

## INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES – A STRATEGIC APPROACH

Document Describing EFSA's strategic approach to its international activities

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Signed by

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Chair

## International activities – a Strategic Approach

1. In 2006, EFSA's Management Board had identified the further development of EFSA's international activities as one of the key recommendations arising from the report of the External Evaluation<sup>1</sup> carried out under Article 61 of its Founding Regulation<sup>2</sup>
2. The European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013 adopted by the EFSA Management Board on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008 identifies the most important drivers for change including globalisation, increased innovation, matters linked to sustainability and climate change and the societal and policy changes with a potential impact on EFSA's future work. To address these, it highlights the need for greater international links and cooperation.
3. The EU is the world's largest exporter and the world's second largest importer of food and drink products and a major trader in agricultural commodities<sup>3</sup> Global trade, increased travel, and migration are all factors which potentially contribute to the international spread of new or re-emerging risks (e.g. BSE). The global nature of risks in the food and feed chain is underscored by the statistics from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feeds 2007<sup>4</sup> where approximately 7300 notifications were received for food and feeds imported into the Community. Global trade not only presents challenges to risk managers but also highlights the need for risk assessors to cooperate at the international level.
4. EFSA has to fulfil its mission to assist risk managers at the European level and in the Member States to protect health and maintain confidence in the European food supply. To support its core business EFSA needs to be fully engaged at the international level, aware of global food safety challenges, able to identify emerging risks, collect, collate and exchange information and data being aware of one another's communications, building appropriate cooperation and coherence with both international and third country organisations.
5. The development of EFSA's approach to its international activities takes into account the legal and institutional context under which it works. To fulfil its overall mission and tasks provided for in Articles 22 and 23 of its founding Regulation and deliver its core business, EFSA needs access to the broadest globally available base of scientific information and data concerning risks and be involved in the development and use of internationally recognised risk assessment methods. Article 23<sup>5</sup> requires EFSA to provide scientific and technical assistance, when requested to do so by the Commission, with a view to improving cooperation between the Community, applicant countries, international organisations and third countries in the fields within its mission. Article 33.1 and 33.2 require EFSA to work with applicant countries, third countries or international bodies to search for, collect, collate, analyse and summarise relevant scientific and technical data in the fields within its

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendations of the Management Board of EFSA following the Evaluation of EFSA's activities carried out under Article 61 of 178/2002

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety

<sup>3</sup> Chief trading partners are the USA, non- EU European nations, Russia, China, Brazil, Argentina, Thailand, India, Vietnam – source CIAA data and trends for 2006

<sup>4</sup> Article 50.3 178/2002, see [http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/rapidalert/index_en.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Art 23.i - to provide scientific and technical assistance, when requested to do so by the Commission, with a view to improving cooperation between the Community, applicant countries, international organisations and third countries, in the fields within its mission

mission<sup>6</sup>. Article 49<sup>7</sup> specifically requires EFSA to work with countries which have concluded agreements with the European Community by virtue of which they have adopted and apply Community legislation (e.g. EFTA-EEA countries).

6. In addition, other European legal provisions and policies establish a framework for EFSA's cooperation with third country or international bodies – e.g. Pre-accession Programmes, Joint Agreements between the European Community and the US to build cooperation on scientific and technical issues, Agreements on scientific and technical cooperation etc

7. In many food and feed safety, phytosanitary and sanitary areas, the European Commission has the institutional and legal competence to represent the European Community in international fora. Support on scientific and technical issues to the Commission in its work in intergovernmental discussions e.g. in OIE, IPPC, EPPO, OECD, WTO, WHO and FAO is framed by these legal and institutional defined responsibilities. It is important that the Commission and therefore European positions are underpinned by strong scientific and technical support which has been developed in full knowledge of international information, evidence, data and risk assessment practices.

6. Risk assessments, other evaluations, data and information collection and analysis are carried out by international committees and other bodies and in particular those under the auspices of FAO/WHO, OECD, OIE and IPPC are used as international references and ultimately underpin the standards used for international trade. It is important that these fully reflect the assessment of risks as these pertain to Europe and there is a clear need for European input into such assessments and the risk assessment methodologies applied. In line with its mandate and the institutional framework, EFSA has to be able to contribute to and learn from international risk assessments activities and be fully embedded in the international scientific community.

