



Brussels, 27 February 2004  
EFSA/CONTAM/100 Rev.1

## **MINUTES OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN (CONTAM) HELD ON 3 AND 4 FEBRUARY 2004 IN BRUSSELS**

(adopted by written procedure on 27 February 2004)

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### **PARTICIPANTS**

#### *Panel Members:*

Jan Alexander, Denis Bard, Christina Bergsten, Angelo Carere, Lucio Guido Costa, Jean-Pierre Cravedi, Alessandro di Domenico, Roberto Fanelli, Johanna Fink-Gremmels, John Gilbert, Philippe Grandjean, Niklas Johansson, Agneta Oskarsson, Andrew Renwick<sup>1</sup>, Jirí Ruprich, Josef Schlatter (Chair), Greet Schoeters, Dieter Schrenk, Philippe Verger (Vice-Chair)<sup>1</sup>

#### *Ad hoc expert:*

Bruce Cottrill<sup>2</sup>

#### *EFSA*

Claudia Heppner (Scientific Co-ordination CONTAM Panel), Djien Liem (Scientific Co-ordination Scientific Committee), Tlaitmass Bounou (Administrative Secretariat CONTAM Panel)

#### *European Commission*

Barbara Gallani (DG Health and Consumer Protection), Taina Säteri (DG Health and Consumer Protection), Frans Verstraete (DG Health and Consumer Protection), Martin Slayne (DG Health and Consumer Protection)

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<sup>1</sup> Only present on 4 February 2004

<sup>2</sup> Only present on 3 February 2003

## **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The chair of the Panel opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. Apologies for absence were received from Herman Autrup and Rolaf van Leeuwen (Vice-Chair) and from the European Commission Achim Boenke (DG Research).

## **2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The proposed agenda was adopted.

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following members declared an interest for agenda item 10, methylmercury in food:

Philippe Grandjean, who is one of the authors of the Faroe Island study. This is one of the two pivotal studies on which the FAO/WHO Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) based its methylmercury evaluation.

Andrew Renwick, who was WHO Temporary Adviser for FAO/WHO JECFA and assisted with its discussion of the kinetic issues and uncertainties in the evaluation on methylmercury.

Josef Schlatter, who was a member of JECFA, co-ordinated the Committee's discussion on methylmercury during the sixty-first meeting of JECFA, and was co-author of the evaluation of methylmercury.

Philippe Verger, who was member of JECFA and participated in the discussions on methylmercury.

The Panel agreed that the above mentioned members can fully participate in the discussions and on mercury and methylmercury in food (agenda item 10).

## **4. FEEDBACK FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

The chair updated the members of the CONTAM Panel on the last meeting of the Scientific Committee held on 15 January 2004. Details can be found in the minutes (EFSA/SC/42)<sup>3</sup> from the Scientific Committee (SC).

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sci\\_committee/sci\\_meetings/144/minutes\\_sci\\_05\\_adopted\\_en1.pdf](http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sci_committee/sci_meetings/144/minutes_sci_05_adopted_en1.pdf)

## 5. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM EFSA

The scientific co-ordinator of the CONTAM Panel informed the members of the Panel on following items: move to Parma, feedback from the Management Board meetings (3 December 2003 and 20 January 2004), recruitment for the CONTAM panel and EFSA's strategy related to an article on contaminants in farmed salmon which was recently published in Science<sup>4</sup>.

Although the Science article provided extensive information on levels of organic contaminants in salmon, the Panel's view was that this article did not provide new scientific evidence and that the approach used to assess the risks of farmed salmon was considered inadequate. The Panel noted that the dioxin levels in salmon as presented in the article were below the current EU maximum limits.

## 6. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION

The Service within the Commission responsible for legislation informed the Panel on the ongoing discussions for setting maximum levels for Ochratoxin A (OTA) in coffee, wine, beer, spices and cacao with the Member States. A European research project is ongoing to elucidate the mechanisms involved in OTA carcinogenicity. It is expected that this study will be finalised by the end of 2004 and the EFSA will then be requested by the Commission to update the scientific opinion from the SCF in the light of these new research results. Besides the already existing maximum level for OTA in cereals and cereal products and dried vine fruit, the setting of a maximum limit for OTA in roasted coffee, wine and grape juice is currently under discussion. The appropriateness of setting a maximum level for OTA in dried fruit other than dried vine fruit, green coffee, cocoa and cocoa products, spices, some meat products as well a review of the existing maximum levels will be considered after the EFSA assessment of the research results on OTA toxicology. Furthermore, the Panel was informed about the ongoing discussions on the *Fusarium*-toxins: Type-A trichothecenes (such as, T-2 and HT-2 toxin), Type B trichothecenes (such as deoxynivalenol, nivalenol), as well as zearalenone and fumonisins.

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<sup>4</sup> Hites, R. A., Foran, J. A., Carpenter, D. O., Hamilton, M. C., Knuth, B. A., Schwager, S. J. 2004. Global Assessment of Organic Contaminants in Farmed Salmon. *Science*. 303, 226-229.

## **7. WORK PROGRAMME**

### **7.1 Official requests to EFSA received from the European Commission**

The scientific co-ordinator informed the Panel that for the 5<sup>th</sup> CONTAM plenary meeting no requests which fall within the mandate of the Panel were received by EFSA.

