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Budapest, Hungary

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EFSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PROGRESS REPORT

Executive Summary

The present report refers to the period from 1st March to 31st May, 2011.

On 2 May EFSA started operating with the structure described at the Board's March meeting. The complete reorganisation will be accomplished by the end of 2011.

Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance (RASA): EFSA has adopted 14 scientific opinions, six other scientific outputs and 20 supporting publications in the scientific fields under RASA's remit.

Activities will continue within the meat inspection mandate, completing the assessments for swine and initiating those of other species. The 16th scientific colloquium on Emerging issues in plant health is planned in Parma on 9-10 June, and eight mandates for scientific opinions are expected to be received in the coming months.

Scientific Evaluation of Regulated Products (REPRO): EFSA has adopted 126 scientific opinions, 30 other scientific outputs and six supporting publications in the scientific fields under REPRO's remit.

545 Article 13.1 health claims were adopted and clustered in 75 opinions to be published in June 2011. 24 reasoned opinions on routing MRL requests and one urgent request were adopted. Peer review will commence for 50 new active substances, and 58 active substances of stage 4 of the review programme. Work will continue for the evaluation of plastics recycling processes (85 applications), intelligent packaging materials (34 applications), and the re-evaluation of hundreds of flavouring substances, feed and food additives. Several guidance opinions were adopted by the GMO Panel (risk assessment of food and feed derived from GM plants, selection of comparators and the risk assessment of GM micro-organisms and derived food and feed), NDA Panel (general principles and specific guidance on gut and immune function claims) and FEEDAP Panel (assessment of microbial biomasses for use in animal feed and updated two guidance documents (cocciostats and histomonostats and tolerance and efficacy studies)).

Science Strategy and Coordination (SCISTRAT): EFSA has adopted one scientific opinion and three supporting publications in the scientific fields under SCISTRAT's remit.

The AF endorsed the planning of future strategic discussions and agreed on priorities for the Focal Points (FP) in 2011. At the May meeting, FP addressed the issues of data collection, developments of the EFSA Expert Database and Article 36. Within the Pre-Accession programme, 60 experts from the eight beneficiary countries participated in a training seminar on chemical contaminants and emerging risks.

Guided by EFSA's 2010-2013 communications strategy, **Communications (COMMS)** marked progress in implementing a more thematic approach. Three press releases and 12 web stories were published. EFSA and ECDC issued a joint press release on EU summary report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks in 2009. Activities were carried out to adapt the EFSA's website to the new organisational structure.

EFSA received several institutional visits, including that of the DG SANCO Deputy Director General L. Miko, the U.S. Consul General of Milan C. Z. Perez, a delegation of the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (AESAN) and a delegation of the German Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection. EFSA's Executive Director participated in numerous meetings, conferences and round tables, and the European Parliament discharged EFSA's budget for the financial year 2009.

EFSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PROGRESS REPORT

RISK ASSESSMENT AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE

Panel on animal health and welfare (AHAW)

The Panel adopted two opinions on (1) Bluetongue serotype 8 and (2) Bluetongue monitoring and surveillance.

A public consultation on the draft guidance on risk assessment for animal welfare was opened in early May.

The 2010 annual report on the activities of the Network for animal health and welfare was finalised. The second meeting of the Network was held early in May. In this meeting a technical session addressed the application of risk assessment to animal welfare.

The Panel will continue working on the meat inspection mandate, completing the assessments for swine and initiating those of other species. A new mandate was received from the Commission to update the opinions on welfare of beef cattle as well as animal-based indicators for welfare of pigs. In the coming six months, mandates are expected on: *Histomonas meleagridis*, vesicular stomatitis, swine vesicular disease, and animal-based indicators for welfare of broilers.

Panel on biological hazards (BIOHAZ)

The BIOHAZ Panel adopted two opinions on TSE ("Reassessment of the BSE epidemiological situation in three Member States" and "Review of the BSE-related risk in bovine intestines"), three opinions on food-borne zoonoses ("Campylobacter in broiler meat", "Setting of new target on Salmonella in broilers" and "Food-borne viruses") and one opinion on food hygiene (Smoked "skin-on" sheep meat).

A new dossier on the CECURE[®] decontamination treatment for poultry has been received. The dossier will be assessed by the BIOHAZ and CEF Panels.

New mandates have been received on "Public health risks represented by certain composite products containing food of animal origin" and "Hygienic criteria for clean sea water".