7. EFSA already has in place a strategy for cooperation with the Member States<sup>8</sup> on which it recently presented an interim review to the Management Board.<sup>9</sup> Experience from this activity has assisted EFSA to reflect on cooperation at the international level.

8. As a mature organisation it is timely that EFSA sets out its vision and key objectives in relation to its international activities. During its first 6 years of operation, EFSA has already forged close links on an ad hoc basis with those organisations in third countries and at the international level whose activities cover those relevant to EFSA's remit as well as developing individual contacts with key scientists around the world.

9. This document seeks to provide a strategic approach for EFSA's international activities and lays out its objectives and priorities for consolidating its existing work and identifying future initiatives.

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<sup>6</sup>Art 33.1. The Authority shall search for, collect, collate, analyse and summarise relevant scientific and technical data in the fields within its mission. This shall involve in particular the collection of data relating to: (a) food consumption and the exposure of individuals to risks related to the consumption of food; (b) incidence and prevalence of biological risk; (c) contaminants in food and feed; (d) residues.

Art. 33.2. For the purposes of paragraph 1, the Authority shall work in close cooperation with all organisations operating in the field of data collection, including those from applicant countries, third countries or international bodies.

<sup>7</sup> Art. 49 The Authority shall be open to the participation of countries which have concluded agreements with the European Community by virtue of which they have adopted and apply Community legislation in the field covered by this Regulation. Arrangements shall be made under the relevant provisions of those agreements, specifying in particular the nature, extent and manner in which these countries will participate in the Authority's work, including provisions relating to participation in the networks operated by the Authority, inclusion in the list of competent organisations to which certain tasks may be entrusted by the Authority, financial contributions and staff.

<sup>8</sup> Strategy for cooperation and networking between the EU Member States and EFSA, December 2006, EFSA website, see [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/DocumentSet/mb\\_strategy\\_28thmeet\\_en\\_6a,1.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/DocumentSet/mb_strategy_28thmeet_en_6a,1.pdf)

<sup>9</sup>[http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/DocumentSet/mb181208\\_item8\\_doc6a\\_Interim\\_review.pdf?ssbinary=true](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/DocumentSet/mb181208_item8_doc6a_Interim_review.pdf?ssbinary=true) Interim Review of the Strategy for Cooperation and Networking between EU Member States and EFSA

## EFSA Objectives in its international activities

10. In order for EFSA to deliver its overall risk assessment and communications mission, to assist EU risk managers and ensure the most robust scientific basis for measures to protect health and maintain confidence in the European food system, EFSA's has identified the following 4 key objectives in relation to its international activities:

### I To support the EU in its international commitments

11. EFSA provides support to the Commission in its international programmes and commitments. EFSA has identified and prioritised with the Commission the key Codex Committees for which EFSA's support may be needed.<sup>10</sup> In particular, EFSA's experts participate to Codex Ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces on Antimicrobial resistance and on Food Derived from Biotechnology as well as assisting in Committees. In addition to assisting the Community, EFSA's involvement in Codex Alimentarius enables it to anticipate the scientific activities of the international risk assessment bodies of WHO/FAO as many of their initiatives are instigated by Codex.

12. EFSA has also assisted the Commission by providing support to the Commission's discussions in the WTO, EPPO, IPPC, OIE, WHO, FAO and bilateral discussions with third countries by providing the scientific basis for Community positions with the ultimate aim of assisting the Community meet its international obligations.

13. The Community has in place several bilateral and multilateral activities which are relevant to the activities and responsibilities of EFSA, e.g. initiatives under the Transatlantic Economic Partnership Council and in particular the Risk Assessment Dialogue and the Global Risk Assessment Dialogue in which EFSA has already participated.

14. EFSA has assisted the Commission with scientific training programmes in Mercosur countries and in Asia with the objective of building greater risk assessment understanding and capacity and ultimately assisting importing countries understand the scientific basis for EFSA's risk management measures and enable them to meet them. For example, at the request of the Commission, EFSA recently worked with Russian experts, building their expertise and understanding of the scientific basis for European maximum residue levels for pesticides.

