

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

**63rd Meeting of EFSA's Management Board
Minutes of the Public Session
Parma, 18 December 2014, 9.00 – 13.45h**

Members of the Management Board present

Sue Davies (Chair)	Raymond O'Rourke
Piergiuseppe Facelli (Vice-Chair)	Radu Roatiş Cheţan
Jaana Husu-Kallio (Vice-Chair)	Jiri Ruprich
Iñaki Eguileor	András Székács
Stella Michaelidou-Canna	Robert van Gorcom
Ladislav Miko	Tadeusz Wijaszka
Jan Mousing	

Apologies: Piet Vanthemsche

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority present

Bernhard Url (Executive Director)	Juliane Kleiner
Gian Luca Bonduri	Olivier Ramsayer
Peter De Pauw	Tobin Robinson
Dirk Detken	Alberto Spagnolli
Marta Hugas	Alessia Vecchio

Also attending:

Anthony Hardy, Chair of EFSA's Scientific Committee

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SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

The Board adopted:

- The Single Programming Document 2015-2017 subject to the changes required during the discussion;
- The amendments to the Art. 36 list of organisations.

The Board noted:

- EFSA's progress report and the progress indicators and congratulated the Executive Director, EFSA's experts and staff for the work carried out in the reporting period;
- The presentation of the Chair of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform, which presented on-going and future activities of the Platform;
- The update on the implementation of the 'Open EFSA' project;
- The presentation on EFSA's activities in the field of nutrition;
- The update on the IT operational strategy implementation;
- The feedback from the Audit Committee;
- EFSA's 2014 budget execution and transfers;
- The European Ombudsman report 'Putting it right'.

In addition the Chair:

- Gave a feedback on the discussion held on the previous day with the Director of Nutrition of the WHO Geneva, Dr Francesco Branca;
- Thanked Olivier Ramsayer (Head of the Department for Resources and Support) for his valuable contribution to the growth of EFSA over the past five years and wished him all the best for his new career at the European Aviation Safety Agency.

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The Chair opened the public session of the 63rd Management Board meeting by welcoming the Board members, Executive Director, Chair of the Scientific Committee, Chair of the NDA Scientific Panel, Chair of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform, EFSA Management Team and staff members. The Chair welcomed Tobin Robinson, who participated in the meeting of the Management Board for the first time following his appointment as ad interim Head of the Science Strategy and Coordination Department (SCISTRAT).
2. The Chair invited the Board members to declare possible interests in addition to those already declared with their Annual Declaration of Interests. No interest was declared by the Board members.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

3. The agenda was adopted with the addition of an item under Any Other Business: the Ombudsman report "Putting it right".

Item 3: EFSA progress report

4. The Executive Director gave an overview of the activities carried out from the 1st of October to the 30st of November, 2014. In particular, he highlighted: the adoption of the opinion on bisphenol A, guidance document on statistical reporting, reports on the risk of transmission of the Ebola virus via the food chain and to pets, urgent request for scientific advice on avian flu, 2012 pesticide residue report and the software for GMO analysis for comparative assessment. In addition, he informed the meeting on his annual exchange with the European Parliament ENVI Committee and the meeting with the Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis, the organisation of the joint ANSES-EFSA conference on occupational exposure to pesticides, the stakeholders events in the areas of Threshold of Toxicological Concern and acrylamide, the European Neighbourhood Food Safety Conference held in Parma and the organisation of an Open Doors day in EFSA. Concluding, the ED updated the Board on the recent organisational changes. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.
5. The Chair of the Scientific Committee provided information on the guidance on statistical reporting, which is focused on the quality of scientific reports in terms of objectives, sources of information, study design and data quality and aims at promoting a harmonised approach on the way how studies are reported. He highlighted the on-going activities in the field of risks and benefits of fish consumption, which opinion is planned to be adopted at the beginning of 2015. He referred to the work that the working groups on 'Emerging risks', 'Uncertainty' and 'Environmental risk assessment' are carrying out and said that in the coming future two new working groups will be established in the areas of 'Weighting evidence' and 'Biological relevance'. Concluding, he gave an update on the activities that will be carried out to address a mandate asking to assess the risks linked with the use of insects as food.
6. A Board member reported on his participation as observer in the external review meeting for the renewal of the Scientific Committee and eight Scientific Panels. He said that the outcomes of the meeting were very satisfactory and that he got reassurance that the selection process was carried out consistently and in compliance with the regulatory framework. However, for the future renewal exercises, he recommended that internal and external evaluators meet at an earlier stage in order to set a common line regarding the interpretation of the evaluation criteria.
7. Questions and comments were received on:
 - The inclusion of bystanders among the target groups of risk assessment of pesticide exposure.
 - The ED clarified that EFSA work in the area of pesticide exposure is carried out taking into considerations workers, residents and bystanders;
 - Whether the guidance on statistical reporting could have the potential for application over the European boundaries.
 - The Chair of the Scientific Committee said that the guidance on statistical reporting promotes an enhanced application of the principle of transparency in the scientific reports, and although it was produced to primarily address EFSA's needs, hopefully it will have some influence on the international scientific community too;