Panel on contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)

The Panel has adopted one statement related to oral toxicity of endosulfan in fish, three opinions related to polybrominated diphenyl ethers in food, zearalenone in food, and smoked "skin-on" sheep (the latter was in co-adoption with the BIOHAZ Panel). In addition, the Panel endorsed its opinion on meat inspection – swine.

Two new mandates in relation to reference points of actions (RPA) and bottled clean seawater (allocated to BIOHAZ and CONTAM) were received. The CONTAM Panel agreed to set up a new WG in relation to RPA and asked for further clarifications in relation to chemical criteria to be identified for domestic use of bottled clean seawater.

Panel on plant health (PLH)

In the reference period the Panel adopted two opinions on "*Monolinia fruticola*" and "*Agrilus planipennis*".

The programme of the 16th Scientific colloquium on emerging issues in plant health was finalised.

In the next 6-12 months the following outputs are expected to be adopted: (1) Guidance documents on assessment of environmental risk and evaluation of the effectiveness of options to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of organisms harmful to plants in the EU territory; (2) Scientific opinions on *Phytophthora ramorum*, Solanaceous poospiviroids and Florida citrus fruit; (3) The second meeting of the Network for risk assessment in plant health will take place in October 2011.

Scientific assessment support Unit (SAS)

In the reporting period the Unit completed eight internal reports including:

(1) a statistical analysis as support to the BIOHAZ quantitative microbiological risk assessment of *Campylobacter* in the broiler meat chain, (2) a report discussing quantitative model results for potential time of infection in Europe and possible distance of spread of *Monilinia fruticola* to PLH and (3) report to the PLH opinion on "Request to provide a scientific opinion on a technical file submitted by the US authorities to support a request to list a new option among the

EU import requirements for wood of *Agrilus planipennis* host plants”, (4) a report to the PPR opinion on “Guidance Document regarding emission from protected crop system” (5) a report on the estimation of 95% quantiles of Malathion and Malaoxon concentrations in Camomile flowers for modifying existing MRL to the PRAPeR reasoned opinion on Malathion and (6) a statistical review report to NDA.

In support to systematic literature reviews two (7 and 8) internal reports were issued. One on specific risk concerning Bluetongue virus serotype 8 as support to the AHAW opinion on Bluetongue virus serotype 8 and one as support to the AHAW opinion on Bluetongue virus monitoring and surveillance. Besides the papers downloaded by EFSA staff via the more than journal 6,000 titles made available by the unit through the portal the SAS scientific information and documentation services processed over 600 additional requests for scientific papers.

The Unit published a call for a grant on “Feasibility study on the use of farmer/producer associations/federations to form sentinel surveillance networks for adverse events on the health of agricultural plants and animals and the safety of new agricultural products in primary production” whereas in this project adverse events are defined as unexpected changes in a target population or its primary production environment. In addition the unit published a call for a multiple framework contract “Assistance to the Scientific Assessment Support Unit for statistical analyses, data management and *ad hoc* consultation upon request”.

Dietary and chemical monitoring Unit (DCM)

A scientific report on monitoring of acrylamide levels in food was published in mid-April. Three external reports summarising the final outcome of art. 36 grants on electronic transmission of chemical occurrence data were published. A report evaluating the use of a draft enhanced food classification system (Foodex) in the collection of comprehensive food consumption data was published at the beginning of March, together with the Guidance for the use of comprehensive food consumption data. A draft summary paper on the new food classification and description system under development (Foodex 2) was circulated for comments to the relevant EFSA Networks in May.

Four internal reports were filed in relation to assistance requests from GMO, CEF, and CONTAM Panels, respectively, covering evaluation of exposure in an application, food contact materials, biogenic amines and brominated flame retardants.

A tender to support harmonised food consumption data collection was launched in preparation for the EU Menu. Two grants were launched on “Dietary monitoring tools for risk assessment” and “Electronic transmission of chemical occurrence data”.

Biological monitoring Unit (BIOMO)

The Unit has issued two EFSA scientific reports on “Specifications for harmonised reporting specifications for food-borne outbreaks” and the “EU summary report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks in 2009”, which was produced in collaboration with ECDC. In addition, three supporting documents (manuals) were published to support the Member States in the reporting period of 2010 data.

The Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection met in March and it endorsed the report on harmonised reporting specifications for food-borne outbreaks and a reporting manual. A specific Task Force meeting took place in May that addressed the implementation of the new reporting specifications for food-borne outbreaks.

