



Brussels, 19 May 2005
EFSA/CONTAM/299

MINUTES OF THE 11TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN (CONTAM) HELD ON 18 TO 19 APRIL 2005 IN BRUSSELS

(ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE ON 17 MAY 2005)

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Jan Alexander, Herman Autrup, Denis Bard, Angelo Carere, Lucio Guido Costa¹, Jean-Pierre Cravedi, Alessandro di Domenico, Roberto Fanelli, Johanna Fink-Gremmels², John Gilbert, Philippe Grandjean, Niklas Johansson, Rolaf van Leeuwen (vice-chair), Andrew Renwick, Jirí Ruprich, Josef Schlatter (chair), Dieter Schrenk, Greet Schoeters, Agneta Oskarsson, Philippe Verger (vice-chair)

EFSA

Ulla Bertelsen (Assistant Scientific Co-ordinator CONTAM Panel), Tlaitmass Bounou (Administrative Secretary CONTAM Panel), Claudia Heppner (Scientific Co-ordinator CONTAM Panel)

European Commission

Almut Bitterhof (DG Health and Consumer Protection), Gudrun Gallhoff (DG Health and Consumer Protection)¹, Jean-Francois Roche (DG Health and Consumer Protection)¹, Martin Slayne (DG Health and Consumer Protection), Frans Verstraete (DG Health and Consumer Protection)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The chair of the Panel opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. No apologies for absence were received from the members of the CONTAM Panel and from the European Commission.

¹ Only present on 18 April 2005

² Only present on 19 April 2005

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The proposed agenda was adopted without modifications.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No specific interests were declared by the members of the CONTAM Panel.

4. MATTERS ARISING SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING

No matters have arisen since the previous meeting.

5. FEEDBACK FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (SC)

The chair updated the members of the CONTAM Panel on the 12th meeting of the SC held on 14 to 15 April 2005 in Brussels. Details can be found in the minutes (EFSA/SC/156) which will be published on the EFSA's web page in the near future.

Furthermore, the CONTAM Panel was informed of the following other items.

EFSA and the EFSA SC invite comments from interested parties on the draft opinion of the EFSA SC on "Harmonised Approach for Risk Assessment of Compounds which are both Genotoxic and Carcinogenic"³ until 30th of May 2005. Due to time restrictions this opinion was only briefly discussed by the CONTAM Panel. The Secretariat will summarise the discussions and Panel members are invited to add further comments to this draft until the 20th of May. After this deadline the Panel members still can submit individual comments directly via the EFSA web site.

The advisory forum has established an *ad hoc* working group on the input of national authorities into the work of its scientific committee, panels, and other expert group⁴. Within this context representatives of different bodies including the CONTAM Panel are required. One Panel member volunteered to participate in this working group (WG).

The SC will establish a new WG on the benchmark approach. The intention is to have a first meeting before the summer break. Panel members were invited to contact the CONTAM Secretariat in case they are interested to join this WG.

³ http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sc_committee/sc_consultations/882_en.html

⁴ http://www.efsa.eu.int/advisory_forum/adv_meetings/791/af_doc11_mswg_input_panels1.pdf

The Panel members expressed the wish to have more information about airports in the proximity of Parma, ways to reach Parma, accommodation possibilities and revised mission expenses and indemnities of Panel members when moving meetings from Brussels to Parma.

6. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM EFSA

The scientific co-ordinator informed the Panel on following items:

Management Board (MB)(Meeting (8-10 March)

- In light of the renewal of membership of the scientific Committee and scientific Panels in 2006 the MB approved to use the same selection criteria for candidates as in 2003. The MB also discussed ways how scientist in the new Member States could be encouraged to submit their candidature.
- Discussions on the establishment of a stakeholder consultative committee which will meet 2-4 times per year have taken place.

Advisory forum (7-8 April in Stockholm)

- Lots of interests were shown in the SC opinion on “Harmonised Approach for Risk Assessment of Compounds which are both Genotoxic and Carcinogenic”
- The members of the advisory forum confirmed to be the sole contact point for the exchange of data and information and to be the conduit for information to and from EFSA to the National Agencies, Authorities, Ministries in each Member State and vice versa.

