scientific Committee held its 24th Plenary meeting on 16-17 April 2007. Scientific Committee members expressed their gratitude to the Management Board for addressing the workload of the Scientific Panels and Committee. In addition 16 working group meetings and 2 conference calls were held in the area of transparency in risk assessment –scientific aspects, cloning of animals, qualified presumption of safety, emerging risks, human health risk-benefit assessment, safety assessment of botanicals, benchmark dose approach, welfare of experimental animals, in- and external review of the quality of EFSA's scientific work, and EFSA's responsiveness to urgent questions.
42. In May 2007 an EFSA/EU-EuroFIR/Nordic Council of Ministers Joint Workshop was held related to bioactive compounds in major European food plants. Two databases on bioactive compounds one related to potential health-beneficial effects and the other related to potential toxic effects were presented and their usefulness for EFSA's work were explored.
43. The EFSA Steering Group on Cooperation agreed upon a new mandate for a joint Scientific Committee and Advisory Forum Working Group on the safety assessment of botanicals and botanical preparations in order to develop further the cooperation with the European Member

States on this issue. The current working group will present the outcome of the first mandate to the Scientific Committee during the July 2007 plenary meeting.

44. An EFSA internal task force comprising staff from relevant Panels is currently preparing a status report related to activities on the risk assessment of nanoparticles. The task force will also elaborate draft terms of reference for a modest work programme related to complimentary work within the food, feed and environmental area to be presented to the Scientific Committee and the Steering Group on Cooperation in July 2007. The Assessment Methodology Unit of the EFSA Scientific Cooperation and Assistance Department will assist in executing the task.

II. Advisory Forum

45. The 21st meeting of the Forum took place on 19th April 2007 in the premises of the Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung in Berlin (Germany). Most Member States, all EFTA countries and Croatia (pre-acceding country) took part in the meeting. Main items discussed at the meeting were:

II.1. Feedback from the 1st meeting of the Steering Group on Cooperation (SGC) held on 21st March:

- The SGC prepared proposals for its functioning (Terms of Reference) that the Forum endorsed. The ToR (presently part of the AF minutes in circulation for approval) state that the SGC will act as the interface between the Advisory Forum and the Scientific Committee in providing strategic oversight on, and steering the implementation of, the strategy on scientific cooperation and networking.
- The SGC proposed mandates for a first set of scientific cooperation projects between EFSA and the Member States. The Forum discussed on the following projects proposed by the SGC:
 - o Setting-up a database of scientific experts in the EU;
 - o Risks and Benefits of the fortification of food with folic acid;
 - o Horizon scanning to identify emerging food safety risks;
 - o European network of experts for chemical occurrence data collection;
 - o European network of food consumption database managers;
 - o Safety assessment of botanicals and botanical preparations.
- ToR and mandates for the above mentioned projects were objects of further discussion at the 2nd SGC held in Brussels on 15 May 2007. Revised versions of the ToR and mandates are currently under preparation and/or circulation for approval to the SGC members.

II.2. Implementation plan on "Enhancing the exchange of scientific information":

The updated Implementation Plan proposes to further develop the Advisory Forum Extranet to make it operational for the exchange of information. The representatives of Austria and Luxemburg renewed their active support in working with EFSA for the achievement of the outcome. The issue will be followed-up at the Forum meeting in Bratislava in June 2007. Following the AF meeting in Berlin, an Extranet Project Steering Group has been set-up with the participation of both EFSA staff and AF members. Activities in accordance with the implementation plan have been carried out and will be brought to the attention of the AF ITWG meeting in Berlin on 4-5 June. Feedback will be gathered from the IT experts and incorporated in the ongoing working plan.

- II.3. Length of the Forum meetings: The Forum agreed in principle in having ½ a day longer meetings when these are not combined with the Head of Agencies meetings.

The next meeting is scheduled on 28-29 June 2007 and will be held in Bratislava in collaboration with the Slovak State Veterinary and Food Administration and the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture. The AF meeting will be held immediately after the joint event EFSA is organising with the Slovak State Veterinary and Food Administration on 28 June.

Meetings: AF working groups: 2, AF Plenary: 1, SGC: 2

External Relations

46. On April 3rd a delegation of 7 Management Board Members visited EFSA and met with the Management Team, the Bureau of the Scientific Committee, the External Relations and Management Board Unit, the Scientific Management Team and Units in the Science and Communications Directorate.
47. On 21st May EFSA received a group of 22 Students and 2 professors from Michigan State University. The students follow courses in food science/technology, dietetics/nutrition and food service.
48. On 24th May EFSA received a group of 50 Veterinary Students from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. They were received at the Palazzo Ducale and received a presentation from Ana Alfonso on EFSA and especially on the work of the AHAW Panel.