Work on meat inspection mandate continued and a new working group was established for poultry meat inspection. Another working group was set-up to consider the use of XML and Excel in automatic data transfer of the zoonoses data. A new mandate from the Commission was received on analyses of the EU-wide baseline survey on *Listeria monocytogenes*.

SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION OF REGULATED PRODUCTS

Panel on food additives and nutrient sources added to food (ANS)

The Panel adopted two opinions in the field of food additives (“Lutein” and “Glycerol esters of tall oil rosins”).

In the coming months, the Panel will mainly focus on the re-evaluation of food additives in line with Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 setting up a programme for the re-evaluation of approved food additives in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008. In addition, it will continue the safety assessment of new food additive applications, safety assessment of nutrient sources, including nutritional substances for use in fortified food that are subject to national derogations according to Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006. The Panel is also developing a technical guidance to explain the

technical, exposure and toxicological data required to establish the safety of food additives proposed for use in the EU, which is anticipated to be finalised in 2012.

Panel on food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings and processing aids (CEF)

A joint statement of the CEF and BIOHAZ Panels summarising the conclusions and recommendations from the scientific opinions on the safety of irradiation has been published at the beginning of April.

The Panel adopted seven opinions on food contact materials and ten opinions on flavouring substances. In addition the Panel adopted one opinion on the criteria for safety evaluation of polyethyleneterephthalat (PET) recycling processes and the CEF part of a joint opinion with the BIOHAZ Panel on the safety of a processing aid used for decontamination of carcass treatment.

The ESCO WG on non-plastic food contact materials met for the last time to finalise the lists of substances taking into account the comments received during a stakeholder meeting.

The CEF Panel will continue working in the area of food contact materials, where the evaluation of plastics recycling processes (85 applications with a deadline to the end of 2013) is on-going. Applications for active and intelligent packaging materials (34 applications) have also been received and will be evaluated. The Panel will continue working on the re-evaluation of hundreds of flavouring substances, for which it was considered that additional data were needed. Another request for the safety evaluation of a processing aid used for decontamination of carcass treatment has been received from the Commission and will be evaluated together with the BIOHAZ panel.

Panel on additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP)

The Panel adopted 14 opinions on the authorisation of feed additives, one guidance document for the assessment of microbial biomasses for use in animal feed and has updated two guidance documents (cocciostats and histomonostats and tolerance and efficacy studies). The Panel also endorsed the technical Guidance on the safety of use of *Bacillus* species in animal nutrition for public consultation.

The re-evaluation of feed additives remains one of the main working areas of the Panel.

Panel on genetically modified organisms (GMO)

The GMO Panel adopted one scientific opinion on GM soybean; three Guidance documents: (1) Selection of comparators; (2) Risk assessment of food and feed derived from GM plants; (3) Risk assessment of GM micro-organisms and derived food and feed. Public consultation was held on the opinion on post market environmental monitoring; a workshop was held with MS and stakeholders on the comparative approach and the draft Guidance document on selection of comparators; the Belgian competent authority under Dir. 2001/18/EC presented its environmental risk assessment report on GM maize MON88017 for cultivation. Seven new applications were received and three EC mandates for opinions on certain maize stacks, new techniques and the Amflora monitoring report for 2010. The internal mandate for developing EFSA administrative guidance to applicants was accepted. EFSA published reports on stakeholder consultative workshops on comparators, environmental risk assessment (ERA) guidance document with NGOs, ERA guidance document with applicants; the annual report on the GMO network and a report on the workshop on ERA criteria for GM mammals and birds, public consultation report on guidance for selection of comparators.

Panel on dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA)

Seven working groups and three plenary meetings were held in the reporting period. The Panel adopted two Article 13.5, four Article 14, and 545 Article 13.1 health claims to be clustered in 75 opinions to be published in June 2011. To date the Panel has received 320 health claims applications of which 106 opinions have been adopted covering 114 applications; 118 applications have been withdrawn; and 17 applications are in progress. EFSA will finalise the assessment of the remaining "non-botanical" claims (26 claims to be covered in five opinions) by June 2011 and publish them by July 2011.

In addition the Panel adopted two guidance documents on health claims (general principles and specific guidance on gut and immune function claims) which were both subject to public consultation and discussion at stakeholder meetings. In order to simplify the health claims application forms, the Panel made administrative amendments to the scientific and technical guidance for the preparation and presentation of the application for authorisation of a health claim of 2007 and adopted a revised version of this document.

