



Communication, Engagement and Cooperation Department

Stakeholder Engagement

5th Meeting of the EFSA Stakeholder Bureau

Brussels, 24 September 2019

Introduction

The Stakeholder Bureau is one of the 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 the EFSA's remit. It is composed of one main and one alternate representative of each of the seven stakeholder categories. Members of the Bureau act in the interests of the stakeholder category that they represent rather than solely in the interests of the stakeholder organization that they represent.

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. In addition, it helps shaping the agenda of the Stakeholder Forum, the annual gathering of all registered stakeholder organizations.

The fifth meeting of the Bureau that took place in Brussels on 24 September 2019 was an opportunity to exchange views on the framing of the next EFSA Strategy 2027, discuss the progress with implementation of the Transparency Regulation, and the preparation of the Stakeholder Forum 2019. The Bureau was updated on the review of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA) as well as on upcoming communication and engagement activities.

Framing of EFSA Strategy 2027

EFSA's current Strategy 2020 will soon come to its end. EFSA has taken stocks of the developments and trends in its environment that will inform the new Strategy 2021-2027. The Management Board has reviewed the outcome of this exercise and has focused on the external challenges and opportunities that EFSA will face in the future.

The Bureau exchanged views on a variety of topics that fall under main strategic clusters of the new Strategy touching upon the sustainability of food systems and assessing of alternative options, ensuring the sustainability of expert pool, importance of understanding society concerns and ensuring a clear communication.

Implementation of the Transparency Regulation

The Bureau was updated on EFSA's ongoing work towards implementation of the Transparency Regulation on behalf of both the European Commission and EFSA.

Peter Bokor, representative from DG SANTE, the European Commission highlighted that EFSA and DG SANTE are working closely together and that a joint implementation plan has been developed with appropriate coordination mechanisms set so to ensure the delivery of results in time.

Victoria Villamar, Head of Engagement and Cooperation Unit at EFSA briefed the Bureau on the current EFSA plans to implement the new Transparency Regulation. The information regarding EFSA's preparatory work was divided per Regulation pillars, i.e. Transparency and Confidentiality; Scientific Value; Governance; and Engagement & Risk Communication.

The Bureau raised concerns related to the future involvement of Member States experts affiliated to national risk management authorities in the context of independence of EFSA's work. EFSA reassured that the rigorous selection criteria for appointment of EFSA experts will not be changed.

The Executive Director recalled EFSA's commitment toward an open dialogue with its stakeholders to ensure an appropriate level of stakeholder involvement in line with the objectives and ambitions of EFSA's Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA).

Preparation for the Forum 2019

Goran Kumric, Engagement & External Relations Officer at EFSA provided an update on the progress with organisation of the Stakeholder Forum 2019 and inform the Bureau on the main discussion topics and interactive engagement tools to be applied.

Forum event 2019 is set-up in a way to allow an interactive engagement, discussion and input by stakeholders on topics related to the stakeholder engagement in the context of implementation of the Transparency Regulation, the framing of the Strategy 2027, and the review of SEA.

Bureau Members will take prominent roles in facilitating the conversation table discussions. In total some 60 organisations have confirmed their participation. The Forum will provide a platform for networking with peers as well as with EFSA senior management, scientific, communication and engagement Staff.

The review of SEA; presenting initial results

The Board was updated on the process of the mandatory external review of the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach (SEA) so far and was presented with initial results.

Based on the results of the stakeholder survey, it appears that the Stakeholder Engagement Approach delivers on its aims and objectives. Stakeholders are in general positive about the way EFSA engages with stakeholders and they appreciate the variety of engagement models enabling both strategic and technical input to EFSA's work.

It was noted that Stakeholders' non-participation in EFSA events relates to a lack of resources, perceived relevance of topics, and awareness about the existing engagement mechanism.

Mr O'Rourke has been appointed by the Management Board to steer and advise the process of the SEA review. He recalled that the Board pays much attention to all EFSA's stakeholder engagement initiatives and will follow all the initiatives related to the implementation of the Transparency Regulation.

Bernhard Url recalled that EFSA remains committed to constant improvement of its communication with stakeholder community, and added that, together with rigorous science, adequate communication builds the foundation of a trustworthy public risk assessment organisation.

The results of the SEA review will be presented to the EFSA's Management Board to inform their decisions on possible update of EFSA's stakeholder engagement.