Art. 36 Establishment of a network

Article 36 of the Regulation 178/2002⁵ relates to networking of organisations operating in the fields within the Authority’s mission. The aim of such networking is in particular to facilitate a scientific co-operation framework by the co-ordination of activities, the exchange of information, the development an implementation of joint projects, the exchange of expertise and best practices in the fields within the Authority’s mission. A letter to this topic will soon be sent out to the various representations in Brussels. EFSA will also give some more detailed information on the general criteria to help organisations to identify quickly if they are eligible.

Call for membership in CONTAM Panel

The restricted call for expression of interest for membership is now closed and over 100 applications were made. Evaluation of the applications is in process. It is planned to submit a shortlist of candidates to MB for approval by written procedure as their next meeting is not before mid June.

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http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexapi!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=EN&numdoc=32002R0178&model=guichett

Flights Brussels – Parma

Club-air will stop its flights between Brussels and Parma from 1st of May 2005 onwards. EFSA will encourage the set up of an air-link between Malpensa and Parma.

Workshop on Risk analysis and Risk communication related to the occurrence of emerging chemical in food – Ottawa Canada 23-24 March.

Sixty participants from Canada and 8 participants from Australia (FSANZ), Japan (FSC), UK (FSA), USA (FDA), Commission and EFSA did attend the above mentioned workshop. One of the main outcomes was the establishment of an informal “global inter-authority platform on food safety”. This forum would meet once a year to discuss cooperation’s, exchange of information and common approaches.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION

The Service within the Commission responsible for legislation mentioned that the draft Commission Regulation on Fusarium toxins in food has received a favourable opinion from the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health and will be adopted shortly by the European Commission. The possible measures as regards deoxynivalenol, zearalenone and ochratoxin A in animal feed are still under discussion with the Member States.

Furthermore, the Panel was informed that the Commission will send in the near future two requests to EFSA with regard to carry out risk assessments. The first request is in relation to nitrate in vegetables, as the previous evaluation from the Scientific Committee in Food (SCF) dates back to 1995⁶ and recently high levels of nitrate have been reported in rucola (rocket). The second request relates to ochratoxin A in food. EFSA will be asked to revise/update or reconfirm the opinion of the SCF from 1998⁷ in the light of new toxicological studies published since then, in particular the final results of the EU-research project QLK1-2001-01614 “Mechanisms of ochratoxin A induced carcinogenicity as a basis for an improved risk assessment”. It also was pointed out that ILSI will organise a workshop on this topic from 29 to 30 June & 1 July 2005 in Bratislava, Slovakia.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

8.1 Official requests to EFSA received from the European Commission

The scientific co-ordinator informed the Panel that for the 11th CONTAM plenary meeting a new request from the Commission to perform a review of all scientific

⁶ http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/scf/reports/scf_reports_38.pdf

⁷ http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/sc/scf/out14_en.html

data on potential risks to human health from hormone residues in bovine meat and meat products – related to Directive 2003/74/EC amending Directive 96/22/EC on hormones was received by EFSA. This request falls within the mandate of the Panel.

The Service within the Commission responsible for legislation outlined the background of this question and the members of the Panel discussed the terms of reference as well as the proposed deadline. The members of the Panel noted that the current terms of references are not specific enough and it was proposed that the Secretariat will draft in consultation with the chair a revision which will be send to the Commission. It was proposed that EFSA should initiate a call for new scientific data in this matter.

8.2 Update on undesirable substances in animal feed (section: persistent organic pollutants)

The chair of WG on undesirable substances in animal feed (USAF), section persistent organic pollutants (POPs) informed the Panel that the WG met on 3 and 23 March 2005. At these two meetings the final draft opinions on endosulfan and lindane as undesirable substance in animal feed which will be up for adoption at this plenary meeting were prepared. The WG will get additional experts to prepare the opinions on DDT, hexachlorobenzene, chlordane, aldrin, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor although the written terms of reference have not yet been received by EFSA.