European Parliament

49. As part of EFSA's policy the Authority regularly attends the meetings of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) Committee of the European Parliament by providing scientific assistance and information to MEPs on areas of EFSA's competence. In particular, EFSA's senior officers attended the discussions on the authorization of GM maize variety MON 863 that took place at the ENVI meeting on 8th May in relation to an oral question addressed to the European Commission. EFSA informed the Committee on the state of play of the work currently on-going at EFSA and on the timeframe - mid June - for EFSA's conclusions. Furthermore, EFSA followed discussions on plant protection products and the strategy for the sustainable use of pesticides as well as on food enzymes/food flavourings/food additives ("food improvement agents package").
50. On 11th June EFSA's Executive Director participated at the annual meeting with Directors of the EU Agencies that is jointly organized by the Budget and Budgetary Control Committees of the European Parliament. Discussions on the draft budget for 2008 will be the main agenda item of this meeting.
51. Furthermore, EFSA's Executive Director met MEP Kartika Liotard recently nominated liaison MEP for EFSA in the course of April to discuss further collaboration between EFSA and the ENVI Committee and in particular assistance from EFSA to the ENVI Committee, the MEPs and the European Parliament in general. This meeting was the first of a series of regular meetings that EFSA's Executive Director intends to hold with MEP Liotard in view of strengthening EFSA's relations with the European Parliament and offering the technical and scientific assistance.

Meetings with the European Commission

52. Bilateral meetings between DG SANCO Director General, Robert Madelin, and EFSA's Executive Director, Catherine Geslain-Laneelle, took place in April and May. Issues in the agenda included

specific topics such as plant protection products, GMOs, animal health, nutrition, fees and budgetary matters. In addition to bilateral meetings at the Executive Director level, EFSA's officers participated at Commission's standing committees and working groups with Member States.

53. EFSA addressing ECOSOC representatives at early July: EFSA will participate at a meeting of the NAT Section of the ECOSOC on 4th July in Brussels to present the priorities and work programme of the Authority in 2007-2008.

EFSA's Stakeholder Consultative Platform

54. Under the chairmanship of Sue Davies, EFSA's Stakeholder Consultative Platform met on 26-27 April in Parma. At this occasion terms of reference for two working groups within the Platform that will address transparency in risk assessment and criteria for public consultation were agreed. In The Platform was invited to comment on EFSA's preliminary draft management plan for 2008 and was addressed by Dr Patrick Wall, Chair of EFSA's Management Board. EFSA's Executive Director updated the Platform on EFSA's main activities since the last meeting of the Platform last December. This presentation was followed by focused-discussions on animal health, cloning and nanotechnology. The minutes of the meeting will shortly be made public. The second meeting of the Platform in 2007 will take place on 18-19 October.
55. A technical meeting with the Stakeholder Consultative Platform and with experts from the NDA Panel of EFSA will be organized on 11th June in Parma. The purpose of the meeting is to consult interested parties on the draft guidance document for submission of applications for health claims authorisations that is currently open for comments on EFSA's website and to have a technical exchange of views with experts from the NDA Panel and EFSA officers on the current draft guidance document. The NDA Panel will consider all comments received from interested parties in view of the final adoption of the guidance document.

Pre-Accession Programme for Turkey and Croatia

56. On 15/16 March a seminar on relationship to Stakeholders took place in Turkey. Some 48 participants attended the seminar with 20 from the authorities and 28 from the stakeholders (consumer organisations, NGO's, producers, research institutes, universities etc.). There were speeches by EFSA and by BEUC and a representative from Bulgaria on their transition from Candidate country to EU Member State and the implications for their work on Food Safety. Representatives from the Turkish authorities, industry and consumers gave speeches on the situation in Turkey.
55. The 29/30 March a seminar on Handling Crises took place in Croatia. There were some 38 participants from the authorities, the consumer organisation and the Chamber of Commerce. The following institutions attended: The Food Agency, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health, the Sanitary Inspections, The Veterinary Institute and the National Institute of Public Health. Nine more seminars are planned before the end of the year.
59. In addition to the seminars experts from Turkey and Croatia participate in EFSA meetings as observers where it is possible and relevant, e.g. the colloques, the PRAPeR meetings, the Advisory Forum working groups and the Management Board meetings.