Upcoming engagement and communication activities

This agenda point aimed at informing the Bureau on the ongoing and upcoming communications related to scientific outputs and inform the Bureau on upcoming engagement activities (events, public consultations, call for data).

The Vice Chair of EFSA's Management Board, Raymond O'Rourke mentioned the Bee Partnership Discussion Group as a successful engagement model that won the EU Ombudsman 2019 award for excellence through collaboration.

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 Board will continue paying much attention to all EFSA's stakeholder engagement initiatives, particularly within the frame of the implementation of the Transparency Regulation.

The Executive Director 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 Transparency Regulation-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.	EFSA Strategy 2027 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A draft Strategy Direction to be presented to the Management Board at its meeting in December	Dec 2019
2.	Implementation of 178 Regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Setting up of the Sounding Board- Setting up of Technical Discussion Groups with Stakeholders	Ongoing
3.	Stakeholder Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agreement on the roles of the Bureau Members as hosts of the conversation world café tables	Done
4.	Review of SEA 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Final report to be presented to the Management Board at its meeting in December 2019	Dec 2019

Annex 1. Draft Agenda

5th Meeting of the Stakeholder Bureau

Meeting date:	24 September 2019
Meeting hours:	08.30-13.15
Meeting venue:	Brussels, Square de Mèus 35
Chair:	Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA

Time	No.	Topic	Scope	Presenter
08.30-09.00	0	Welcome coffee		
09.00-09.10	1	Welcome by the Chair of the Stakeholder Bureau and adoption of the Agenda	Welcoming the participants and presenting the outline of the 5th meeting of the Bureau. Overview of action points from the last meeting.	Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA
09.10-09.20	2	Welcome by the Vice Chair of the Management Board	Share the Management Board views on ongoing EFSA initiatives including implementation of the changes of the GFL, progress with EFSA Strategy 2021-2027 and review of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach.	Raymond O' Rourke, Vice Chair of EFSA's Management Board
09.20-10.20	3	Update on the Transparency Regulation	Update by the European Commission Update on EFSA's ongoing work towards implementation of the Transparency Regulation.	Peter Bokor, DG SANTE, European Commission (TBC) Victoria Villamar, Head of Unit External Engagement and Cooperation, ENCO
10.20-10.40		<i>Coffee break</i>		
10.40-11.20	4	Preparatory work for the Stakeholder Forum 2019	Update on the progress with organisation of the Forum 2019; inform on the main discussion topics and interactive engagement tools to be applied; clarification on roles of Bureau; update on the onboarding session for newly registered stakeholders.	Goran Kumric, Engagement & External Relations Officer, Engagement and Cooperation Unit (ENCO)
11.20-11.50	5	Review of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach – initial results	Update on the process of the mandatory external review of the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Approach; present initial	Victoria Villamar, Head of Unit External Engagement and

			results and gather Bureau's input.	Cooperation, ENCO
11.50-12.00	6	Upcoming engagement and communication activities	Inform the Bureau on the ongoing and upcoming communications related to scientific outputs; inform the Bureau on upcoming engagement activities (events, public consultations, call for data).	Goran Kumric, Engagement & External Relations Officer, Engagement and Cooperation Unit (ENCO)
12.00-12.20	7	Issues raised by the Stakeholder Bureau	Based on input collected before the meeting	Bureau Members
12.20-12.30	8	Closing remarks		Bernhard Url, Executive Director, EFSA
12.30-13.15		<i>Networking Lunch</i>		

Annex 2. Participants list

Stakeholder Representatives

	Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Organisation	Name and Surname
1.	Consumers	BEUC	Camille Perrin
2.	NGOs and Advocacy Groups	PAN Europe	Angeliki Lysimachou
3.	Farmers and Primary Producers	COPA-COGECA	Riccardo Siligato
4.	Business and Food Industry	FoodDrinkEurope	Rebeca Fernandez
5.	Distributors and HORECA	Euro Commerce	Els Bedert
6.	Practitioners	Association of Veterinary Consultants	Elinor McCartney
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 of EFSA
3.	Victoria Villamar	Head of Engagement and Cooperation Unit (ENCO)
4.	Erika Cavalli	Institutional and Stakeholder Relations Assistant, ENCO
5.	Goran Kumric	Engagement & External Relations Officer, ENCO

European Commission, DG SANTE Representatives – Observers

	Name and Surname	Function
1.	Peter Bokor	Head of Food chain science and stakeholder relations, D1
3.	Fatima Darago	Administrative Assistant