15. Within the framework of EU enlargement, EFSA is working with candidate and pre-accession countries to promote understanding of the Authority's work, share expertise, create information exchange mechanisms, and involve the national authorities in crisis coordination exercises. EFSA is engaged in the European Neighbourhood scheme in collaboration with the Commission and is currently working with Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia and the five Potential Candidate countries in Western Balkan (Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina)<sup>11</sup>. These activities touch on the full range of EFSA's remit and EFSA will continue to support the Commission in delivering these programmes with the objective of strengthening scientific cooperation and networking.

## Key Initiatives

### - At multilateral level

- Define and prioritise with the Commission the support to EU delegations in international intergovernmental meetings such as Codex intergovernmental task forces but also where needed in EPPO, IPPC, OIE, Council of Europe and OECD and associated preparatory activities<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Codex Committees for Pesticide Residues, Food Contaminants, Food Additives, Food Hygiene, Methods of Analysis and Sampling, Nutritional Foods for Special Dietary Uses.

<sup>11</sup> Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:210:0082:0093:EN:PDF>

<sup>12</sup> For example assist the Commission by inputting scientific or technical advice on positions prior to international meetings.

- To build a more solid basis for cooperation with international bodies, explore with the Commission the potential for appropriate framing of EFSA's activities in the revision of existing agreements on increasing scientific and technical exchanges.

- At bilateral level

- Identify and prioritise EFSA's support to the Community activities and in particular those linked to the Transatlantic Risk Assessment Dialogue and the Global Risk Assessment Dialogue<sup>13</sup>, Accession and Neighbourhood Programmes.
- Within the legal and institutional framework, work with the Commission to identify the appropriate bases for cooperation with those bodies undertaking similar tasks to EFSA in Third Countries to facilitate cooperation and exchanges on tasks within the remit of EFSA.<sup>14</sup>

**II Ensure access to international scientific data and information to provide a strong basis for risk assessment and the identification of emerging risks**

16. In addition to EFSA's cooperation and networking with Member States and in recognition of the global nature of many risks, EFSA is already working with international and third country organisations. The objective is to share knowledge through networking, facilitating access to scientific know-how, data, best practices and research environments outside Europe, enabling EFSA to build scientific excellence and coherence while promoting synergies on a global scale.

17. As foreseen in its founding Regulation (Article 33), EFSA will build cooperation on data and information collection in areas such as food consumption, incidence and prevalence of biological risk, contaminants in food and feed and residues and other data necessary for it to carry out its mandate. In this respect EFSA is already engaged in regular multi-lateral activities. For example, through the International Food Chemical Safety Liaison Group it has been able to exchange information in relation to Bisphenol A and Melamine working closely with the European Commission, Food Standards Australia and New Zealand, Health Canada, Japan Food Safety Commission, US FDA and NZFSA. Such platforms will be important forums for building future cooperation and sharing information, data and experiences.

18. EFSA will also promote cooperation with international organisations and third country agencies in order to identify emerging risks, and changing risk situations. This has assisted in predicting the impact of global risks on the European situation, e.g. with WHO, OIE and FAO on Avian Influenza. Such cooperation will be increasingly important in the future when dealing with new or re-emerging risks due to global trade, international travel and migration, climate change and new technologies. EFSA has already held a joint conference with WHO and FAO to examine the emerging issues presented by the impact of climate change on food safety and nutrition. EFSA is also part of the WHO's Infosan network and embedded in its emergency procedures. EFSA's ability to provide scientific support during an emergency/crisis will be greatly enhanced by building such links and cooperation with international organisations to have immediate access to data and other information.

19. At bilateral level, EFSA has so far entered into one formal agreement to facilitate the exchange of information with the US-FDA<sup>15</sup> which primarily ensures that confidential rules are respected. This has increased the flow of information. The agreement forms part of the arrangements for the implementation of the Transatlantic Economic Partnership<sup>16</sup>. EFSA envisages that additional agreements may be helpful and will explore with the European Commission the feasibility of these including within EFSA's founding Regulation and the available legal instruments of co-operation that exist at the European level for science and technology with third countries and international organisations.

