



Brussels, 23th November 2004

MINUTES OF THE 10th PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS

Held in Parma (Italy) on 20th and 21st of October 2004

AGENDA:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Official requests to EFSA.
 - 4.1. Presentation of new mandates received from the Commission
 - 4.2. Organization of Working Groups
5. Discussion and possible adoption of opinions
 - 5.1. Stunning of cattle and the risk of BSE
 - 5.2. Antimicrobials to control *Salmonella*
 - 5.3. Vaccines to control *Salmonella*
 - 5.4. Revision of meat inspection for beef
6. Progress reports and discussion on the following mandates:
 - 6.1. *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs
 - 6.2. *Bacillus* in foodstuffs
 - 6.3. *Clostridium* in foodstuffs
 - 6.4. Freezing of cold tolerant strains of *Trichinella* and *C. bovis*
 - 6.5. Risk assessment of *C. bovis*
 - 6.6. Risk Assessment of *Trichinella*
 - 6.7. Washing of table eggs
 - 6.8. Evaluation of proposal for a different processing method for the production of collagen.
 - 6.9. Request for advice on general approach of the CRL study (BSsurvE study) Wilesmith Model.
 - 6.10. BSE-Portugal.
 - 6.11. Stunning of cattle and the risk of BSE
 - 6.12. Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk
 - 6.13. Animal By-products
 - 6.14. Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.
 - 6.15. Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of heat treatment of manure
7. Feed-back by the Chairman on subjects discussed in the SC of interest to the Panel
8. Feed-back by the Panel members attending WG from other Panels
9. Discussion on self tasking issues
10. AOB
11. Closure of the meeting

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PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic, Pierre Colin, John D. Collins, Christian Ducrot, James Hope, Günter Klein, Hilde Kruse, Ernst Lücker, Simone Magnino, Riitta Liisa Maijala, Antonio Martínez López, Christophe Nguyen-The, Birgit Noerrung, Servé Notermans, George-John Nychas, Maurice Pensaert, Terence Roberts, Ivar Vågsholm, Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch and Mac Johnston.

Apologies

Ernst Lücker, Simone Magnino (21)

EFSA

Marta Hugas, Bart Goossens, Shamila Nair, (Scientific Staff)
Angela Cohen, Sylvia Volante, Martine Lartigue (Administrative staff)

Commission

DG Health and Consumer Protection: Taina Sateri, Joaquim Ordeig Villa (20 October).

1. WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everybody.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Prof Ernst Lücker. There were no additional declarations of Interest.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

4. OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA

4.1. Presentation of new mandates received from the Commission

- a. A new mandate was received by EFSA related to the Geographical BSE Risk Assessment. It was explained that the mandate is composed of 2 main parts:
 - A request to re-assess 6 countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and New Zealand) taking into account the new data on different other countries which were re-assessed and eventually re-classified. This part of the mandate is for the attention of the Expert GBR Workgroup only and will not be dealt with by the panel.
 - As a follow up on the methodology it was agreed earlier by the GBR working group that an update of the current methodology is needed taking account of the

shift from a European-based issue to a more global issue. As it is anticipated that the Commission will not request EFSA to prepare such an update, a mandate under a self-tasking was considered. This update of the GBR methodology, which will be carried out by an expert group including the members of the current GBR WG with an additional number of experts, will mainly focus on the weight of the various factors contributing to the GBR status rather than on introducing truly new parameters. Such an update will also support and contribute in a constructive way the ongoing discussions at the international level between OIE and EU related to a harmonisation of this risk assessment process for the appearance of BSE in a specified country and as such, EFSA remains further actively involved in these discussions. In terms of timing, it is anticipated that this exercise on the update of the previous SSC opinions will be presented for adoption by the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards earliest by half 2005.

- b. Request for an opinion of EFSA on the assessment of the lower age limit for the removal of certain SRM. In this mandate the EFSA is requested to:
 - i. Give technical advice on the relevance of an OIE consultation report prepared on the same issue.
 - ii. If found relevant, the EFSA is then requested to review the previous SSC opinions on the age limit for the removal of certain bovine tissues as specified risk material.
 - iii. The deadline for i) requested is as before the end of December 2004 whereas the requested deadline for ii) is March 2005.