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE

Communications activities: on- and offline

With the aim of communicating to the media EFSA's scientific activities and corporate issues, various media materials were produced.

60. Press releases/statements:

- a. EFSA evaluates proposed temporary EU Maximum Residue Levels for pesticides (15 March)
- b. EFSA to celebrate 5th Anniversary (27 March)
- c. EFSA publishes EU-wide survey on *Salmonella* levels in broiler meat flocks (3 April)
- d. Parma, EFSA, and Europe (7 May)
- e. EFSA opinion on the likelihood of BSE infectivity in specified risk material from cattle at different age groups (11 May)
- f. EFSA takes forward its work on Nutrition and Health Claims. Consultations begins on draft guidance for health claims applications (16 May)
- g. EFSA statement on the recent CRIIGEN publication on MON863 maize (15 March)
- h. EFSA statement on the recent CRIIGEN publication on MON863 maize – UPDATE (26 March)

The press statement on MON863 generated notable coverage of 100 articles, mostly in specialised press but also in mainstream European press - Italy (*L'Espresso*, *Italia Oggi*), in Finland (*Helsingin Sanomat*), Sweden (*Svenska Dagbladet*) and Denmark (*Berlingske Tidende*) as well as Greece (*Eleftherotypia*), Cyprus (*Politis*) and Portugal (*Publico*).

Also the press release on Salmonella in broilers triggered interest in the press and led to a considerable coverage of over 100 articles, published mainly in Italy, Sweden, the UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, Greece and Slovenia. A balanced coverage was achieved in specialised (over 20 articles), general national (22 articles) and regional press (23 articles). In addition, press agencies (9 articles) covered the story and 4 Audiovisual reports were broadcast (*RAI*, *LA7*, *BBC Radio4* and *Channel 4*). It is interesting to point out that there appears to have been little or no coverage in Poland or Hungary, 2 countries with the highest Salmonella infection rates in the EU.

The press release on MRL for pesticides also generated some 40 coverage pieces in the specialised press across Europe but was covered also by several press agencies (*Rueters*, *DPA*, this latter following an interview of Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle with a journalist of the newswire in Germany on the occasion of the Management Board of 27 March).

Press release on Nutrition and Health Claims generated some 16 articles both specialised and general press European press. For instance, *The Daily Telegraph* reported on this issue, *ANSA*, *Amulehti* (Finnish daily), *Agrarish Dagblad* (Dutch specialised daily), etc.

61. News Alerts:

News alerts were disseminated to the press in relation to some relevant events and more precisely:

- a. The visit of a delegation from Chile (28 March)
- b. The Management Board meeting in Berlin (27 March)
- c. The 5th meeting of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform (27 April)

- d. The 9th May celebrations held in Parma (9 May)
- e. US student visit EFSA (21 May)
- f. Dutch Students visit EFSA (24 May)

Several EFSA events were organised in Parma (i.e. visit of a delegation from the Chilean Health Safety Agency, Stakeholder Consultative meeting and 9 May celebration in cooperation with local authorities and visit of students from Michigan State University). Announcements were sent to local and regional media. A balanced coverage was achieved, all main regional dailies reported on the events.

62. Web news stories:

EFSA also provided web news stories on key developments and activities:

- a. European Commission request to EFSA for advice on the implications of animal cloning on food safety, animal health and welfare an the environment (8 March)
- b. Quantitative risk assessment on the residual BSE risk in sheep (15 March)
- c. EFSA announces November Scientific Forum as part of the Five Year Anniversary (27 March)
- d. EFSA delivers advice on data requirements for pesticides evaluation (30 March)
- e. EFSA GMO Panel reconfirms that the use of the nptII gene as a selectable marker in GM plants does not pose a risk to human or animal health or the environment (13 April)
- f. EFSA to work with European partner institutes on *Salmonella* in pigs (19 April)
- g. EFSA advises on harmful fruit fly found in imports from Egypt (7 May)

63. Web

Since the last board meeting March 27, the web redesign has continued according to schedule. Final page templates and navigation maps were delivered by the Web consultancy at the end of May while the build of the Content Management System based on specifications began in April. Manual migration of content from the current website to the new Content Management System (CMS) began May 15 and is being carried out by five interims. Estimated launch date for the new website is July 15. Delivery on this date may still be impacted by delays in the build of the website structure and functionality and possible issues with migration of documents.