The Panel also adopted three Novel Foods opinions (Safety of a "novel chewing gum base (Rev-7)" as food ingredient, Safety of Yeast beta-glucans as food ingredient and Safety of Touchi Fermented Black Bean (soy) Extract). A document for dietary reference values (DRV) for protein was endorsed for public consultation. Public consultations on three draft guidance documents on the evaluation of health claims in selected areas are currently ongoing.

In the area of DRVs for micronutrients, three calls for tender have been launched for literature research and review related to specific preparatory work in the establishment of DRVs.

There is a possibility that before the end of the year EFSA will receive a number of Article 13 claims (up to 290) for reassessment (probiotics which EFSA concluded were not sufficiently characterised, and claims for which EFSA concluded that there was insufficient evidence).

Panel on plant protection products and their residues (PPR) and Pesticide Unit (PRAS)

Four conclusions were adopted following the pesticide peer review of four active substances. Conclusions for the final three re-submitted active substances will be adopted in 2011, and the peer review programmes will commence for the 50 pending new active substances, and the 58 active substances of stage 4 of the review programme, for which EFSA should deliver its views by 31/12/2012.

Two external reports, on (1) the emissions of pesticides from protected crop systems and (2) the establishment of a database on ecotoxicological properties were published.

24 reasoned opinions in response to 30 questions on routing MRL requests were adopted. In addition, EFSA issued a reasoned opinion on an urgent request from the Commission (biphenyl residues in nutmegs and mace). Regarding the work under Regulation (EC) No 396/2005, EFSA expects to adopt 60-80 reasoned opinions in response to routine MRL applications, depending on the number of requests that will be submitted.

Within the next 12 months, between 64 and 120 reasoned opinions are expected to be adopted; the actual number of outputs would depend on the feed-back obtained during the Member State consultations and the need to organise additional expert meetings. The finalisation of the 2009 Annual Report on Pesticide Residues is anticipated for June.

A new mandate was received from the Commission requesting an Opinion and a Guidance document on the risk assessment of pesticides on bees. The PPR Panel has also received four additional mandates to issue Guidance documents on aquatic ecotoxicology, an opinion on the clustering and ranking of emission from protected crop systems and an opinion on dissimilar mode of action for cumulative risk assessment of pesticides residues.

SCIENCE STRATEGY AND COORDINATION

Scientific Committee (SC)

The SC adopted the guidance on nanoscience and nanotechnologies in the food and feed chain. The guidance was published, along with the comments received during the public consultation.

The SC endorsed the draft opinion on genotoxicity testing strategies for public consultation. The consultation ran from 20 April to 31 May and the opinion is expected to be finalised in September 2011.

The SC reviewed the first draft of the guidance document for the establishment of protocols for 90-day feeding study in rodents with the whole food and feed: the revised draft will be re-discussed at the June plenary meeting.

The technical report "Applicability of physico-chemical data, QSAR and read across in TTC assessments" from the outsourced project on TTC has been finalised.

Emerging Risks Unit (EMRISK)

EMRISK published a report on an outsourced project carried out by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) on customization of the media monitoring tool, MediSys. A technical report summarising the operation of the Network on emerging risks in 2010 was also published. An internal mandate for procurement of the collection of consumption data on energy drinks for specific subpopulations was received. An internal mandate for an internal task force to review approaches for addressing chemical mixtures is in preparation.

Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation (AFSCO)

At the March meeting, the Advisory Forum (AF) endorsed the planning of future strategic discussions in the AF, agreed on priorities for the Focal Points (FP) in 2011 and further development of the Information Exchange Platform. At the AF meeting in May, EFSA's draft science strategy was among the key topics discussed. The agenda of the FP

meeting in May included data collection at national level and at EFSA, developments of the EFSA Expert Database and Article 36. In the context of the Pre-Accession programme, 60 experts from the 8 beneficiary countries participated in a training seminar on chemical contaminants and emerging risks. The Editorial Board of the EFSA Journal discussed indexation in bibliographic databases. The EFSA working group on Training activities on principles and methods of risk assessment in food safety has finalised its technical specifications on risk assessment training. The training courses are expected to be implemented through the European Commission's Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication activities:

The Communications Directorate has moved to its new organisational structure, consisting of the Editorial unit and the Communications Channels unit. The Editorial unit defines communications approaches and content for dissemination through integrated communications activities developed and implemented by the Channels unit across all channels and tools (media relations, on- and offline communications).

