



Brussels, 24th May 2004

**MINUTES OF THE 6th PLENARY MEETING OF  
THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS  
Held in Brussels on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2004**

**AGENDA:**

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Draft agenda for 6th plenary meeting of 21 and 22 April 2004

1. Welcome, apologies for absence
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Declaration of interest
4. Matters arising from previous plenary meeting
5. Information on EFSA and zoonoses data collection
6. Discussion and possible adoption of following opinions
  - a. Revision of meat inspection for lambs and goats
  - b. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the scientific justification for proposing amendments to the United Kingdom Date Based Export Scheme
  - c. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the application of the United Kingdom for moderate risk BSE status.
  - d. A request for an opinion on BSE related culling in cattle
7. Progress reports and discussion on the following draft opinions:
  - a. Antimicrobials to control *Salmonella*
  - b. Vaccines to control *Salmonella*
  - c. *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs
  - d. Microbiological risks in infant foods
  - e. *Bacillus* in foodstuffs
  - f. *Clostridium* in foodstuffs
  - g. Revision of meat inspection for beef
  - h. Freezing methods for *Trichinella* and *Cysticercus*
  - i. Risk Assessment of *Trichinella*
  - j. Risk Assessment of *Cysticercus* in calves
  - k. Chronic Wasting Disease
  - l. Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk.

- m. Animal By-products
  - i. Combustion of tallow in a thermal boiler process for safe disposal of ABP
  - ii. Safety of vis-à-vis biological risk including TSE's of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.
- 8. New requests to EFSA.
  - a. Organization of Working Groups
- 9. Self-tasking issues, discussion of suggested topics.
- 10. Information on the Code of conduct of EFSA
- 11. Feed-back by the Chairman on subjects discussed in the SC of interest to the Panel
- 12. Information and discussion on Emerging Risks (EMRISK) WG of the Scientific Committee).
- 13. Feed-back from Panel members attending WG from other panels
- 14. AOB
- 15. Closure of the meeting

**MINUTES OF THE 6<sup>th</sup> PLENARY MEETING OF  
THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS**  
Held in Brussels on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2004

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**PARTICIPANTS**

Panel Members:

Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic, Pierre Colin, John D. Collins, Christian Ducrot, James Hope, Günter Klein, Ernst Lücker, Simone Magnino, Riitta Liisa Maijala, Antonio Martinez López, Birgit Noerrung, Servé Notermans, George-John Nychas, Ivar Vågsholm, Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch.

Apologies

Maurice Pensaert, Terence Roberts, Mac Johnston, Christian Ducrot (22), Simone Magnino (21).

EFSA

Bart Goossens, Marta Hugas, Pia Makela, Shamila Nair, (Scientific Staff)  
Sylvie Daloze and Angela Cohen (Administrative staff)

Commission

Taina Sateri (DG Health and Consumer Protection)

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**1. WELCOME**

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everybody. He also introduced Dr Shamila Nair, who recently joined EFSA and its Panel on Biological Hazards.

Apologies were received from Maurice Pensaert, Terence Roberts and Mac Johnston.

**2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made. The members raised questions on their respective Institution's interests and funding (sometimes unknown to them) and how this could be declared.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS PLENARY MEETINGS**

The Panel noted the adoption of the minutes of the previous plenary meeting by written procedure.

## **5. INFORMATION ON EFSA AND ZONOSSES DATA COLLECTION**

Pia Makela presented EFSA's plans for the Zoonoses data collection with respect to the new Directive 2003/99/EC of the European Parliament and Council. She invited the panel to discuss the role of the BIOHAZ panel in this exercise and in particular to reflect the panel's needs for data from this system. Many questions were raised as to how EFSA would collect the data from Member States (access to national or private laboratories), whether WHO's data collection system for foodborne Disease would be consulted, how methodology and reporting in the different countries would be harmonised regarding reliability of data and confidentiality, how the integration of human data coming from the Communicable Disease Networks with EU data would be performed and how EFSA can provide guidelines for the harmonisation of reporting system.

The text version of P. Makela's slides will be distributed.

## **6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING OPINIONS**

### **6.a Revision of meat inspection for lambs and goats**

The draft document was distributed and briefly introduced. A glossary is now included on definitions of terminology in particular a special emphasis is now given to the description of an "integrated system", an "assembly or regulatory centre" and for a "lot". Animal health will be stressed in the report. Several comments from Panel members were collected and will be included in the document. It was agreed to circulate the document with the new amendments before publication. The opinion was adopted.

### **6.b. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the scientific justification for proposing amendments to the United Kingdom Date Based Export Scheme**

### **6.c. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the application of the United Kingdom for moderate risk BSE status**

Working Group reports and the opinions for both 6b and 6c were presented and after a short discussion and some suggested changes they were adopted.

