



**MINUTES OF THE 24TH PLENARY MEETING OF
THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS
HELD IN PARMA ON 21 AND 22 JUNE 2006**

AGENDA:

- 1 Welcome and apologies for absence
- 2 Presentation of EFSA and general information
 - 2.1 General introduction on EFSA
 - 2.2 Introduction for the scientific work in EFSA
 - 2.3 Legal aspects: Declaration of confidentiality, commitment of independence and declaration of interests
 - 2.4 Financial aspects: Expert compensation guide
 - 2.5 Communication strategy
 - 2.6 Institutional and international relations
 - 2.7 Presentation on EFSAnet
- 3 Adoption of the scientific agenda
- 4 Introduction of Panel members and secretariat staff
- 5 Election of chair and vice chairs
- 6 Meeting dates 2006
- 7 The BIOHAZ Panel: mandate and work programme
 - 7.1 Overview on food hygiene, foodborne zoonoses and food microbiology
 - 7.2 Overview on BSE and waste management
 - 7.3 Follow up on legislation
- 8 New official requests to EFSA: organization of working groups
- 9 Progress reports and discussion on the following mandates
 - 9.1 Opinion on the cattle SRM related back-calculations
 - 9.2 Review of the GBR methodology
 - 9.3 Breeding for TSE resistance in small ruminants
 - 9.4 Review of the Community summary zoonoses report
 - 9.5 ABP: Progress on process applications received
 - 9.6 Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk in sheep
 - 9.7 Joint AFC/BIOHAZ guidance document on the submission of data for the evaluation of the safety and the efficacy of substances intended to be used to decontaminate the surface of foods of animal origin
 - 9.8 Microbiological testing, criteria and other objectives
- 10 Appointment of Panel members to attend WG from other Panels
- 11 AOB
- 12 Closure of the meeting

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Olivier Andreoletti, Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic, Pierre Colin, John D Collins, Aline De Koeijer, John Griffin, Arie Havelaar, Günter Klein, Hilde Kruse, Simone Magnino, Antonio Martínez López, Christophe Nguyen-The, Karsten Noeckler, Birgit Noerrung, Miguel Prieto Maradona, Terence Roberts, Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch

EFSA:

Marta Hugas, Fulvio Barizzone, Paolo Calistri, Wolfgang Gelbmann (am 21 June), Bart Goossens, Tobin Robinson, Eirini Tsigarida (Scientific Staff); Angela Cohen, Cristiana Ventura (Administrative staff).

European Commission:

DG Health and Consumer Protection: Taina Sateri (telephone conference from item 7 onwards).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Dr. Herman Koëter (acting as Executive Director) welcomed the participants and presented a general introduction on the mission of EFSA. Up until the appointment of the Chair under item 5, the meeting was chaired by Dr Marta Hugas, Scientific Co-ordinator of the Panel. The participants were welcomed to the inaugural Plenary meeting under the second mandate¹ of the Biological Hazards Panel. Apologies were received from James Hope, James McLaughlin and Ivar Vågsholm.

2. PRESENTATION OF EFSA AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The different EFSA departments presented to the Panel members the various general EFSA activities:

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|--|--------------------|
| - Introduction of the scientific work | Djien Liem |
| - Legal aspects including declarations of interest | Dirk Detken |
| - Financial aspects | François Monnard |
| - Communication strategy | Anne-Laure Gassin |
| - Institutional and international relations | Christine Majewski |

2.1. PRESENTATION ON EFSANET

An electronic document management system will soon be available for BIOHAZ Panel members and EFSA staff to facilitate the exchange of working documents.

¹ The duration of the second mandate of the BIOHAZ Panel runs three years from this inaugural meeting of June 2006.

3. ADOPTION OF THE SCIENTIFIC AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

4. INTRODUCTION OF PANEL MEMBERS AND SECRETARIAT STAFF

The Panel members² and EFSA staff³ introduced themselves.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIRS

The procedures for the election of the Chairs and two Vice-chairs were explained to the Panel⁴. The Panel chose to select the Chairman through a show of hands rather than by ballot. Prof Collins was unanimously re-elected Chair of the Panel on Biological Hazards. From this point, Prof Collins chaired the rest of the meeting. The Chair thanked the members for appointing him and continued the procedure for the election of the two Vice-chairs.