Guided by EFSA's 2010-2013 Communications Strategy, the Communications Directorate is making progress in implementing a more thematic approach to EFSA's communications to illustrate the impact of EFSA's work and demonstrate how the Authority contributes to improving food safety across Europe and to building public confidence in the way risk is assessed. Work has begun on implementing a thematic approach for Zoonoses and GMOs.

Main highlights:

Thematic:

GMOs – 31 March, Brussels: EFSA organised a stakeholder workshop on draft guidance for GM plant comparators. 100 participants attended representing academia, scientists, industry, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and EU decision makers. The meeting was webcast live EFSA's website and received over 1,000 live views. The outcomes of this workshop and the previous written public consultation were taken into consideration by the EFSA GMO Panel as it finalised the GMO food and feed guidance document which is scheduled for publication in the week beginning 16 May 2011 together with a press release aimed at giving wide visibility to this work.

Zoonoses – 22 March, EFSA and ECDC issued a joint press release on the European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources for Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in 2009 which shows Salmonella in humans falling for the fifth consecutive year. Joint communication with DG Sanco which also issued its press release on the same day.

Other:

Scientific Committee and Panels Renewal – In order to create strong awareness and to motivate scientific experts to apply to EFSA's call for the renewal of the Scientific Committee and Panels, EFSA launched a promotion campaign, which included the publication of a press release, web announcements, a network promotion with high level inter-institutional letters, presentations during events, adverts in EFSA newsletters, a distribution drive for posters and postcards and close collaboration with the EFSA FP and other organisations which helped to promote the call.

AFCWG - 23-24 March, Parma – 30th meeting of the Advisory Forum Communications Working Group (AFCWG). Key agenda issues included an overview of the results from the public consultation on nanotechnology; an update on task force activities; an update on EFSA's risk communications strategy and related activities; a presentation of EFSA's work on aspartame/sweeteners and cooperation between Anses and EFSA on recent scientific studies; a presentation of the integrated approach on zoonoses; an update on the analysis by Member States of national data from the Eurobarometer survey; a presentation of EFSA's work on emerging risks and a debate on social media. The agenda also included an update on key issues in Member States such as the dioxin contamination in Germany and a case study on baby food contamination given by Sweden.

Festa dell'Europa -- 2-9 May, Parma – To increase awareness and understanding of EFSA as well as Europe and European values among local and regional citizens, EFSA, the Comune di Parma, Europass, Provincia di Parma, University of Parma and EC Representation in Milan organised for the fifth year the "Festa dell'Europa". This year the Festa featured 60 events from 2 to 9 May and actively involved 70 local partners and associations, bringing together citizens of Parma and from other European countries. During the week, EFSA focused on highlighting its role in the framework of the EU food safety system through a scientific event jointly organised with the Italian Ministry of Health; this initiative took place on 5 May and was attended by nearly 250 participants including university students and graduates, local industry and institutional representatives.

- Coverage increased in Italian national/regional media, rather than just local media, including national dailies, La Repubblica, Il Corriere della Sera, and La Gazzetta dello Sport, newswire ANSA, and national broadcasters MTV News and RAI Sport, reported on the initiative. 164 articles picked up the messages conveyed through a press conference, three joint press releases, one event announcement, six TV interviews, four radio interviews, as well as daily alerts to the journalists.

Other highlights:

Website improvements - In addition to updating 16,000 web pages in four languages to reflect EFSA's re-organisation, strategic website improvements include the launch of a new model for Topics A-Z, which provides better contextualisation of scientific issues and supports a more thematic communications approach. Other improvements are the dynamic generation of copyright notices to all scientific outputs, upgraded management of inter-lingual navigation, and enabling of better Google indexing.

New and revised content include Topics on acrylamide, GMOs, aspartame, food additives, food-borne diseases, as well as the Management Board members page, Panel/Unit specific linking to the Register of Questions, DATEX pages, ESCO working group pages, and information supporting the Call for new Scientific Committee and Panel members.

Outreach - On behalf of the EU Agencies, EFSA hosted a meeting of the Inter-institutional Editorial Committee for the EUROPA website.

Media activities - In the three months March-May 2011, the Press Office dealt with a total of 159 media queries; 18 interviews were organised with the Executive Director and other scientific staff / experts with media across Europe and beyond, e.g. the New York Times, AFP (French press agency), France 3 (French national TV), Postimees (Estonian key daily), and Telegraaf (Bulgarian national daily).