<sup>13</sup> Includes transatlantic partnership countries and in addition other third country risk assessment bodies

<sup>14</sup> Agreement between the Community with for example: New Zealand, Agreement, Australia etc

<sup>15</sup> EFSA and FDA Strengthen Cooperation in Food Safety, EFSA website, July 2007, see [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa\\_locale-1178620753812\\_1178621165446.htm](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178621165446.htm)

<sup>16</sup> Transatlantic Economic Partnership [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2003/october/tradoc\\_111712.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2003/october/tradoc_111712.pdf)

## Key Initiatives

- In the areas of priority put in place arrangements utilising existing legal instruments to underpin and provide a solid basis for the exchange of data and other information with relevant international and Third Country bodies with a view to providing a comprehensive basis for its risk assessments and emerging risk activities.
- Build international cooperation and explore mechanisms to facilitate rapid exchanges of information and data to enhance EFSA's ability to support risk managers in case of emergencies.

## III Participation to risk assessment at the international level

20. Several international organisations carry out risk assessments in the same fields as EFSA. EFSA is already involved in risk assessment activities at international level as many of the leading European scientists on EFSA's Panels and Committee as well as staff are engaged in the activities of the international risk assessment committees and working groups of JMRA, JMPR, JECFA. In the same manner EFSA's experts are invited on a personal capacity to participate to those risk assessment activities undertaken by OIE, IPPC, WHO, EPPO and OECD. This involvement will continue to be important in the future if European methods, data and best practices are to be taken into account by these committees and EFSA's work is to be fully informed by their activities.

21. EFSA takes into account opinions from these bodies while still examining the issue from the European perspective to ensure the overall independence and relevance of the resulting EFSA scientific advice in the European context. EFSA has held discussions with these bodies to identify how the sharing of risk assessments, information and data could be undertaken and used to mutual benefit, for example (with JECFA on Aflatoxin). EFSA has built close working relationships with their secretariats to enable each to be fully informed of one another's activities. Ultimately consolidating this further will assist with the avoidance of duplication of effort and reduce unnecessary divergence.

22. EFSA has also pre-notified, immediately prior to publication and under embargo, its risk assessments where there is likely to be an international impact with the international offices of the USFDA, USDA, FSANZ, USEPA, Japanese Food Safety Commission, Health Canada, WHO, OIE and FAO.

23. Cooperation with international bodies has also been built on specific issues. For example, EFSA worked closely with WHO on *Enterobacter sakazakii* in infant formula and jointly with WHO and ECDC on Antimicrobial resistance. Where significant risk assessment work has been carried out by a third country, EFSA has involved relevant experts in its initial discussions while ensuring the overall independence of the resulting scientific opinion. e.g. in the Scientific Committee's work on cloning of animals where EFSA involved an FDA expert in the initial Working Group discussions.

24. Through colloquia and conferences, EFSA has been able to share and discuss with international experts, key risk assessment and scientific matters and through this dialogue form the basis for consensus on approaches and methodologies e.g. in relation to environmental risk assessment, risk benefit, dealing with carcinogenic and genotoxic substances.

25. EFSA will continue to build on these activities with the objective of influencing, contributing to and learning from them, building on its discussions in international risk assessment fora, promoting harmonization in methodologies and guidance and remaining at the forefront of international risk assessment thinking.

26. EFSA will through its international cooperation anticipate new risk assessment methodologies and identify the relevance of new science knowledge and technologies for current risk assessment practices.

## Key Initiatives

- Build as appropriate on existing cooperation with JECFA, JMPR, JEMRA OIE, IPPC, EPPO and third country agencies on such activities as risk assessment programming, calls for data and sharing of information used to carry out risk assessments.

- Identify upcoming risk assessment priorities at the international level and utilise to the full risk assessments carried out by international, third country and regional bodies while still maintaining the independence of the European scientific advice.
- In cooperation with the Commission define and prioritise EFSA's involvement in such initiatives as the development of risk assessment guidelines and harmonisation of risk assessment methodologies at the international level.

