



Communication, Engagement and Cooperation Department

Stakeholder Engagement

4th Meeting of the EFSA Stakeholder Bureau

Brussels, 14 May 2019

Introduction

The Stakeholder Bureau is one of two permanent mechanisms under the Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA) with a role to advise on civil society's concerns regarding food safety, health, the environment, risk communication and other issues in EFSA's remit.

The task of the Bureau is also to contribute to the general understanding of EFSA's scientific risk assessment process among stakeholders, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of decisions taken. The Bureau helps to shape the agenda of the Stakeholder Forum, the annual gathering of all registered stakeholder organisations.

Members of the Bureau act in the interest of the stakeholder category they represent. The mandate of Members of the Bureau shall be for a period of three years, after which a new vote will be held to select new members. Members of the Bureau may serve for no longer than two mandates. The initial composition of the Bureau was acknowledged at the first meeting of the Stakeholder Forum, on 30 May 2017.

The representative of Business and food industry, Ms Beate Kettlitz has resigned as member of the Bureau due to retirement, as of 1 January 2019. The elections of a new representative of the Industry Category in the Bureau has resulted in appointment of Ms Maud Perrudin, Association of the European Self-Medication Industry (AESGP).

EFSA's Management Board has, in its meeting of 10 October 2018 adopted an amendment to the decision on the SEA, which allows the nomination of alternate members of the Stakeholder Bureau. It follows recommendations by the Management Board based on the interim evaluation report of the implementation of SEA pilot phase¹, where the need for an alternate member was recognized. Alternate member substitutes for a Bureau Member when the latter is unable to attend Bureau meetings.

A call for nominations for Alternate members of the Stakeholder Bureau was launched on 4 December 2018. Registered Stakeholder Organisations had two month-period to submit their nominations. Please find the list of Members and Alternate Members of the Bureau in Annex 1.

The previous meeting of EFSA's Stakeholder Bureau² took place on 17 October 2018 in Brussels. It was an opportunity to discuss the progress with the implementation of the SEA, the priorities for the Stakeholder Forum in 2018, as well as stakeholder engagement in the framing of EFSA self-mandates and guidance documents.

¹ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/event/mb180321/mb180321-i5.pdf>

² <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/181017-1>

Discussion Points at the 4th meeting of the Stakeholder Bureau

The 4th meeting of the Stakeholder Bureau took place in Brussels on 14 May 2019. The agenda of the meeting was co-created with the Bureau members and designed with a view to allow space for interaction and questions (Agenda enclosed as Annex 1).

Transparency and sustainability of the food safety risk assessment regulatory process

The meeting was chaired by EFSA's Executive Director, Dr Bernhard Url. In his opening talk Dr Url recalled that the adoption of the revised General Food Law (GFL) marks an important moment in EFSA's history, providing the firm legal basis that EFSA needs to make its science more open and transparent.

The amendments to the GFL cover different aspects of EFSA's activities, first and foremost, it increases transparency in the risk assessment process by requesting EFSA to publish data proactively and early in the assessment process. Other changes pertain to improved risk communication and stakeholder engagement, quality and reliability of studies, and the sustainability of EFSA's governance.

For what concerns the implementation of the GFL, a critical success factor will be the engagement of stakeholders all-along the implementation process.

The Bureau was welcomed by the Vice Chair of EFSA's Management Board, Raymond O'Rourke who shared the Management Board views on the progress with the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach.

In this intervention the Vice Chair recalled a good progress achieved so far in the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach. The Board acknowledged that targeted and ad hoc mechanisms for stakeholder engagement, such as the annual roundtable with NGOs and discussion groups on data collection for bee-health and on emerging risks or the communicators' lab function well and prove to be fit-for-purpose.

Péter Bokor, Head of DG SANTE's Food Chain Science and Stakeholder Relations Unit, DG SANTE, European Commission presented new elements of the revised GFL Regulations, covering in particular the pre-submission advice, notification of commissioned studies, fact finding missions, proactive publication of data, general plan on risk communication, and Member States' involvement in EFSA governance. Mr Bokor presented the way forward with the implementation, and outlined the main elements of the preparatory work that must be carried out, both by EFSA and by the Commission in the period after the publication of the new Regulation.