Media visit - 4 March, Parma – media visit organised for journalists from new Member States to build visibility and understanding of EFSA's work. Ten journalists covering food safety-related issues from the major national dailies (Telegraf -BG, Politis-CY, Lidove Noviny-CZ, Postimees-EE, Népszabadság -HU, Latvijas Avize-LV, Vakaro zinioties-LT, Rzeczpospolita-PL, Adevarul-RO, Pravda-SK), attended the event. The agenda included an overview of EFSA's work, presentations by EFSA scientists on health claims, GMOs, pesticides and zoonoses, followed by a Q&A session and one-to-one interviews. The media visit was a simple, cost-effective way of establishing good relations with media in countries from which we have only occasional coverage. Each journalist wrote a factual article following the visit, focusing mainly on GMOs, health claims and the results of the 2010 Eurobarometer survey.

Conferences: 17-20 May, Lyon: EFSA had an information stand at the International Conference on Animal Health Surveillance. EFSA contributed to the scientific program with presentations related to animal welfare and hosted an EFSA networking event to promote its work in animal health. 300 European and international scientist and stakeholders participated in the conference

Other Publications:

The Scientific Colloquium Report #15 on Emerging Risks in Food was printed in March.

The English version of EFSA's Work Plan 2011 was published in March.

EFSAnews 24 and issue 9 of the InFocus newsletters (Animals, Food, Plants) were published in May.

Press Releases (3):

- EFSA seeks new experts to join Scientific Committee and Panels (31 Mar)
- EFSA and ECDC zoonoses report shows Salmonella in humans falls for fifth consecutive year (22 Mar)
- Le idee e i progetti dei cittadini per festeggiare insieme l'Europa (20 Apr)

Web News Stories (12):

- EFSA explains use of its new food consumption database (2 Mar)
- EFSA reviews safety of caramel colours (8 Mar)
- EFSA's Management Board endorses 2012 draft management plan, meets Advisory Forum (17 Mar)
- EFSA encourages objective scientific debate on aspartame (18 Mar)
- Nuclear power plant incident in Japan (25 Mar)
- EFSA holds stakeholder workshop on draft guidance for GM plant comparators (31 Mar)
- EFSA assesses the safety of food irradiation (6 Apr)
- EFSA issues advice on reduction of Campylobacter in chickens (7 Apr)
- EFSA completes evaluation of further 442 'general function' health claims (8 Apr)

- EFSA launches public consultation on genotoxicity testing (20 Apr)
- EFSA publishes report on monitoring and exposure assessment of acrylamide (20 Apr)
- EFSA rolls out re-organisation programme to meet demands, optimise resources (2 May)

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Visits and meetings

- 4 March, Parma: Carol Z. Perez, U.S. Consul General at the U.S. Consulate in Milan, visited EFSA to familiarise with EFSA's work and enhance cooperation with the Authority.
- 10 March, Dublin: EFSA's ED visited the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) and presented EFSA's work priorities and challenges. The meeting was attended by FSAI officers and representatives of the food chain interested parties.
- 28 March, Lyon: EFSA's ED participated in the BioVision conference, where she took part in the two round tables "How we will be fed in 2020" and "Neutraceuticals: luxury niche or new hope for global nutrition?"
- 30-31 March, Parma: visit of DG SANCO delegation led by L. Miko, Deputy Director General. There was an in-depth discussion about the EC and EFSA work programmes, priorities and challenges. Dedicated sessions on GMOs, pesticides, health claims, new technologies, food packaging, flavourings and risk communication were also organised.
- 7 April, Parma: visit of the delegation from the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (AESAN) led by President Roberto Sabrido, who exchanged views on scientific cooperation with Member States.
- 2-3 May, Parma: visit of a delegation from the German Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection led by Bernhard Kühnle, Director-General for Nutrition, Food Safety and Animal Health. Contaminants, pesticides, GMOs, food packaging, chemicals, as well as risk communications and EFSA's work process were among the topics discussed during the meeting.

Discharge 2009

The European Parliament discharged EFSA's budget for the financial year 2009, with few recommendations on performance, budgetary and financial management and Internal Audit. Those recommendations are followed-up by EFSA Audit Committee.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Stakeholder relations

8 April, Brussels: plenary meeting of the EFSA Stakeholder Consultative Platform. Discussions took place on EFSA's independence, the Authority's re-organisation, and the final draft of the reflection paper on the engagement of the stakeholders in EFSA's activities, which will be finalised by written procedure.