#### IV To promote coherence in risk communications and build awareness of EFSA's activities at the international level

26. EFSA's international activities in relation to communications and outreach focus on two main goals: to build greater cooperation in order to raise awareness of and explain EFSA's role in providing the scientific basis for measures in the European Community in the food and feed safety, nutrition, animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection areas.

27. In order to build greater coherence EFSA has developed co-operation in risk communications with national European food safety authorities since 2003.

28. In a similar manner, EFSA has begun to build contacts with communications departments in third country and international bodies and exchanges information, and shares experiences on issues where an international dimension has been identified.

29. This work has been underpinned by EFSA's system of pre-notification to trusted partners of selected risk assessments and press materials immediately prior to publication. The objective is to inform international partners regarding upcoming public announcements and promote coherence in the risk communication approach, for example in dealing with issues of significant international media interest, such as aspartame.

30. EFSA has participated in international conferences on risk communications in order to share experiences, identify good practices and foster mutual understanding. EFSA will build on this international co-operation by further developing networks with communications and outreach departments in international and third country organisations with similar remits to EFSA.

31. Through its communications activities EFSA will further develop awareness and understanding of EFSA's role and outputs at the international level, as well as enhancing the credibility of the scientific basis for European measures taken in the areas covered by EFSA's remit.

#### Key Initiatives

- EFSA will build on its existing communications activities linked to risk assessment activities with international partners on those areas of mutual and global interest, sharing information and learning on communications activities as well as developing best practices.
- EFSA will build on its existing practice of exchanging information including pre-notifying on specific issues and early warning on key public announcements prior to these being published, and sharing information and liaising with partners on emerging and topical issues relevant to EFSA's work as they appear in the media/online.
- EFSA will help foster the establishment of an international platform for exchanging information and experiences and developing common practices and guidelines to help ensure coherence in risk communication

### **Review timescale and process**

32. This document will form the basis for the more detailed planning of international activities that will be included in EFSA's Annual Management Plans, and in its discussions with the Commission in developing its international activities within its legal and institutional framework. It will be reviewed after 2.5 years or as necessary reflecting any reviews of EFSA's Strategic Plan 2009 - 2013.



## Annex I

### Glossary of Terms

ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EPPO	European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FSANZ	Food Standards Australia and New Zealand
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
JECFA	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Contaminants and Food Additives
JEMRA	Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment
JMPR	Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Pesticide Residues
JRC	Joint Research Centre
NZFSA	New Zealand Food Safety Authority
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USEPA	United States Environment Protection Agency
USFDA	United States Food and Drug Administration
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

### Key Initiatives, Actions and Indicators of Success relating to 'EFSA's International Activities – A Strategic Approach

This Annex provides information concerning the mid term activities to deliver the key initiatives under each objective of EFSA's International Activities – A Strategic Approach. These will be reviewed annually and subsumed into the Annual Management Plans

Objective I - To support the EU in its international commitments – Multi-lateral level		
Key Initiatives	Actions	Indicators of success
<p><b>At multilateral level</b>                      Define and prioritise with the Commission the support to EU delegations in international intergovernmental meetings such as Codex intergovernmental task forces but also where needed in EPPO, IPPC, OIE, Council of Europe and OECD and associated preparatory activities<sup>17</sup>.</p> <p>To build a more solid basis for cooperation with international bodies, explore with the Commission the potential for appropriate framing of EFSA's activities in the revision of existing agreements on increasing scientific and technical exchanges.</p>	<p><b>Multi-lateral level</b>                      Discuss with the European Commission the priorities and develop an agreed framework including listing EFSA's participation and assistance and determining with the Commission their activities to build EFSA's basis for scientific and technical exchanges in the multinational context– end 2009</p>	<p><b>Multi-lateral</b>                      Framework agreed and in place</p>

<sup>17</sup> For example assist the Commission by inputting scientific of technical advice on positions prior to international meetings.