- EFSA scientific cooperation with other EU and international organisations in the area of risks of transmission of the Ebola virus via the food chain.
 - Marta Hugas (Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance) stressed that EFSA's activities in the field of transmission of the Ebola virus are not concluded yet, since the Authority is currently assessing the risks of spill over to the ecological system and, after the assessment carried out on bushmeat, activities are being implemented for the assessment of vegetables too. She explained that the working groups set up to perform the above-mentioned risk assessment also include representatives from the WHO, FAO and ECDC.
 - Progresses of the data warehouse project and the state of development of a system allowing EFSA and the Member States to share data.
 - The ED informed the Board that the rules regulating the access to data are being discussed by the European Commission and the Member States and their endorsement is expected by the first quarter of 2015. Once the rules are adopted, EFSA will be in the position to implement mechanisms to share data with the Member States and, potentially, also with other interested parties. A pilot project involving some Member States is currently been implemented to test the access to data.
 - The outcomes of the stakeholders' satisfaction survey.
 - Juliane Kleiner (Risk Assessment of Regulated Products) said that EFSA will provide the Board with copy of the report, which is also available on EFSA's website.
 - EFSA interaction with the EU Parliament.
 - The ED updated the Board on the EFSA plan of institutional activities aimed at strengthening communication and collaboration with the European Parliament ENVI Committee. The visit to EFSA of an ENVI Committee delegation has been tentatively planned in autumn 2015.
8. With reference to the Progress Indicators annexed to the EFSA Progress Report, additional questions and comments were received on:
- The way how EFSA estimates the number of outputs for the following year and whether the method applied for such estimation was effective.
 - The ED agreed that the methodology in use to determine the expected number of outputs is for some aspects weakened by elements of uncertainty. In addition, he reflected on the efficacy of a system mainly based on the counting of outputs, since this does not take into full account neither the different nature of the outputs produced, nor the need to allocate to these outputs different resources both in terms of quality and quantity. EFSA is thinking to revise the system to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of its production. However, when it comes to the estimation of incoming work, EFSA needs to base its assumptions on the information from its customers, primarily the Commission.
 - The reasons for the increase of dossiers in the status of 'stop-the-clock' during the last part of the year.
 - The ED clarified that the increase refers to cases where EFSA needs to receive additional information. He said that EFSA is committed to a continuous improvement of its guidance documents, with the aim to enhance the quality of the dossier submitted for assessment.
9. The Board noted EFSA's progress report and asked the ED to convey their gratitude to EFSA's scientific experts and staff for the excellent work they performed in the reporting period.