### **6.d. A request for an opinion on BSE related culling in cattle**

The Working group assessment and the opinion for this mandate were presented and after a short discussion and some suggested changes the opinion was adopted.

### **6.e. Opinion on Combustion of tallow in a thermal boiler process for safe disposal of Animal By-Products of category 1.**

The Working group assessment and the opinion for this mandate were presented and after a short discussion and some suggested changes the opinion was adopted.

## **7. PROGRESS REPORTS**

### **7.a Antimicrobials to control *Salmonella***

The Chairman of the working group briefed the panel on the progress made electronically on the draft document as there were no WG meetings since the last plenary. The draft document will include an introduction on poultry, prevalence of *Salmonella* and use of antimicrobials as opposed to alternative methods to control *Salmonella* in poultry. The development of antimicrobial resistance will also be discussed. The working group proposes to submit a draft for discussion at the June plenary meeting.

### **7.b Vaccines to control *Salmonella***

The chair/rapporteur briefly presented the progress made on the draft document. The introduction on *Salmonella* would be similar to that of "Antimicrobials to control *Salmonella*", above. Basically the draft will include: bacteriological and serological detection methods, scientific basis for vaccination and the advantages and disadvantages of vaccination, especially in their possible use in control programmes.

The chair/rapporteur briefly presented the progress made on the draft document. The introduction on *Salmonella* would be similar to that of "Antimicrobials to control *Salmonella*", above. Basically the draft will include: bacteriological and serological detection methods, scientific basis for vaccination and the advantages and disadvantages of vaccination. The working group will meet again in May. A first draft document will be presented for discussion at the BIOHAZ plenary meeting in June.

### **7.c *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs**

Since the last WG meeting in December 2003, considerable progress has been done. The next WG meeting is scheduled for the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The rapporteur presented a description of the different chapters of the draft, which will include: an introduction, the organism, methodology, human disease, monitoring and control for different foodstuffs. Pending the approval by the Codex Alimentarius Commission this summer, the Codex definitions will be used. A first draft document will be tabled for discussion at the plenary meeting in July.

### **7.d Microbiological risks in infant foods**

An outline of the progress was reported: methods of detection, identification, hazard characterization and the risks from different production systems. A chapter is needed on the control measures and microbiological criteria. The draft will take into account several microorganisms of risk but it will mainly focus on *Enterobacter sakazakii*. Next meeting is scheduled for the end of May.

### **7.e/f *Bacillus* and *Clostridium* in foodstuffs**

The second working group meeting took place the week before the Plenary. This was a joint *Bacillus/Clostridium* meeting since the terms of reference are the same. However, it will be decided in the future whether or not to hold separate meetings. The working group invited two new experts to help in drafting the *Bacillus* opinion. The Chairman for the *Bacillus* group

presented the plan of the report: introduction, *Bacillus cereus*, changes in taxonomy, the different kinds of disease and taxonomy, ecology- reservoirs, identification of foodstuffs and storage conditions. The Chairman for the *Clostridium* working group briefly presented the framework of the draft which will be similar to the *Bacillus* draft. The different species, disease and toxins will be elaborated. The draft document is expected to be tabled for discussion at the October plenary meeting.

#### **7.g Revision of meat inspection for Beef**

The Panel was briefed on the outcome of the first meeting. The opinion is being considered as forming part of the series of opinions on revision of meat inspection. Next meeting is scheduled in May. There is no draft available as yet but the approach to the question has been identified. Basically the pathology issues in beef are more complex than in calves. BSE and Tuberculosis information from previous opinions will be included. It is important to identify the public health and food safety aspects of these inspections.

For requests 7.h, 7.i, and 7.j the working groups are in the process of constitution and there have been no meetings before the plenary.

#### **7.k. Chronic Wasting Disease**

The last Working Group meetings were held on 20 February and on 20 April 2004. Good progress was made with the report; additional data and input from companies involved in TSE testing were received and evaluated. Next meeting is scheduled for 10 May. Possible adoption is foreseen at the plenary meeting in June 2004.

#### **7.l. Quantitative Assessment of the residual BSE risk**

The Chairman of the working group briefed the panel on the follow up on the report containing the assumptions for the risk calculations. This report will now be forwarded to the COM services which will further request Det Norske Veritas (DNV) to complete the calculations. After finalization, both parts combined will form the basis for an update of a number of SSC opinions on safety (in terms of residual BSE risk) of tallow, gelatine and di- and tri-calcium phosphate. This review is likely to start after the summer.

#### **7.m. Animal By-products**

Safety vis-à-vis biological risk including TSE's of biogas and compost treatment standards of Animal By-Products.