Barbara Gallani, Head of EFSA's Communication, Engagement and Cooperation Department presented EFSA's ongoing preparatory work related to the implementation and recalled the importance of involving stakeholders as critical partners along the process. Establishing a stakeholder sounding board was mentioned as a possible model to ensure appropriate involvement and an open dialogue amongst consumers, food and feed businesses, the academic community and all other interested parties. In addition, EFSA will consider establishing appropriate targeted stakeholder engagement models such as discussion groups and consultation bodies that would inform EFSA's work on technical level. EFSA will keep a close contact with the EU Inter-Agency Network along the implementation of the GFL.

EFSA will also use this opportunity to make sure its work is delivered in a leaner, efficient, and cost-effective manner. However, due to resource limitations, EFSA will need to reprioritise some of its ongoing activities and development projects, to ensure timely and effective implementation of the revised GFL.

The distributors representative of the Bureau called on EFSA to keep-up with its core business – delivering the scientific work and to strike a right balance with the necessary reprioritising. Industry representative noted that the Industry stakeholders are strong advocates of the sufficient budget for implementation and confirmed the willingness to take part in the implementation process from an early stage. For what concerns the development of standard data formats, EFSA should learn from European Medicines Agency (EMA) and European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) experiences in order to ensure that requests for scientific outputs received by the Authority are processed in an efficient manner.

Farmers and primary producers' representative of the Bureau recalled the importance of independent science, that the selection of EFSA scientists should not to be influenced by Member States, and that the transparency should not hamper innovation. Consumer representative welcomed the adoption of the proposal but expressed concerns related to the Multi-annual Financial Framework and securing enough resources for EFSA to deliver such ambitious tasks.

Academia representative raised a point related to the independence policy of EFSA, in particular on the research funding aspect, since the 25% funding threshold somewhat contradicts the Horizon 2020 principles that encourage scientist to take part in private-public research partnerships.

Preparatory work for the Stakeholder Forum 2019

The Bureau meeting continued with a discussion on the objectives and strategic thinking related to the Stakeholder Forum meeting, scheduled to take place in Parma on 17-18 October 2019. The central topic of the 2019 edition will be the active engagement opportunities before and during the risk assessment process, how to enable engagement opportunities at early stage of the process including framing of questions concept.

The Bureau agreed that the Forum should allow discussion on the future of stakeholder engagement, to look at what SEA is providing at the moment, and what is expected in the future to ensure the successful implementation of the Regulation on the transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain. Bureau will be consulted on the selection of topics to be discussed at the Forum 2019. The Bureau welcomed the idea to organise an onboarding session for newly registered stakeholder organisations.

EFSA ongoing engagement and communication activities

Barbara Gallani presented the Authority's latest communication activities and upcoming public consultations. Ms Gallani presented the latest development with the social science, Eurobarometer, *EUmyfood* campaign, and updated the Bureau on the upcoming stakeholder engagement events.

The recently established Social Science Roadmap is a framework under which EFSA plans to use social science to inform its work and shall contribute to better understanding of the socio-economic factors and enhanced engagement with society along the risk assessment process. Bureau was interested to learn more on the preliminary outcomes of the Eurobarometer, in particular country-specific information and connection with national surveys. The Eurobarometer 2019 results will be published early June.

Review of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach

Matthew Ramon, Team Leader, External Engagement, Engagement and Cooperation Unit presented the progress with the mandatory SEA review. Stakeholders will be asked to provide input on stakeholder registration process, functioning of permanent and targeted engagement models, and transparency and availability of information by means of a survey. The Bureau was also consulted on criteria that EFSA shall use when prioritising *ad hoc* stakeholder requests for bilateral meetings. EFSA shall take into consideration aspects such as availability of resources, principle of balanced representation, and the transparency of processes.