Data protection (DP)

The data protection officer (DPO) provided advice and support on ensuring compliance with the DP Regulation with regard to: the anti-harassment informal procedures based on the European data protection supervisor's guideline (EDPS); follow-up on administrative inquiries and disciplinary proceedings; follow-up on EDPS opinion concerning the selection of Panel members; pooling of EFSA in-house scientific expertise; outsourcing of archiving services; development of a meeting organisation system (MOS); and duties and rights of staff terminating employment with EFSA.

Legal and regulatory affairs

EFSA has four cases pending before the EU Courts: two cases alleging infringements to procurement rules by excluded bidders and two alleging infringements to the EU access to documents procedure.

IT and Operations

Related to EFSA's reorganisation, the first phase of changes to EFSA's IT tools was successfully completed on May 1. This involved adapting, testing and deploying 12 IT applications and modifying configurations of the IT infrastructure. Work was carried out during holidays to minimise the impact on the organisation's functioning. Additional functionalities of the Risk assessment workflow (RAW), Zoonoses Application, Data Collection Framework, Website and EFSA Journal were also delivered. A new version of the Expert Database is now available to provide an inventory of the expertise of EFSA staff and allow experts to submit their profile independently from the DoI. A new and

improved tool for audio, video and web conferencing was deployed and made available to all users following the successful completion of the pilot phase.

EFSA new seat

Work to implement variations to the initial design, allowing a more versatile use of the premises, started in March. While it is confirmed that the ceiling costs of the building cleared by the Budgetary Authority (38.6 M€) will not be challenged, the estimated end date of building operations is September 2011. This date is still compatible with the requirements for the internal refurbishing and the move to the new building in December 2011. Works for the settlement of the external area around the building have also started.

EFSA is negotiating with Parma's authorities the conditions of the purchase agreement. While no major disagreements emerged, the main issues of discussion are the payment method and the qualification of possible penalties. EFSA has published the call for tender aimed to select the financial institution offering the best conditions for the financing of the building purchase.

Status of procurement procedures of goods and services to equip the building:

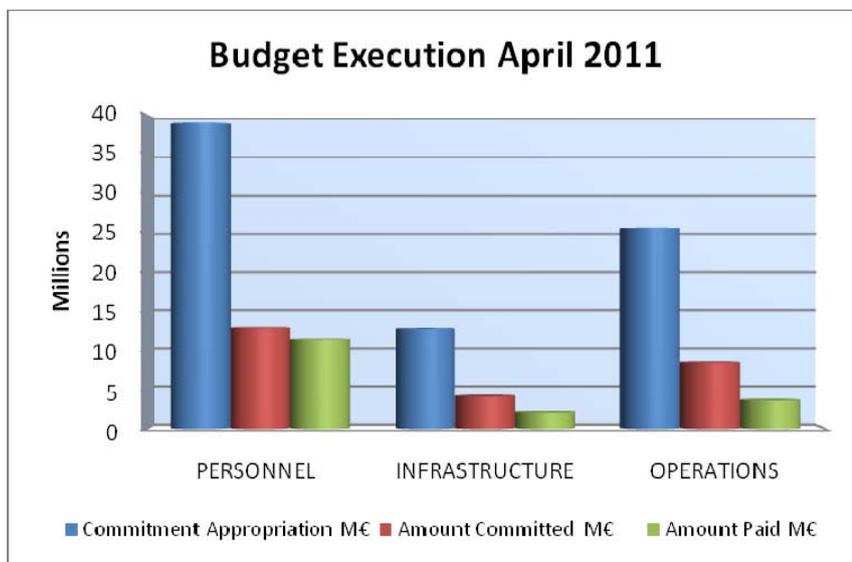
- Transportation and moves (completed);
- Insurance services (awarded);
- Purchase of new furniture (under evaluation, to be awarded in July);
- Canteen and bar services (to be completed in September).

Financial management

As of 30 April 2011,

- EUR 25.38 million or 32.8% of the EUR 77.31 million budget was committed. The commitment level stands EUR 1.33 million above the April target (EUR 24.05 million). Under Title I [Personnel], the 33 % commitment rate corresponds to the personnel expenditure at this time in the year. Under Title II [Infrastructure], the budget is at 32% committed corresponding to a linear consumption pattern under this title. Under Title III [Operations], the execution rate reached 33%. Whereas the commitments under the scientific cooperation programme are in line with the objective (EUR 1.0 million), the commitment level related to scientific meetings has already reached 56 % at the end of April.
- EUR 16.89 million or 21.9% of the EUR 76.96 payment appropriations were paid. This payment level stands EUR 1.07 million below the target (EUR 17.96 million) mainly for lower payment level under Title II and III. IT developments initiated last year and conducted during the first quarter of 2011 were paid for the appropriations carried forward from last year. Under Title III, the financial closure of 2009 science grants and procurement is being processed in a timely manner with the exception of EUR 0.53 million which was planned for payment in April. The payment level is better than last year's (see year on year comparison hereunder).