Five members agreed to be considered in the election of the Vice-chairs. Votes were cast and one member had one third of the votes, and two members shared joint second place. Two further rounds were therefore necessary to establish the appointment of the two Vice-chairs. Dr Birgit Noerrung and Prof Herbert Budka were voted as Vice-chairs of the Panel on Biological Hazards.

6. MEETING DATES 2006

The following Plenary dates were set:

12-13 July 2006

6-7 September 2006

8-9 November 2006 (NB changed from provisional date of 25-26 October)

13-14 December 2006

7. THE BIOHAZ PANEL: MANDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME

The mandate of the Panel is to deal with questions on biological hazards relating to food safety and food-borne disease, including food-borne zoonoses and transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, microbiology, food hygiene and associated waste management.^{4, 5}

² www.efsa.europa.eu/science/biohaz/biohaz_members/catindex_en.html

³ www.efsa.europa.eu/about_efsa/structure/catindex_en.html

⁴ www.efsa.europa.eu/mboard/statutory_texts/internal_rules/409/decision_panels_mb_04_en11.pdf

⁵ Article 18 EC MB 17.10.2002 – 3 adopted, Scientific Committee and Panels Internal Rules

7.1. OVERVIEW ON FOOD HYGIENE, FOODBORNE ZOOSES AND FOOD MICROBIOLOGY

The general approach to the process of developing an opinion was explained. An overview of the work to date on food-borne zoonoses, food microbiology and food hygiene in the remit of the Panel was presented.

7.2. OVERVIEW ON BSE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

A presentation was made summarising the unfolding of TSE events from its emergence in 1986 to the risk reduction measures taken and the current situation. A synopsis was given of the mandates received on TSE and waste management to-date.

7.3. FOLLOW UP ON LEGISLATION

A summary was prepared by the EC listing the legal steps taken and the new legislation adopted following the publication of BIOHAZ opinions.

8. NEW OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA: ORGANIZATION OF WORKING GROUPS

There were no new mandates received by EFSA.

9. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING MANDATES

Items 9.1 - 9.8 constitute WG which were formed under the first mandate of the Panel. As this was the inaugural meeting of the new Panel under the second mandate, the Chair requested under each of the items 9.1 - 9.8 that the participants indicate if they agreed with the re-appointment of the WG members, if they objected to the membership of any expert in a WG and to indicate if they wished to join the WG. All of the WG members were re-appointed and those new Panel members who asked to join a WG were so appointed. The Chair or Rapporteur of each of the WG gave a summary of the background of the related mandate and a status report of the work of the WG to date.

9.1. OPINION ON THE CATTLE SRM RELATED BACK-CALCULATIONS

New data is under examination by the WG in order to perform the back calculations, and furthermore, countries with detailed surveillance from past years had been invited to provide the data to perform the back calculation. EFSA therefore requested an extension to the EC's deadline. The EC had extended the deadline to the end of December 2006.

9.2. REVIEW OF THE GBR METHODOLOGY

A short background on GBR⁶ was given for the benefit of the new members. The original methodology had proven to be an effective gauge and had provided an accurate prediction, in particular for European countries. EFSA launched a self-tasking mandate to provide an update of the GBR methodology which would consider the new data available, such as surveillance data, new tools (e.g. BSurvE model⁷), the epidemiology of the recent years, and the current situation outside the EU, such as in America and Africa. The update of the methodology also enables improvement in terms of transparency.

The work on updating the GBR methodology began in June 2005 and is ongoing. It is aimed to finalise the new methodology by the end of 2006. The opinion will be put for public consultation before finalisation. The last meeting was held on 12-13 June and major progress was made to simplify the methodology so as to make it more transparent for the assessed countries. The next meeting will be held on 18-19 July. Another meeting is scheduled for 5 October.

9.3. BREEDING FOR TSE RESISTANCE IN SMALL RUMINANTS

The draft opinion was reviewed by the Panel members. Some comments were made and the document is expected to be ready for possible adoption at the July Plenary. The next WG meeting will be held on 30 June.

Both the WG on Breeding for TSE resistance in small ruminants and the WG on Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) for Residual BSE risk in sheep (see item 9.6) are using a certain amount of common data.