64. Publications

Since the last Board meeting in March, the following activities were carried out:

- a. The production of the English version of the Annual Report 2006 and its Summary was completed and dispatched via the Publications Office of the European Commission. The pdf version will also be published on the EFSA website. The FR-IT-GER versions will be ready in the course of the second quarter 2007.
- b. The Summary Report of the Work Plan 2007 has been published in EN-FR-IT-GER.
- c. The leaflet of the EFSA 5th Anniversary, presented at the Management Board meeting on 27 March 2007, has been published in EN-FR-IT-GER.
- d. The Summary of the Scientific Colloquium N°5 (Development of Food-Based Dietary Guidelines has been published.
- e. L'EFSA in 5 risposte (EFSA in five answers) - ITA

Publications which will be published in the course of June 2007:

- f. Summary of the Scientific Colloquium N°6 (Risk-Benefit Analysis of Foods);
- g. Community summary report on trends and sources of zoonoses, zoonotic agents, antimicrobial resistance and foodborne outbreaks in the EU in 2005;
- h. EFSAnews N°15

65. Events

In the course of May, EFSA participated to the following events:

Brussels – European Commission open day; EFSA was present within the context of DG SANCO.

Parma – Celebrations of the 50 year anniversary of Treaties of Rome + EFSA 5 year anniversary, in collaboration with Parma Province, Parma Commune;

Ispra – EC Joint Research Centre (JRC) open day

The stand and EFSA presence in general for these events were conceived taking into account the needs to provide information (general and scientific) to the general public and to generate interest and fun among the youngest visitors. Further to the feedback by the organisers, EFSA presence was considered a success.

As an example, during the JRC open day, this success resulted in an estimate of 1500 contacts at the stand judging from the over 1000 (!) quiz cards played and the over 1500 EFSA gadgets distributed. Throughout the entire day two animators played the "EFSA show ", communicating in a suitable way for children what EFSA is all about, through playing the quiz game, the EFSA memory and puzzle games, etc.

On 30 May, Catherine Geslain-Lane lle held a lecture at the College of Europe in Parma. The lecture was very well attended and the Executive Director had a chance to discuss with students after the lecture and inform them about et al EFSA's future plans to receive stagiaires.

In the course of June (5-6) EFSA organised, together with CIHEAM (Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomique Europ ennes), the international conference: Identity, Quality and Safety of Mediterranean Food Products – Parma (Palazzo Ducale).

ADMINISTRATION DIRECTORATE

66. Human Resources/Recruitment

Temporary Agents and Officials:

until June 2007

| | | RECRUITMENT (+) | | | | END OF CONTRACT (-) | | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | TA foreseen 2007 (establishment plan) | Total staff number Dec 2006 | Number of Recruitment procedures | <i>New comers</i> | <i>Change in contract, Cat. or Grade (*)</i> | <i>Resignations</i> | <i>Change in Cat. or Grade (**)</i> | "Net" Result | Actual Total staff number | ongoing recruitment procedures |
| AD | 166 | 87 | 31 | 19 | 12 | 2 | 7 | 22 | 109 | 55 |
| AST | 134 | 86 | 14 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 95 | 37 |
| Total | 300 | 173 | 45 | 27 | 18 | 4 | 10 | 31 | 204 | 92 |

(*) = EFSA's staff recruited to TA posts (including AUX, CA, END) at EFSA

(**) = EFSA's staff leaving their TA post in order to be recruited to a new TA post at EFSA

All contracts situation:

until June 2007

| | | RECRUITMENT (+) | | | END OF CONTRACT (-) | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|--|---------------------|------------------------|---|--------------|---------------------------|
| | Total staff number Dec 2006 | Number of Recruitment procedures | <i>New comers</i> | <i>Change in contract, Cat. or Grade (*)</i> | <i>Resignations</i> | <i>Contract Expiry</i> | <i>Change in contract, Cat. or Grade (**)</i> | "Net" Result | Actual Total staff number |
| AT+ Officials | 173 | 45 | 27 | 18 | 4 | 0 | 10 | 31 | 204 |
| AUX | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | -7 | 17 |
| CA | 24 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 27 |
| END | 7 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Total | 228 | 53 | 35 | 18 | 4 | 4 | 18 | 27 | 255 |

(*) = EFSA's staff recruited to another position at EFSA

(**) = EFSA's staff leaving their position to be recruited to a new position at EFSA