Item 4: Interaction between EFSA and stakeholders: The role of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform

10. The Chair invited the Chair of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform (SHP), Andreas Varlamos, to introduce the item. Following a concise description of the SHP's composition, functioning and key tasks, Mr Varlamos expanded on the achievements of the SHP which, among others, include better working practices, concrete actions and deliverables, an increased level of participation of the SHP members and the establishment of a true and open dialogue with EFSA, as well as among the SHP members themselves. A survey had been conducted on the present and future role of the SHP, which highlighted the overall satisfaction of the members for the functioning of the Platform and the interaction with EFSA. However, the stakeholders brought forward suggestions and recommendations for improvement, which are being assessed for possible implementation.

Some of these would require further reflection and time for the identification of actions to be carried out. Hence, Mr Varlamos anticipated that the SHP will submit to the Board the proposal to extend by one year the mandate of the current Platform, in order to review its mandate and terms of reference before the renewal. Among the objectives to be achieved, the Chair of the SHP mentioned the alignment of the Platform with the 'Open EFSA' approach, a common view on overarching strategic objectives, fit-for-purpose and value for money. Stating that the SHP is a unique opportunity for different pan-European interests to work together and contribute to EFSA's functioning, the SHP Chair concluded asking the Board to provide their input on the future role of the Platform. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

11. Questions and comments were received on:
 - Whether all SHP members participate in the Platform activities with the same level of interest and commitment;
 - If the SHP represents all stakeholders in the food chain or there are areas that are underrepresented;
 - Whether the SHP entertains relations with EFSA's Scientific Committee on the wider horizontal and cross-cutting issues affecting the food and feed chains.
12. The Chair of the SHP said that the participation of the stakeholders in the activities of the Platform is increased and improved over the years. Still some groups participate in the meetings in a discontinuous manner, but this could be attributed to both logistical reasons (meetings held in Parma are attended less frequently than those held in Brussels) and low organisational capacity in terms of resources. Regarding the capacity of the SHP to fully represent all EU interests in the food and feed areas, the Chair of the SHP said that this is among the main issues of discussion among the members, who started reflecting on the future role of the Platform. As well, the SHP will reflect on how to further improve relations with the other bodies of EFSA, in particular with the Scientific Committee and the Advisory Forum.
13. The Chair thanked the Chair of the SHP for the constructive discussion and noted that at the following meeting the Board will likely discuss around the SHP proposal to extend its current mandate. Concluding, she asked to the Chair of the SHP to indicate what date would be the most appropriate for her to participate in a SHP meeting in 2015.

Item 5: Update on Open EFSA

14. Dirk Detken (Head of the Legal and Regulatory Unit) updated the Board on the outcomes of the public consultation on the discussion paper "Transformation to an open EFSA", which was carried out from mid-July to mid-October, 2014. EFSA received 189 comments from more than 50 contributors, comprising more than 300 inputs. Comments were received from a variety of stakeholders, among which public bodies, academic and research institutions, industry, consultants and NGOs. Comments from industry addressed issues like the differentiated treatment to individuals based on their professional expertise and qualification, the need to increase consultations and engagement with applicants (e.g. with bilateral meetings, pre-submission meetings, the application of a post-adoption 'appeal' process, etc.), and the request that EFSA considers only publications complying with a minimum level of scientific standards (e.g. GLP or peer-reviewed publications). At the opposite, NGOs recommended an approach taking into account all relevant publications irrespective of standards officially applied. As well, NGOs would favour the limitation of public consultations to predefined sectors and phases, in order to avoid undue influence from the private sector. Stakeholders from the public sector and individuals commented, among others, that EFSA should work in more EU languages and should establish a compliant system against its opinions. However, the different categories of stakeholders also highlighted some common elements, among which: the protection of commercially sensitive information, the need to define better society expectations and cost benefit concepts, as well as establish a compliant/appeal system. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.
15. The ED said that the work around 'Open EFSA' needs to be framed in a wider context of transformation of the Authority in a more open and transparent organisation, where EFSA intends to investigate what means could be used to enhance the transparency, effectiveness, efficiency and openness of its decision making process. Such a process could not be carried out without assessing what are the costs of the identified actions, who carries those costs, what are the benefits and who benefits from them. Hence, the ED anticipated that a cost-

benefit assessment will be carried out and that a Roadmap will be submitted to the Board in March 2015. The EFSA policy on openness and independence is planned to be adopted by mid-2016.