Feedback of the NGO Roundtable, Academia Workshop and Environment Scanning Workshop

The last session of the meeting allowed Bureau members and alternate members to share views and ideas on the engagement mechanisms they took part in. The NGO representative shared a positive impression of SEA in general and supported the stakeholder active engagement throughout the implementation of the revised GFL. Related to the Environment scanning Workshop, a part of consultation related to development of the next EFSA Strategy 2021-2027, Bureau members welcomed engagements that allow opportunity for stakeholder input at early stage of the process.

Academia representative updated the Bureau on the outcomes of the first EFSA workshop with Academia stakeholders and supported the idea to keep this format as a reoccurring event since it facilitates discussion on common topics of interest with input and ideas on how to further shape future collaborations. Dr Url recalled that EFSA should engage with the Academia stakeholders much more to make its Risk assessment more innovative and robust.

General remarks and next steps

Raymond O'Rourke recalled that the Management Board is continuously looking at the progress with the implementation of SEA processes, as a topic of high importance for the Board. The Vice Chair of the Management Board reassured the Bureau that he is a strong advocate of this two-way engagement process in the Management Board. He recalled that the Board will continue paying much attention to all EFSA's stakeholder engagement initiatives, particularly within the frame of the implementation of the revised General Food Law.

Bernhard recalled that EFSA is in general terms significantly under-budgeted for the scale of work and the importance of food safety for EU consumers. In the months to follow we will closely monitor the negotiations for the 2020 budget, in which a first GFL-related increase of EFSA's financial appropriations is expected. Even more important will be the final shape of the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework for 2012-2027, where EFSA's resources for the following seven years will be set out.

Table 1. Follow up actions

	Follow up action	When
1.	Implementation of 178 Regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder "Sounding Board" as a model to allow stakeholder engagement along the process of the implementation of the GFL Regulation, - Discussion groups on more specific areas, - Technical meetings with stakeholders – best models for standardised data formats - explore the sister Agencies experience with data formats 	Ongoing
2.	Industry Roundtable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consider anticipating the event before the summer break 	Done
3.	Stakeholder Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of topics for discussion – ask Bureau for input on topics, - Define the roles of the Bureau Members 	Ongoing
4.	Communication & Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share the results of the Eurobarometer - Prepare an info graphic/one pager on SEA engagement models – catalogue of services, 	Done Ongoing
5.	Review of SEA 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder Survey – keep the survey open for 3 weeks to allow time for feedback - Share a list of criteria for prioritisation of ad hoc requests for bilateral meetings 	Done Ongoing
6.	Feedback on the NGO Roundtable, Academia Workshop and Environment Scanning Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report on the Environment Scanning Workshops to be shared with the Bureau members 	Done

Annex 1. Draft Agenda

4th Meeting of the Stakeholder Bureau

Meeting date: **14 May 2019**
 Meeting hours: **08.30-14.00**
 Meeting venue: **Silversquare, Square de Mèus, 35 Brussels**
 Chair: **Bernhard Url, EFSA**

Overall objective: The Bureau shall provide input to EFSA at a high level on issues in the Authority's remit taking societal concerns in consideration. The Bureau shall contribute to the preparation of the annual Forum and monitor the actions EFSA takes as a result of the Forum

Time	No.	Topic	Scope	Presenter
08.30-09.00		Welcome coffee		
09.00-09.10	1	Welcome by the Chair of the Stakeholder Bureau	Welcoming the participants and presenting the outline of the 4th meeting of the Bureau. Overview of action points from the last meeting, implementation so far and what comes next	Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA
09.10-09.20	2	Welcome by the Vice Chair of the Management Board	The Management Board views on the progress with the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach	Raymond O' Rourke, Vice Chair of EFSA's Management Board
09.20-10.20	3	The European Commission initiative on transparency and sustainability of the food safety risk assessment regulatory process	-Update by the European Commission on the progress of the legislative proposal on Food Law - Working towards implementation of the updated General Food Law	Peter Bokor, DG SANTE, European Commission EFSA (TBC)
10.20-10.40		<i>Coffee break</i>		
10.40-11.30	4	Preparatory work for the Stakeholder Forum 2019	Follow-up on of the Forum 2018 Desired outcome of the Forum 2019 and how to get there, Co-ownership of the event Agreement on topics & speakers Clarification on roles of Bureau members as contributors on behalf of stakeholder categories Framing of questions	Goran Kumric, Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Engagement and Cooperation Unit (ENCO)