- c. Request for a scientific opinion of EFSA on the safety of treatment of fishery products with the “clearsmoke process”.

In this mandate EFSA is requested to assess the health risk to the consumer from the consumption of fishery products treated with the “clearsmoke process” with particular attention to the capacity of the treatment to slow down the growth of spoilage bacteria.

It was suggested that the issue was more in the remit of the AFC Panel as the process of the product would include aspects of chemical safety as well. It was suggested that the issue should be discussed with the AFC secretariat. The members of the Panel offered to contribute to the opinion, with the lead of the AFC Panel.

4.2. Organisation of WG

- a. A working group for the update of the methodology was set up involving two panel members and also including the GBR Workgroup. Additional experts will be invited. It is anticipated that this group will undertake this task at the beginning of 2005.
- b. A Working group was set up under the chairmanship of a panel member to address the request for an opinion on the assessment of the age limit removal of certain SRM.

5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING MANDATES

5.1. BSE related risk following stunning of cattle.

The Chairman/Rapporteur of the working group presented the draft document to the panel. This document was discussed and after some modifications on the text, conclusions and recommendations, the report and opinion were adopted.

5.2. The use of antimicrobials to control *Salmonella* in poultry

The draft document, which had been discussed thoroughly at the last plenary meeting, was presented. The scientific comments received from the CVMP (Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use) of EMEA (**European Medicines Agency**) on the use of antimicrobials to control *Salmonella* in poultry were discussed thoroughly and commented upon, especially focusing on the conclusions and recommendations as well as in the summary. The opinion was adopted, with some editorial comments pending.

5.3. Revision of meat inspection for beef

The Chairman/Rapporteur of the working group presented the draft document to the panel for discussion. The plenary expressed several comments and contributions on the conclusions and recommendations of the draft. It was agreed to include these comments in a revised version which will be presented for formal adoption at the December plenary.

5.4. The use of vaccines to control *Salmonella* in poultry

The draft opinion was presented to the Panel. The scientific comments received from CVMP of EMEA were discussed. The Panel considered then, the conclusions and recommendations as well as the summary. The opinion was adopted, some editorial comments pending.

5.5. Welfare aspects of laying hens

While the question is being dealt with in the AHAW and the CONTAM Panel, the BIOHAZ Panel has been dealing with part of the Terms of Reference on its remit, especially on the microbiological safety of eggs produced using different laying systems. A BIOHAZ panel member involved in this working group briefed the members on the current draft report. The BIOHAZ Panel adopted an opinion on the part of the mandate dealing with the microbiological safety of eggs in respect of the different laying systems. The opinion will be published as a joint opinion with the AHAW Panel and the CONTAM Panel.

5.6. Freezing of cold tolerant strains of *Trichinella* and *C. bovis*

The working group had their meeting in Parma on the 19th of October. The Rapporteur presented the progress made on the draft opinion. Time, temperature combinations for the different *Trichinella* species and host species will now be considered. There is a paucity of information on the cold resistant strains of *C. bovis*. The rapporteur outlined the progress now made to-date. The draft opinion will be presented at the December Plenary meeting for discussion and possible adoption.

6. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING MANDATES:

6.1. *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs

The Rapporteur of the working group described the progress made on the opinion and went through the different chapters of the draft document. Concerns were raised on the size of the draft document, and it was generally agreed that the WG should try to shorten the report without losing essential information. Members of the panel will send their comments on the draft document back to the Rapporteur. The setting of microbiological criteria along the food chain, implementing food hygiene practice, milk products, pasteurization and heat treatment were discussed in light of the Terms of Reference. A revised draft opinion will be presented at the December plenary for discussion and adoption is foreseen in January.

6.2. *Bacillus* in foodstuffs

The Chairman of the working group briefed the panel on the progress made in the draft document. The new Table of Contents will be reorganised so that the draft document is harmonious with that of the Opinion relating to *Clostridium*. Discussions centred on the testing of raw materials and the widespread occurrence of *Bacillus* spores which appear to be common in food. A revised draft opinion for information and discussion will be presented at the December plenary.