### **7.2 Potential self tasking perfluorooctane sulfonates (PFOS)**

The Panel discussed a revised proposal of a mandate for self tasking related to PFOS, which was prepared by two Panel members. The members had some minor comments on this document and it was agreed to adopt the final draft mandate by written procedure.

### **7.3 Update on undesirable substances in animal feed**

The chair of the WG on undesirable substances in animal feed (USAF) informed the Panel that the two WG sections on heavy metals and mycotoxins have met a second time in December 2003. It was pointed out that the access to sufficient occurrence data is the bottle neck in terms of meeting the deadlines for the requests. Recently, the Member States have been asked for more data, but it should be kept in mind that this was a special request. The opinions for the heavy metals are in a quite advanced stage, but it will not be possible to meet the original proposed deadlines. However, it seems feasible to have these opinions finalized by June 2004 at the latest. The Service within the Commission responsible for legislation acknowledged that it is desirable to wait for a complete risk assessment rather than having a non-complete risk assessment which meets the deadline.

Sufficient exposure data are also missing for the third group of USAF, the persistent organic pollutants (POP). The deadline of June 2004 which was set for toxaphene, endosulfan, and gamma-HCH can also not be achieved. An article by Hites et al. (2004)<sup>4</sup> showed that toxaphene is exceeding the levels which are currently set for fish feed. Hence, a risk assessment for this substance is of high priority if Member States confirm these findings at their next meeting. Therefore, it was agreed that several members of the Panel will start with drafting the toxicological part of the risk assessment. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the creation of the third section (POP) of the WG on USAF is of high priority. The Panel members were invited to propose names for feed experts in the POP area to the Secretariat.

#### **7.4 Update on non-dioxin like PCB**

The scientific co-ordinator informed the Panel on the outcome of the second meeting of the WG held in December 2003. EFSA was successful in establishing a contract for a background document on non-cancer health effects of non-dioxin-like PCB (NDL-PCB) in animals. A first draft of this report should be available in February 2004. This document will be discussed at the next meeting (March 2004) of the WG on NDL-PCB. Furthermore, the WG discussed various draft papers on metabolism and kinetics, carcinogenicity, molecular mechanistic endpoints, and human data based on information which is available in the ATSDR database. For the next WG meeting it is planned to extent these papers, as well as to get an update from the exposure group who had a separate meeting in January 2004.

#### **7.5 Update on organotin compounds**

The chair of the WG organotin compounds (ORGT) explained that the exposure chapter of the draft opinion went through major changes and the statistical evaluation of raw occurrence data from the SCOOP report needed more time than anticipated. Hence, the organotin opinion could not be presented to this plenary meeting. The WG will have their last meeting in February to finalize the risk assessment. At this meeting the main focus will be to discuss the exposure section, the establishment of a group-TDI and the exposure to organotins through food contact material. The members of the Panel will receive the final draft risk assessment 4-5 weeks before the next plenary to allow sufficient time for possible comments to be verified and integrated into the draft opinion before the next plenary meeting in order to ensure a possible adoption of this opinion at the next plenary meeting (April 2004).

### **8. UNDESIRABLE SUBSTANCES IN ANIMAL FEED – CADMIUM. DRAFT OPINION**

The chair of the WG on USAF-MT introduced the final draft opinion and an ad-hoc expert explained the occurrence data and the exposure assessment. The members of the Panel agreed on the general template and form of the opinion, to be used also for all other pending opinions on heavy metals. The Panel acknowledged the big effort of the WG, but as too many comments and changes were proposed it was not possible to adopt this opinion at the present meeting.

### **9. UNDESIRABLE SUBSTANCES IN ANIMAL FEED – AFLATOXIN B1. DRAFT OPINION**

The chair of the WG on USAF-MT introduced the final draft opinion on aflatoxin B1. The members of the Panel adopted this opinion subject to minor editorial changes.

**10. MERCURY AND METHYLMERCURY IN FOOD. DRAFT OPINION.**

Two member of the WG introduced the final draft opinion on mercury and methylmercury in food. The members of the Panel discussed and revised this risk assessment in detail. Because of time constraints it was not possible to finalize the opinion and propose it for adoption at the present meeting. The Panel agreed that once the outstanding revisions on the exposure part are completed to distribute the opinion to the members and ask for adoption by written procedure.

**11. PRESENTATION: DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

This agenda item was deferred to the next meeting.

**12. REPORT ON THE EFSA WORKSHOP ON ACRYLAMIDE FORMATION IN FOOD**

Due to time constraints it was not possible to discuss the November 2003 EFSA final workshop report on acrylamide formation in food. Members of the Panel were invited to submit their comments to the Secretariat within the next week (20 February 2004).

**13. MEETING DATES 2004**

For the April plenary meeting it was discussed if a new date could be fixed as one of the Panel members had difficulties with this date. However, it was not possible to identify another date, and therefore it was agreed to keep the original date. Furthermore, the Panel considered organizing the September plenary meeting in Parma.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The chair of the Panel reminded the members to submit a list of on-line journals to the Secretariat.