11.30-12.00	5	EFSA engagement and communication activities	Ongoing Communication initiatives EU-Barometer on consumer perception of food safety Social science roadmap	Barbara Gallani, Head of Department Engagement, Communications and Cooperation
12.00-12.30	6	Review of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach	- Update on the process of the mandatory external review of the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach -Input by the Bureau members on ad-hoc engagement request and definition of criteria for prioritisation	Matthew Ramon, Team leader Inter-Institutional and Stakeholder engagement, ENCO Unit
12.30-12.45	7	Feedback of the NGO Roundtable, Academia Workshop and Environment Scanning Workshop	Bureau Members, and Alternate Member to present their views and experience on the engagement mechanisms they took part in.	Sean O'Laoide José Julio Ortega Calvo Riccardo Siligato
12.45-12.55	8	Issues raised by the Stakeholders	Based on input provided by Bureau members before the meeting	
12.55-13.00	9	Closing remarks		Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA
13.00-13.45		<i>Networking Lunch</i>		

Annex 2. Participants list

Members and Alternate Members of the Stakeholder Bureau

	Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Organisation	Name and Surname
1.	Consumers	BEUC	Camille Perrin
2.	NGOs and Advocacy Groups	Federation of Veterinarians of Europe	Sean O'Laoide
3.	Farmers and Primary Producers	COPA-COGECA	Riccardo Siligato
4.	Business and Food Industry	Association of the European Self-Medication Industry (AESGP)	Maud Perrudin
5.	Distributors and HORECA	Euro Commerce	Els Bedert
6.	Practitioners	European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD)	Ayla Gulden Pekcan
7.	Academia	Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry Europe (SETAC)	José Julio Ortega Calvo

EFSA's Representatives

	Name and Surname	Function
1.	Bernhard Url	EFSA's Executive Director
2.	Raymond O'Rourke	Vice Chair of the Management Board
3.	Barbara Gallani	Head of Communication, Engagement and Cooperation Department, EFSA
4.	Matthew Ramon	Team Leader, External Engagement, Engagement and Cooperation Unit (ENCO)
5.	Marta Hugas	EFSA's Chief Scientist
6.	Erika Cavalli	Institutional and Stakeholder Relations Assistant, Engagement and Cooperation Unit (ENCO), EFSA
7.	Goran Kumric	Stakeholder Engagement Officer, ENCO, EFSA

European Commission Representatives - Observer

	Name and Surname	Function
1.	Peter Bokor	Head Of Unit D1- Food chain science and stakeholder relations, DG SANTE, European Commission
2.	Anastasia Alvizou	Deputy Head Of Unit D1, DG SANTE, European Commission
3.	Fatima Darago	Administrative Assistant, D1, DG SANTE, European Commission

Annex 3. List of Bureau Members and Alternate Members

Bureau Members

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Organisation	Name and Surname
Consumers	BEUC	Camille Perrin
NGOs and Advocacy Groups	Pesticide Action Network Europe	Martin Dermine
Farmers and Primary Producers	COPA-COGECA	Pekka Pesonen
Business and Food Industry	Association of the European Self-Medication Industry (AESGP)	Maud Perrudin
Distributors and HORECA	Euro Commerce	Els Bedert
Practitioners	European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians (EFAD)	Ayla Gulden Pekcan
Academia	Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry Europe (SETAC)	José Julio Ortega Calvo

Alternate Members

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Organisation	Name and Surname
Consumers	SAFE Food Advocacy	Floriana Cimmarusti
NGOs and Advocacy Groups	Federation of Veterinarians of Europe	Sean O'Laoide
Farmers and Primary Producers	COPA-COGECA	Riccardo Siligato
Business and Food Industry	FoodDrinkEurope	Rebeca Fernandez
Distributors and HORECA	FoodServiceEurope	Cristina Freitas da Costa
Practitioners	Association of Veterinary Consultants (AVC)	Elinor McCartney
Academia	EuroScience	Josee van Eijndhoven