16. Questions and comments were received on:
 - Whether the timeline for the adoption of EFSA's new policy on openness and transparency could be shortened;
 - Whether the comments provided by the various stakeholders will be taken into consideration in the same or in a different manner depending on the number of inputs received from each category of respondents;
 - Whether EFSA expected a higher participation of stakeholders in the public consultation;
 - Whether the stakeholders commented on the openness of the scientific panel meetings to observers;
 - What is the amount of resources that EFSA would need to allocate to the openness and transparency process, both in terms of elaboration and implementation of the policy.
17. Dirk Detken assured that the cost-benefit assessment will be objectively carried out on all relevant proposals/initiatives regardless the number of comments received for each of them. He added that all stakeholders' categories expressed both support and concerns with regards to open scientific panel meetings. Juliane Kleiner took the opportunity to inform the meeting that in 2015 EFSA will continue holding open meetings of both the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee. In order to increase opportunities of engagement with the stakeholders, in 2015 the open meetings will be extended by half a day on average. In addition, to facilitate the participation of stakeholders, the meetings will be mostly organised in Brussels. The ED clarified that the cost-benefit analysis should be carried out on approx. 30 initiatives. However, depending on their nature, some of them could be subject to a 'lighter' assessment processes that would allow their implementation in advance compared to the adoption of the openness and transparency policy. Instead, other initiatives would deserve a wider and deeper assessment approach, especially those being more contentious among the various categories of stakeholders and more expensive, not necessarily only for EFSA. Efficiencies in the assessment process can probably be achieved, but the sensitivity of the subject is such that for the time being EFSA would prefer taking a prudent approach when indicating a date for the adoption of the policy on openness and transparency. The ED also said that EFSA was overall quite satisfied with the outcomes of the public consultation, both in term of number and quality of the inputs received. As far as the needed resources are concerned, the ED clarified that the openness and transparency process will not require any additional budget. Nonetheless, EFSA will have to gain all possible opportunities for efficiency to free up resources to be allocated in that process. The cost-benefit analysis will quantify the costs for each initiative and their implementation would also depend on the availability of resources.
18. The Board members noted the update on the development of the 'Open EFSA' and reaffirmed their strong support for this key initiative.

Item 6: EFSA activities in the field of nutrition

19. The Chair introduced the item saying that following the discussion held at the away day in October, the Board had decided to include in the framework of its meetings strategic discussions on matters of particular relevance for the functioning and future operation of EFSA. For that meeting, the Board wished to reflect on the role of EFSA in the field of nutrition. The discussion around this subject would feed into the preparation of the EFSA Strategy 2020. On the previous day, the Board had the opportunity to exchange views with the Director of Nutrition of the WHO in Geneva, Mr Francesco Branca, who provided interesting arguments that fed into the Board reflections. Before inviting Juliane Kleiner to present the work prepared by EFSA, the Chair wished to thank the Chair of the NDA Panel, Prof. Ambroise Martin, for his presence and contribution at the discussion.
20. Juliane Kleiner explained that whilst the EU legislator had given to EFSA quite a broad mandate in terms of food and feed risk assessment, it had restricted EFSA's role in the field of nutrition to certain specific areas. EFSA cannot receive general mandates on matters regarding human nutrition, but only in areas regulated by specific legal acts (e.g. health claims) or by EFSA's founding regulation (e.g. data collection).
21. Prof. Martin gave a short overview of the activities carried out by EFSA and, among others, he mentioned the work performed in the fields of nutrition labelling (including opinions on food allergens, dietary reference values and labelling reference values), health claims (comprising eight guidance documents and almost 600 opinions),

dietetic products (including a guidance to applicants and opinions on infant and follow up milk, as well as total diet for weight control) and addition of vitamins and minerals (e.g. tolerable upper intake levels). A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