8.3 Update on undesirable substances in animal feed (section: mycotoxins)

The chair of the WG on undesirable substances in animal feed (USAF), section mycotoxins (MT) informed the Panel that the WG met on 9 to 10 March 2005. At this meeting the final draft opinions on fumonisins and ergot as undesirable substance in animal feed which will be up for adoption at this plenary meeting were prepared. No further mycotoxins have to been evaluated and therefore the WG will disband.

8.4 Update on non-dioxin like PCBs

The chair of the WG on NDL-PCBs informed the Panel about the outcome of the last WG meetings which took place on 14 to 15 and 21 to 22 March 2005. The members of the WG made good progress on the risk characterisation part. Two more WG meetings are scheduled to finalize the draft opinion in order to submit the opinion to the next CONTAM Plenary meeting (21-23 of June 2005).

8.5 Update perfluorooctane sulfonate

The chair of the WG on perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) informed the Panel that on 4 March 2005 the new established WG met for the first time. The WG agreed on the table of content and rapporteurs for the various chapters of the opinion. It was pointed out that it is very important to keep a good exchange of information on PFOS and PFOS related substances which are handled in the AFC Panel WG on food contact materials (FCM), the EU Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) and research projects such as the PERFORCE⁸. Also the recent release of a draft risk assessment of the EPA on the potential human health effects associated with exposure to perfluorooctanoic acid⁹ and its salts (PFOA) is valuable information for this opinion. The opinion of this self tasking exercise is expected to be finalized early in 2006.

8.6 Update on safety of wild and farmed fish

The chair of the CONTAM Panel provided an update on the progress made by the drafting group. The aim of this drafting group was to harmonise the different styles of the various chapters of the opinion. The full WG will meet soon to start drafting the risk characterisation part. The Panel on dietary products, nutrition and allergies (NDA) will look at their next plenary meeting into the nutritional part of the opinion as this part is outside the scope of the CONTAM Panel. It is foreseen that the final draft opinion will be submitted for adoption to the next plenary meeting of the CONTAM Panel.

9. JECFA Report on acrylamide. Draft Statement

The chair of the CONTAM panel introduced the statement on acrylamide. The CONTAM Panel adopted this statement subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the discussions.

10. Concentration limits for boron and fluoride in natural mineral waters. Draft opinion.

A member of the CONTAM panel introduced the opinion on boron and fluoride in natural mineral waters. The advice is based on two opinions from the NDA Panel on the tolerable upper intake level (UL) for boron¹⁰ and fluoride¹¹. Numerous

⁸ <http://www.science.uva.nl/perforce/index.htm?http%3A//www.science.uva.nl/perforce/perforce.htm>

⁹ <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/pfoa/pfoarisk.htm>

¹⁰ http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/nda/nda_opinions/529/opinion_nda08_ej80_boron_v2_en1.pdf

¹¹ http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/nda/nda_opinions/851/opiniononulfluoride1.pdf

revisions were suggested to this document and therefore it was agreed to present a revised version to the next plenary meeting. The Service within the Commission responsible for legislation signalled that the slight delay of the adoption is still acceptable.

11. Undesirable substances in animal feed – endosulfan. Draft opinion

The chair of the WG USAF-POP introduced the draft opinion on endosulfan as undesirable substance in animal feed. The CONTAM Panel adopted this opinion pending final approval of the summary and conclusions. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation to the WG.

12. Undesirable substances in animal feed – lindane and other HCH. Draft opinion

The chair of the WG USAF-POP introduced the draft opinion on lindane and other HCH as undesirable substance in animal feed. The CONTAM Panel proposed revisions to the document and suggested to adopt the revised version of this opinion by written procedure. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation to the WG.

13. Undesirable substances in animal feed – fumonisins. Draft opinion

Due to time restrictions this opinion was not discussed, and therefore deferred to the next Panel meeting.

14. Undesirable substances in animal feed – ergot. Draft opinion

The chair of the WG USAF-MT introduced the draft opinion on ergot as undesirable substance in animal feed. The CONTAM Panel adopted this opinion subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the discussions.

15. Any other business

There was no any other business.