9.4. REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SUMMARY ZOOSES REPORT

The Chair of the WG described the background to the draft Review to the new members of the Panel. This included the origin of the Community Summary Report, the mandate given jointly to AHAW and BIOHAZ to review the results presented in the aforementioned report, and the format of the final document - a joint Opinion including a suitable summary. The approach used to deal with the BIOHAZ part of the mandate was taken on board by the AHAW⁸ WG who will use the same approach. The two WG had liaised on the overlapping sections of the document.

The Panel reviewed BIOHAZ's draft document in detail and made some suggestions for inclusion in the next draft. According to the mandate received BIOHAZ will address the following issues *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria*

⁶ GBR: Geographical BSE Risk - www.efsa.europa.eu/science/tse_assessments/catindex_en.html

⁷ www.efsa.europa.eu/science/tse_assessments/bse_tse/661_en.html

⁸ AHAW: Panel on animal health and welfare

monocytogenes, VTEC *E.coli*, *Yersinia*, *Trichinella*, *Echinococcus*, *Toxoplasma*, *Cysticercus*, antimicrobial resistance and food-borne outbreaks, while AHAW will address rabies, tuberculosis due to *Mycobacterium bovis* and brucellosis. Draft documents will be exchanged between the two Panels in order to share comments on each others parts. It is foreseen that the BIOHAZ sections could be adopted at the July BIOHAZ Plenary, and AHAW could adopt their section by written procedure, as the next AHAW Plenary is in September.

9.5. ABP: PROGRESS ON PROCESS APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

The WG met on 20 June and is currently working on two mandates. With respect to the mandate on the lime process for Category 2 animal by-products (ABP), the EC agreed to postpone the deadline for the opinion as the applicant did not provide all the data required for a thorough evaluation. The next WG meeting will be held on 13 July.

The Chair of the WG presented the draft opinion on the safety of a thermo-mechanical process to convert category 2 and 3 animal by-products (ABP) in bio-fuel. The draft will be further developed for possible adoption at the July Plenary.

9.6. QUANTITATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR RESIDUAL BSE RISK IN SHEEP

Data is being collected by the WG. The opinion is scheduled to be ready for adoption by the end of 2006.

9.7. JOINT AFC/BIOHAZ GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ON THE SUBMISSION OF DATA FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE SAFETY AND THE EFFICACY OF SUBSTANCES INTENDED TO BE USED TO DECONTAMINATE THE SURFACE OF FOODS OF ANIMAL ORIGIN

The public consultation⁹ was closed on 26 May. The BIOHAZ *ad hoc* WG on Decontaminating Treatments will meet on 10-11 July and will also be attended by two members of the AFC¹⁰ Standing WG on Food Additives. Adoption of the guidance document is foreseen in July.

9.8. MICROBIOLOGICAL TESTING, CRITERIA AND OTHER OBJECTIVES

The public consultation¹¹ was closed on 7 June. Many comments were received which need to be considered before the production of the final document. The WG will have a further meeting to review issues arising from the public consultation.

⁹ www.efsa.europa.eu/science/biohaz/biohaz_consultations/1429_en.html

¹⁰ AFC: Panel on food additives, flavourings, processing aids and materials in contact with food.

¹¹ www.efsa.europa.eu/science/biohaz/biohaz_consultations/1427_en.html

10. APPOINTMENT OF PANEL MEMBERS TO ATTEND WG FROM OTHER PANELS

10.1. QUALIFIED PRESUMPTION OF SAFETY (QPS)

The BIOHAZ Panel member attending the WG of the SC reported back to the BIOHAZ Panel. More work was necessary for the sub-WG on yeasts and moulds. The work of the *Bacillus* WG was almost complete.

10.2. BOTANICALS AND BOTANICAL PREPARATIONS

There was nothing further to report.

11. AOB

11.1. SELF-TASKING ISSUES

The following potential areas concerning self-tasking will be discussed at the July Plenary:

- Identification of self-tasking items
- Antimicrobial resistance
- Avian Influenza - monitoring the situation with respect to food safety

11.2. PANEL ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair of the Panel emphasised the importance of the allocation of time to discuss self-tasking items. In practical terms, this means that the members of the Panel should ensure that they can attend the full duration of the Plenary meetings i.e. from 9.00-17.00 or 18.00 on day one and from 08.00-15.00 on day two of the Plenary.

It was agreed that the members would keep 9-13 October free to attend new WG meetings to be organized after receiving new mandates on food microbiology and food-borne zoonoses.

12. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The meeting ended at 14.30.