22. The representative of the European Commission acknowledged that in the current legal framework the mandate of EFSA in the field of nutrition is relatively limited in scope. However, he reflected on possible future developments of the EU law, which could potentially require a wider involvement of EFSA in certain areas related to nutrition. Hence, while advocating for a full respect of the current legal framework, he said that DG SANTE would be ready to explore with EFSA opportunities to make the best use of EFSA's scientific expertise in support of the Commission's activities in the field of nutrition.
23. Questions and comments were received on:
 - The need to strengthen communication around the role of EFSA in the area of nutrition;
 - The importance that nutrition covers in the national and international agenda. Reference was made to the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition recently held in Rome, where it was stressed that nutrition raises problems and concerns ranging from malnutrition to obesity;
 - The need to maximise the use of EFSA's scientific expertise while ensuring full respect of the legal framework within which the organisation has to operate;
 - The need to promote a European approach towards nutrition, which would coordinate the sometimes different national policies and make Europe better heard and more influential at international level;
 - The role that EFSA could play to support the Member States in gathering and organising data;
 - The need to reflect on EFSA's role in the nutrition area in ten or fifteen years, hence possibly beyond the current legal framework. In this context, a Board member articulated around the possible enhancement of activities for the assessment of risks and benefits of food. As well, he wondered whether EFSA could potentially become the institution providing scientific advice to risks managers in the emerging area of personalised diets.
24. The Chair reflected on the strategic importance that nutrition covers for the quality of consumers' life and the control of the overall disease rate. She welcomed the words of the Commission representative, since they opened to a closer dialogue with EFSA on the identification of opportunities for enhanced cooperation. She acknowledged the important work carried out by EFSA in the nutrition field and called the Authority to closely follow the international developments in this area, so that EFSA could contribute as much as possible to the political priorities set by national and international organisations. In this context, she referred to the on-going international debate around 'healthy diet' and 'healthy and sustainable diet'. The Chair also recommended to investigate opportunities for EFSA to become involved in EU and international networks and recalled the on-going discussion around food security and obesity, which was also brought at the highest attention in occasion of the Second International Conference on Nutrition. In a future perspective, she wondered whether EFSA could also consider direct or indirect nutrition aspects while performing its risk assessment activities, and mentioned some occasions where it was somehow possible, like for the opinion on risks and benefits of fish consumption. Stressing the need to operate within the limits of the legal framework, the Chair reflected on the potential capability of EFSA to play a more relevant role in providing technical support and scientific advice in the area of nutrition. She also called EFSA and the Board to reflect on a possible role of EFSA in feeding into the agenda of the Member States and the Commission when issues or concerns around public health rise. Concluding, she highlighted how the debate around nutrition does also involve aspects of social science, social behaviour, culture and social perception, which, although distant from EFSA's remit, could nonetheless benefit of the availability of risk assessment scientific advice, which EFSA would potentially be able to provide.
25. The representative of the European Commission built on the reflections of the Chair to inform the Board that DG SANTE is implementing an important project in collaboration with the JRC in the area of healthy and sustainable diet, and reminded the audience that the Commission is greatly involved in communication activities around food safety, food security and food sustainability in the framework of the EXPO 2015. He also mentioned the contribution that EFSA will give to the debate thanks to the organisation of its second scientific conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together" that will be held in Milan from 14 to 16 October, 2015.
26. A Board member asked if the participation of representatives of the NDA Panel in WHO working groups dealing with the elaboration of international guidance documents on nutrition would be a pursuable option.

27. Tobin Robinson informed the Board that in the area of emerging risks EFSA is involved in the monitoring of the changing susceptibility of the population to non-hazard food substances which could be related to obesity. As well, he said that EFSA is involved in a foresight project of the Commission and the JRC on food sustainability and that from an emerging risk point of view EFSA will assess the potentials that new risks could enter into the food chain.
28. The ED thanked the Board for the constructive discussion that stimulated highly interesting reflections on whether EFSA could play a better role in nutrition. While providing EFSA's availability to engage in possible new future challenges in this scientific area, he stressed that EFSA is bound to operate within the boundaries of the legal framework that regulates its operations. He wished to thank the NDA Panel members for the excellent work carried out so far and their ability to have addressed a very high workload in the recent years. Concluding, the Chair joined the Executive Director in congratulating the NDA Panel for the highly valuable scientific contribution the experts provide to EFSA and asked Prof. Martin to convey the Board's gratitude to all Panel members.