Objective I - To support the EU in its international commitments – Bilateral level		
Key Initiatives	Actions	Indicators of success
<p>- At bilateral level</p> <p>Identify and prioritise EFSA's support to the Community activities and in particular those linked to the Transatlantic Risk Assessment Dialogue and the Global Risk Assessment Dialogue<sup>18</sup>, Accession and Neighbourhood Programmes.</p> <p>Within the legal and institutional framework, work with the Commission to identify the appropriate bases for cooperation with those bodies undertaking similar tasks to EFSA in Third Countries to facilitate cooperation and exchanges on tasks within the remit of EFSA.<sup>19</sup></p>	<p><b>Bilateral level actions</b></p> <p>Discuss with the European Commission the priorities and develop an agreed framework to build EFSA's basis for scientific and technical exchanges in the bilateral context – end 2009</p>	<p><b>Bilateral</b></p> <p>Framework agreed and in place</p>

<sup>18</sup> Includes transatlantic partnership countries and in addition other third country risk assessment bodies

<sup>19</sup> e.g. such agreements as those between the Community with New Zealand, Australia etc

Objective II - Ensure access to international scientific data and information to provide a strong basis for risk assessment and the identification of emerging risks		
Key Initiatives	Actions	Indicators of Success
In the areas of priority, put in place arrangements utilising existing legal instruments to underpin and provide a solid basis for the exchange of data and other information with relevant international and Third Country bodies with a view to providing a comprehensive basis for its risk assessments and emerging risk activities.	Develop outline and overview of useful data sources for data exchanges with relevant third country and international organisations particularly linked to risk assessment and emerging risk activities by end 2010.	Comprehensive overview of useful data sources developed
Build international cooperation and explore mechanisms to facilitate rapid exchanges of information and data to enhance EFSA's ability to support risk managers in case of emergencies.	Actively build contacts responsible for collecting and assessing data related to handling emergencies in international and third country organisations by early 2010	Contacts developed and exchanges in place

Objective III - Participation to risk assessment at the international level		
Key Initiatives	Actions to deliver objective	Indicators of Success
Build as appropriate on existing cooperation with JECFA, JMPR, JEMRA OIE, IPPC, EPPO and third country agencies on such activities as risk assessment programming, calls for data and sharing of information used to carry out risk assessments.	Annually with JEMRA, JECFA, JMPR secretariats (OIE, IPPC, EPPO) to share risk planning information identify priorities and assess effect on EFSA's work. -Start Sept 09	Programming and prioritisation taking into account international risk assessment bodies activities end 2009
Identify upcoming risk assessment priorities at the international level and utilise to the full risk assessments carried out by international, third country and regional bodies while still maintaining the independence of the European scientific advice.	Exchange at three monthly information concerning risk assessment activities with secretariats of international committees to identify data exchange and cooperation possibilities - end 2009	Exchanges in place exchanging successful cooperation with international risk assessment bodies end 2009
In cooperation with the Commission define and prioritise EFSA's involvement in such initiatives as the development of risk assessment guidelines and harmonisation of risk assessment methodologies at the international level.	Participate in EC's and other initiatives to promote the harmonisation of risk assessment methods and actively seek cooperation with international partners and bodies in this respect – on-going	Engaged in international harmonisation activities and working on specific harmonisation projects.

Objective IV - To promote coherence in risk communications and build awareness of EFSA's activities at the international level		
Key Initiatives	Actions	Indicators of Success
EFSA will build on its existing communications activities linked to risk assessment activities with international partners on those areas of mutual and global interest, sharing information and learning on communications activities as well as developing best practices.	Further establish regular dialogue with communications and outreach departments in international and third country food agencies, establishing virtual exchange for sharing best practices and risk communications learnings – end 2009.	Virtual extranet established with communications departments and outreach of international and third country bodies available to EFSA and to Member States
EFSA will build on its existing practice of exchanging information including pre-notifying on specific issues and early warning on key public announcements prior to these being published, and sharing information and liaising with partners on emerging and topical issues relevant to EFSA's work as they appear in the media/online.	Consolidate policy for pre-notification and exchanges on risk communications – June 2009	Policy delivered following agreed criteria with partners aware of the arrangements
EFSA will help foster the establishment of an international platform for exchanging information and experiences and developing common practices and guidelines to help ensure coherence in risk communication	Annual workshop with key organisations looking at risk communication practices tools and methods building networking and cooperation - mid 2011	Successful workshop identifying key activities for further sharing