Title	Commitment Appropriation	Amount Committed	% Committed	Payment Appropriation	Amount Paid	% Paid	RAL
PERSONNEL	38,957,000	12,870,507	33.04%	38,957,000	11,316,131	29.05%	1,554,375
INFRASTRUCTURE	12,764,400	4,100,969	32.13%	12,764,400	1,979,123	15.51%	2,121,846
OPERATIONS	25,588,400	8,407,591	32.86%	25,236,900	3,604,667	14.28%	4,802,924
Total:	77,309,800	25,379,067	32.83%	76,958,300	16,899,921	21.96%	8,479,146



Year on year, the commitments increased by EUR 1.26 million which represents a 5.25% improvement. The payments increased by EUR 0.29 million compared to last year which represents a 1.78% improvement.

Title	Commitment APR 2011	Commitment APR 2010	Increase	Payments APR 2011	Payments APR 2010	Increase
PERSONNEL	12,870,507	12,515,177	2.84%	11,316,131	11,042,782	2.48%
INFRASTRUCTURE	4,100,969	3,725,385	10.08%	1,979,123	1,751,948	12.97%
OPERATIONS	8,407,591	7,873,413	6.78%	3,604,667	3,808,890	-5.36%
Total:	25,379,067	24,113,975	5.25%	16,899,921	16,603,620	1.78%

Accounting

In the reporting period more than 3,600 payments were executed.

The Court of Auditors' audit mission on the 2010 provisional annual accounts were performed in March and informal indications from the Court of Auditors inform that their preliminary observations shall not lead to any issues regarding the legality and regularity of the 2010 accounts.

The second phase of migration of EFSA's financial database towards the Commission financial database (ABAC) is ongoing and is foreseen to be completed by September. In April, ABAC training has been performed and the test environment opened, in order to prepare a smooth transition towards the new financial system that is scheduled to be in place in September 2011.

Human Resources

Staff Categories	Target 2011	Total Contracted and Offered
Temporary Agents and Officials		
Executives, Managers & Officers (AD)	213	202
Assistants functions (AST)	142	138
Total	355	340
Contract Agents		
Officers functions (CA FG IV)	51	39
Assistants functions (CA FG I, II, III)	59	51
Total	110	90
Seconded National Experts	29	12
Total all staff categories	494	442

On 31st May 2011, 431 posts were occupied and 11 job offers sent to the selected candidates bringing the total to 442 posts filled-in out of the planned 494. The recruitment execution rate for the Establishment Plan 2011 (Temporary Agents and Officials) is at 96%.

Glossary

AESAN – Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition
AF – EFSA'sd Advisory Forum
AFCWG – Advisory Forum Communications Working Group
ANSES - French National Agency for sanitary safety
BSE-TSE - Bovine and Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies
DG SANCO – Directorate General for Health and Consumers
DOI – Declaration of Interest
DPO – Data Protection Officer
DRV – Dietary Reference Values
EC – European Commission
ECDC – European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
ED – EFSA Executive Director
EDB – EFSA Expert Database
EDPS - European Data Protection Supervisor
EP – European Parliament
ERA – Environmental Risk Assessment
ESCO – EFSA Scientific Cooperation projects
FCM – Food Contact Materials
FP – Focal Point
FSAI – Food Safety Authority of Ireland
HR – Human resources
IEP – Information exchange platform
ITOP – IT& Operations Unit, EFSA
JEFCA – Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives
JRC – Joint Research Centre of the European Commission
MB – Management Board
MEP – Member of the European Parliament
MOS – Meeting Organisation System
MRA – Microbiological Risk Assessment
MRL – Maximum residue levels
MS – EU Member States
PET – Polyethylenterephthalat
PMEM – Post Market Environmental Monitoring
QSAR – Quantitative Structure-Activity Relationships
QPS – Qualified Presumption of Safety
RASFF – Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed
RAW – Risk Assessment Workflow
RoQ – EFSA Register of Questions
RPA – Reference point action
SC – Scientific Committee
SP – Scientific Panel
TSE – Transmissible spongiform encephalopathy
TTC – Threshold of toxicological concern
WG – Working Group