6.3. *Clostridium* in foodstuffs

The Chairman described the progress made on the draft document. With respect to *Clostridium* in foodstuffs and the Terms of Reference, “home preservation”, predictive modelling, temperature and shelf life of products were discussed. A revised draft opinion including rearrangements of the contents suggested by the plenary will be tabled for information and discussion at the December plenary.

6.4. Inspection of slaughter animal in areas with low prevalence of *C. bovis* in veal calves

The working group had a meeting on the 12th of October. The Chairman briefed the plenary on the progress made. The draft opinion will be tabled for discussion at the December Plenary meeting.

6.5. Inspection of slaughter animal in areas with low prevalence of *Trichinella* in pigs

The Chairman presented the progress made in addressing the Terms of Reference and the draft document. Discussions revolved around the costs of testing and analysis, and the associated safe guards to ensure an adequate level of service is maintained. A new WG meeting is scheduled for mid December. The draft opinion will be tabled for discussion at the December Plenary meeting.

6.6. Quantitative risk assessment related to residual BSE risk in certain animal derived products.

The document on the assumptions made together with the document containing the calculations as prepared by DNV were presented by the chairman of the WG as a merged

document. This report is the basis for the update of the opinions as presented in the COM mandate. This includes a request to update the opinions on tallow, gelatine, di- and tri-calcium phosphate, removal of vertebral column, meat and bone meal (MBM). The following points were discussed:

- Formal adoption and publication of this background document will proceed after the opinions have been updated in order to allow the inclusion of any agreed changes to this document made during the updates.
- The mandate as received by COM requests an update of the opinions in terms of a shift from **an estimation of the risk to a quantification of the risk** related to the bovine derived products. The five separate updates of opinions relate to the following (in order of priority) :
 - **Tallow** obtained from ruminant slaughter by-products (SSC June and September 2001)
 - **Gelatine** from ruminant bones or hides (SSC March 2003).
 - **Di and tri calcium phosphate** from bovine bones used as animal feed additive or as fertiliser. (SSC submitted March 2003).
 - Human BSE risk posed by **bovine vertebral column** including the dorsal root ganglia. (SSC May 2002)
 - **Mammalian derived meat and bone meal** forming a cross-contamination of animal feedstuffs. (SSC September 1998).

6.7. **Evaluation of the BSE situation in Portugal (mandate from France).**

An update of the progress report was presented by the Chairman of the WG. Comments on the draft report as received by the different members, including the Portuguese Veterinary Services were discussed. An additional working group meeting is foreseen for 5 November and it is planned to bring the draft opinion to the plenary meeting of the Biological Hazards panel in December 2004.

6.8. **Animal By-products**

- Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.

The Chairman of the WG briefed the panel about the progress of questions currently being dealt with by the ABP working group. At the last meeting on August 16, 2004, the general outline structure (*viz.* process, hazard identification, process validation, conclusions) of the reports, as well as rapporteurs and time schedule, were agreed. Further meetings are foreseen on 25 October 2004 and 7 January 2005.

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

The Chairman reported on the last meeting of the Scientific Committee. Discussions included the future of EFSA in Parma, the Advisory forum event and the Stakeholder meeting to be held in Berlin.

8. FEED-BACK BY PANEL MEMBERS ATTENDING WORKING GROUPS OF OTHER PANELS

8.1. Avian influenza

The BIOHAZ panel member involved in this working group briefed the members on the progress made with the current draft report.

8.2. Rift Valley Fever

The BIOHAZ panel member involved in this working group briefed the members on the progress made with the current draft report.

8.3. Exposure Assessment

The BIOHAZ panel member involved in this working group briefed the members on the progress made to-date with the current draft report.

9. DISCUSSION ON SELF TASKING ISSUES

Discussion was postponed to the next plenary.

10. INFORMATION ON EFSA EVALUATION

A document from the EFSA Management Board (MB Doc 14.09.2004 – 5) on Evaluation of EFSA – Article 61 of Regulation 178/2002 was distributed for information to the plenary.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The members of the plenary expressed their interest in receiving information from the European Commission on actions taken after the adoption of opinions as part of the Risk Assessment process.

12. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The meeting was closed at 14.30.