This mandate was deferred to a future meeting. Additional clarifications from DG Sanco are awaited which will form the basis for a renewed mandate.

#### **7.n. Working Group Stunning and the risk for dissemination of nervous tissues in the blood and BSE risk.**

A Working group for this mandate was created and will meet for the first time on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2004.

## **8. NEW REQUESTS TO EFSA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORKING GROUPS**

### **8.1 Request for a scientific opinion concerning a risk assessment for Rift Valley fever**

EFSA is asked to assess the risk of introduction of RFV into the enlarged EU by vectors, animals and animal products, the risk of virus persistence in the EU considering vectors, climatic situation and livestock production in Member States, the relevance of the current recommendations of OIE and FAO for Member States at risk and assessment of the risk for humans in the Member States during a possible outbreak.

The terms of reference were discussed and it was agreed by EFSA that they mainly referred to Animal Health issues with minor implications on food related Public Health. It was agreed to suggest an expert from the Biological Hazards Panel as a member of the WG to be organised by the Secretariat of the Animal Health -Animal Welfare Panel.

### **8.2 Request for a scientific opinion on the washing of table eggs**

EFSA is asked to deliver an opinion on the washing of eggs by December 2005. The question focuses mainly on the advantages and disadvantages of the washing of table eggs from a microbiological safety point of view and to evaluate possible options to reduce the risk for consumers associated with this practice.

The terms of reference were discussed and it was agreed to ask Commission for some clarification.

The Chair of the working group was appointed. Suggestions for membership were received and the secretariat will contact the suggested members to set a date for a first meeting in Brussels.

### **8.3 Request for a scientific opinion on a process for safe disposal of Animal By-products.**

The Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards is asked to deliver an opinion on mandate by the Commission in relation to the re-assessment of the ability of the “Biodiesel Process” to safely dispose of Category 1 animal by-products. If the process is considered to present a risk, the Commission asks EFSA to advice on the risks of the use of that process and on possibilities for addressing them. A working group was created and an opinion is likely to be adopted at the next plenary meeting (June 2004).

## **9. SELF-TASKING ISSUES, DISCUSSION OF SUGGESTED TOPICS**

Discussion took place on a draft paper on “Data needs for microbial risk assessments and epidemiology” submitted by a Panel member. Discussion centred on the kinds of data needed before proceeding for a quantitative microbial risk assessment (QMRA). Some discussion also focused on how to use the data from the zoonoses report in QMRA, it was suggested to include antimicrobial resistance as a topic on the paper. It was agreed to work electronically in a small team in order to create a background document and prepare terms of references for further discussion in the next plenary.

## **10. INFORMATION ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT OF EFSA ON DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The code of conduct of EFSA was distributed for information. The paper is intended to give guidance in relation to several points relating to direct or indirect interests and the necessity to declare them in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Following discussion it was agreed to ask for clarification to the legal services on some issues.

## **11. FEED-BACK BY THE CHAIRMAN ON SUBJECTS DISCUSSED IN THE SC OF INTEREST TO THE PANEL**

The chair gave some feedback on items of interest and discussed during the 6<sup>th</sup> plenary of the Scientific committee : [http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sc\\_commitee/sc\\_meetings/244\\_en.html](http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sc_commitee/sc_meetings/244_en.html)

## **12. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ON EMERGING RISKS (EMRISK) WG OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

The Chair requested the Panel to identify the 6 most important emerging risks (e.g. emerging exposures, emerging hazards) for the attention of the Panel, in order to give some input to the WG on Emerging Risks of the SC. This information will constitute a basis of continued discussions in the EMRISK WG to define the kind of "emerging risk information" that would be relevant for the Authority.

After some discussion it was agreed that individuals will write a one page paper on a specific emerging risk to be discussed in the June meeting. Further discussion will take place in the next plenary in order to compile a list of microbiological emerging risks for consideration at a future EFSA workshop.

## **13. FEED-BACK FROM PANEL MEMBERS ATTENDING WG FROM OTHER PANELS**

The Panel member enrolled in the Animal Health and Animal Welfare Working Group on laying hens briefed the Panel on the issue. The final draft is intended to be presented to the AHAW panel for discussion by the end of June.

The former member of the WG on Exposure Assessment of the SC briefed the panel on a shift in the membership due to personal workload. A new member of the BIOHAZ panel was appointed to the WG. Next meeting is scheduled by beginning of May.

## **14. AOB**

Some comments on the EFSA web design were made relating to the fact that GBR and TSE reports were placed under BIOHAZ Panel when they are not under the responsibility of the Panel. The secretariat informed the panel that a new structure has now been established regarding the placement of those reports.

## **15. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

The meeting was closed at 15.30.