Item 7: Update on the IT operational strategy implementation

29. Paul Devalier (Head of the IT Unit) stressed that the main objective for IT is to support EFSA's business process. Focus has been on improving efficiency by rationalising approx. 80 IT applications to around 20-25 integrated commercial software packages. The main reason behind a similar approach lies on the improvement of the business process end-to-end. The choice of new technology is primarily aimed to improve the overall usability of the IT systems. The advantages of integrated commercial software packages mainly turn around higher speed and reliability. In 2014, EFSA has achieved a first important result with the deployment of the new documents management system, which nowadays manages approx. four million documents previously stored in three different systems. The new document management software provides better traceability and addresses better user requirements and it has been well received by both staff and external experts. This year EFSA primarily worked on the rationalisation of the software solutions and on a better IT governance able to support the transformation process of the organisation over the next five years. In addition, compared to the previous year, in 2014 EFSA achieved one million euro capacity gain in IT operations. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.
30. Comments were received on:
 - The impressive work carried out so far in the IT field which, in 2014, brought results that went well beyond the expectations of the Audit Committee, who is closely following up the implementation of the IT Roadmap;
 - The results achieved with the implementation of a document management system able to improve usability and traceability while simplifying the overall document management structure.
31. The Board noted the IT operational strategy implementation and thanked the the Audit Committee for continuing to keep this under review.

Item 8: Single Programming Document 2015-2017

32. The ED introduced the item recalling the Single Programming Document (SPD) cycle, which started in March with the adoption by the Board of the Preliminary Annual Management Plan. As well, he presented the SPD structure, which contains a multiannual dimension covering the years from 2015 to 2017, as well as details on the 2015's work plan, budget and establishment plan. The Multiannual Plan builds around the strategic objectives that were identified following the external evaluation in 2012: fit-for-purpose, sustainability and trust. These are pursued with the development of multiannual transformational projects, which include, among others, quality management, the data warehouse, talent management, Open EFSA, the revamped EFSA journal and the data roadmap. The annual management plan 2015 provides for a reduction of investment in Activity 1 (Scientific advice), partly in favour of an increase in Activity 2 (Regulated products), which is mostly aimed at addressing the backlog of MRLs. The investment in Activity 3 (Data collection & cooperation) remains mostly unchanged compared to the previous year, whilst in Activities 5-7 (Governance, support and coordination) the investment is reduced by 5%, both in terms of staff and budget. Finally, the investment in Activity 4 (Communication and dialogue) has been slightly increased. On a multiannual perspective (2015-2017), the number of statutory staff will decrease by 7 posts per year, the budget should remain stable around

€ 79.6 million, the workload should remain stable at the levels registered in the previous two years and the resources allocated in Activity 2 should stabilise in 2017. A separate PowerPoint presentation is available online for a detailed description.

33. Questions and comments were received on:

- Whether data on pesticide residues are included in the data warehouse.
 - The data on pesticide residues are included in the data warehouse as part of the chemical occurrence data.
- The annual increase by 1% of staff employed in operational activities.
 - The shift of 1% human resources from support to operations will result in a decrease of staff employed in supporting activities equivalent to 4.5 FTEs per year and in an equivalent increase of staff employed in operational activities.
- The possible need to identify a minimum level of resources for Activity 1, below which it would not be recommendable to go. In order to mitigate the trend seeing a gradual shift of resources from Activity 1 to Activity 2, a Board member asked if EFSA could find ways to improve the efficiency of the processes applied for the assessment of the regulated products.
 - EFSA has a plan to gradually increase the efficiency in the area of regulated products and the increase of resources to Activity 2 is mainly related to the plan for the reduction of the backlog.
- The need to implement a plan aimed at achieving the gradual reduction of the backlog in the area of regulated products. A Board member asked to add indicators on how EFSA intends to reduce the backlog.
 - EFSA will revise the SPD including indicators on the reduction of the backlog.
- The number of posts included in the establishment plan.
 - The establishment plan includes a number of statutory staff members in line with the requirements of the budgetary authority. EFSA received favourable feedback on its request to hire 10 additional short-term contract agents.
- How staff engagement is measured and monitored.
 - EFSA plans to launch staff satisfaction surveys every second year. Similar surveys will also be addressed to external experts. EFSA closely monitors the drivers that the literature considers as the most important to stimulate the staff in doing more and better for the organisation. Compared to the EU average, EFSA scores exceptionally high in terms of staff engagement.
- The scope of having EFSA fully certified with the ISO standards.
 - The certification of EFSA will bring a high value to the organisation quality management system. Hence, EFSA plans to certify all processes in science, communication and administration.
- Whether it is planned to make available to stakeholders the part of the data warehouse collecting molecular typing data.
 - For the time being the project on the data warehouse does not include the sharing of molecular typing data with stakeholders, but it could become an objective for the future.
- The inclusion in the SPD of additional information on how EFSA intends to measure users' satisfaction.
 - Information will be added in the revised final version of the SPD.
- Additional information on the budget allocated to staff and experts costs.
 - Staff and experts costs are kept distinct in the budget, being staff costs allocated under Title 1 and experts costs under Title 3 (Operations). Staff costs represent approx. 52% of EFSA's budget, whilst expert costs represent around 5-6%.
- The need to clarify that the initiative on 'Open EFSA' should not be considered as a new project, since it deals with a subject that the Authority is continuously addressing since years. In addition, reflections were made on whether the 'Open EFSA' could include a specific project on the framing of mandates.
 - EFSA will revise the SPD highlighting better that the project on 'Open EFSA' aims to further enhance EFSA's openness and transparency. The ED said that a project around the framing of questions should be carried out with the indispensable input of the European Commission. He invited the Board and EFSA's management to reflect on what could be the most appropriate manner to tackle this important subject.

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- The need to give more emphasis to the activities carried out in the field of nutrition (see also item 6 above).
 - The revised SPD will be better highlight nutrition among the activities that EFSA carries out in the area of food safety.
 - The need to measure the impact related to the shift of resources from Activity 1 to Activity 2.
 - EFSA does not expect that the shift of resources from Activity 1 to Activity 2 will produce a negative impact on the former. In the coming years, thanks to efficiency gains, EFSA could be able to allocate more resources for self-tasking activities aimed at investigating upcoming future risks and hazards.
 - Whether the progress indicators could be further developed in a way to include both quantitative and qualitative aspects.
 - In the future, progress indicators will be reviewed in order to include more qualitative aspects.
 - The need to review the progress indicators for the Matrix process, which would not follow a linear approach over the years.
 - The indicators for the Matrix project will be reviewed and made more linear.
34. ED wished to highlight the high quality of the Single Programming Document and thanked the EFSA staff for their excellent work.
35. The Board adopted the Single Programming Document 2015-2017 subject to the inclusion of the clarifications and changes required during the discussion.

Item 9: Amendments to the Art. 36 list of organisations

36. Tobin Robinson informed the meeting of EFSA's proposal to add 12 new organisations, based in Belgium (5), Czech Republic (1), Finland (2), Luxembourg (1), Slovakia (1) and The Netherlands (2) to the list of organisations capable of assisting the Authority in performing its tasks (Art. 36 of EFSA's Founding Regulation). He also drew the Board's attention to the technical changes adopted with the decision of the ED dated 27 November, 2014.
37. Making reference to the discussion held at the previous meeting, a Board member asked if activities had been planned to simplify the Art. 36 application form. Another member asked clarifications on the criteria applied for the assessment of the organisations' budget. In particular, she asked if there were rules requiring the respect of a certain proportion between private and public funds. Juliane Kleiner acknowledged the complexity of the application form, which was designed, however, to ensure that the applicant organisations fulfil all the requirements foreseen by the regulatory framework. However, EFSA will work to simplify the application form. In addition, she clarified that the regulatory framework allows the Art. 36 eligible candidates to be funded with private funds up to a maximum of 50% of their budget.
38. The Board adopted the amended Art. 36 list of organisations.

Item 10: Feedback from the Audit Committee

39. The Chair of the Audit Committee updated the Board on the outcomes of the meeting held on the 17th of December. He briefly reported the discussion around a case of breach of trust, which the Internal Audit Capabilities investigated concluding that no undue influence had affected the scientific outputs of the CONTAM Panel issued in a certain time-frame. The Audit Committee commented the draft Anti-Fraud Strategy of EFSA, which is planned to be submitted for adoption at the following Board meeting. The Committee had been updated on the arrangements for EFSA's annual financial audit, which, in accordance with the new Financial Regulation, as of 2015 will be carried out by a private company and not by the Commission Internal Audit Service any longer. The Committee noted the action plan that EFSA had sent to the IAS in response to their recommendations on the building blocks of assurance. Finally, the Audit Committee members had been invited to provide the Chair with their comments and proposals for the revision of the Committee's Charter.
40. The Board noted the feedback from the Audit Committee.

Item 11: 2014 Budget execution and transfers

41. Olivier Ramsayer informed the meeting that at the end of November, EFSA had committed 88.5% of its € 79.70 million budget, which was 2% below the target for that time of the year. In terms of payments, EFSA had executed 72.3% of its payment appropriations, which was 9% below the target for that time of the year. However, no critical element of concern was identified and EFSA said to be confident that the annual target will be achieved by the end of the year.
42. The Board noted the presentation on EFSA's budget execution and transfers 2014.

Item 12: Any other business

Ombudsman report "Putting it right"

43. The Executive Director informed the Board that in November the European Ombudsman had published a report on how the EU Agencies responded to her recommendations in 2013. EFSA had achieved a satisfaction rate of 86%, meaning that the Ombudsman considered that EFSA had provided six satisfactory replies over seven remarks. Only in one case (reimbursement of installation allowance) EFSA decided not to follow the Ombudsman's suggestion to find a compromise on the application of the reimbursement rules.
44. The Board noted the information on the European Ombudsman report.

Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC)

45. A Board member asked additional information on the workshop held jointly with the WHO on the TTC approach. He said that some stakeholders expressed disappointment for not having been involved in the workshop and that some discontentment was expressed for the fact that certain TTC levels had been endorsed. The ED explained that the workshop was attended by experts who registered following the publication of an open call for interest. He added that the day before the workshop, a meeting was organised with stakeholders and that their comments were brought to the attention of the experts. A report on the workshop will be published in January. The ED said that EFSA remains available to address openly and transparently any possible complaints or criticisms.
46. Before closing the meeting, the Chair wished to thank Olivier Ramsayer for his valuable contribution to the work of EFSA over the last five years, and on behalf of the Board wished him all possible success in his new career at the European Aviation Safety Agency.
47. The Chair closed the meeting thanking the Board members, Executive Director, EFSA management, Chair of the Scientific Committee, Chair of the NDA Panel, Chair of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform, EFSA staff and technicians. She informed the audience that the following meeting will be held on 19 March 2015 in Parma.

END

Actions Arising

Meeting reference	Action	Deadline	Status
December 18, 2014	EFSA to provide the Board members with the link to the online report on the stakeholders satisfaction survey.	ASAP	Done
December 18, 2014	EFSA to revise the Single Programming document in accordance with the comments received from the Board members.	Beginning of January	Done
December 18, 2014	EFSA to propose to the Board how the mandate work referred in paragraph 33 above could be taken forward.	End of 2015	Open