

Parma, 20 July 2011  
EFSA/CONTAM/1464

**MINUTES OF THE 46<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON  
CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN (CONTAM) HELD FROM  
30 MAY TO 1 JUNE 2011 IN PARMA**

Agreed on 15 July 2011

**PARTICIPANTS**

*Panel Members:*

Jan Alexander, Diane Benford, Alan Boobis, Sandra Ceccatelli, Jean-Pierre Cravedi, Alessandro Di Domenico, Daniel Doerge, Eugenia Dogliotti, Lutz Edler, Peter Farmer, Johanna Fink-Gremmels, Metka Filipič, Peter Fürst, Thierry Guérin, Helle Katrine Knutsen, Miroslav Machala, Antonio Mutti, Martin Rose, Josef Schlatter (chair), and Rolaf van Leeuwen

*EFSA:*

*Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance Directorate (RASA)*  
Hubert Deluyker<sup>1</sup>

*Unit on Contaminants (CONTAM unit)*

Katleen Baert, Marco Binaglia, Gina Cioacata, Carolina Di Bona, Mari Eskola, Claudia Heppner (head), Valentina Mota, Silvia Nicolau Solano, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Doina Stoika, Natalie Thatcher and Elena Zeraschi

*Unit on Dietary and Chemical Monitoring (DCM unit)*

Valeriu Curtui, Stefan Fabiansson (head)<sup>1</sup>

*Unit on Scientific Assessment Support (SAS unit)*

Saghir Bashir (deputy head)<sup>1</sup>

*Unit on IT and Operations*

Saša Maric<sup>1</sup>

*European Commission:*

Paolo Caricato (DG Health and Consumers, unit G4)<sup>2</sup>, Marina Marini (DG Health and Consumers, unit 03)<sup>3</sup>, Frank Swartenbroux (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3)<sup>3</sup>, and Frans Verstraete (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Only present on 1 June 2011

<sup>2</sup> Only present on 1 June 2011 by phone

<sup>3</sup> Only present on 30 May 2011 by phone

<sup>4</sup> Present from 31 May to 1 June 2011

## **1. WELCOME**

The chair of the CONTAM Panel welcomed the members to the 46<sup>th</sup> CONTAM plenary meeting. Martin Rose, a new CONTAM Panel member, introduced himself to the CONTAM Panel. Natalie Thatcher who had joined the Unit on Contaminants at EFSA on 2 May 2011 was introduced to the members of the CONTAM Panel.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Bruce Cottrill of the CONTAM Panel and from Almut Bitterhof (DG Health and Consumers, unit E3) of the European Commission.

## **3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The draft agenda was adopted.

## **4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interests, EFSA screened the Annual Declaration of Interest (ADoI) and/or Specific Declaration of interest (SDoI) filled in by the experts invited for the present meeting. No conflicts of interests related to the issues discussed in this meeting were identified during the screening process with the exception of the ones below.

In the SDoI filled in for the present meeting Dr. Diane Benford declared the following interest in relation to agenda item 6: information on a scientific study undertaken by the UK Food Standards Agency on production methods for smoked "skin-on" sheep meat. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interests and Implementing documents thereof, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a conflict of Interest (level B). Pursuant to "EFSA's Procedure on Identifying and Handling Declarations of Interest", the said expert incurs in the limitations identified under point C.III.b5 that is not actively participating in the final discussion during the decision phase/adoption. However Dr. Benford can be present to answer questions addressed specifically to her.

Dr. Martin Rose declared at the begin of the plenary meeting the following interest in relation to agenda item 6: Within his employment Dr. Rose conducted the analytical studies on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in smoked "skin-on" sheep meat. The study results are presented in the scientific study undertaken by the UK Food Standards Agency on production methods for smoked "skin-on" sheep

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<sup>5</sup> Implementing act to the policy on declaration of interests procedure for identifying and handling potential conflicts of interest.  
[http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/General/mb\\_annex\\_procedure\\_doi\\_en%20221008.0.pdf?ssbinary=true](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/General/mb_annex_procedure_doi_en%20221008.0.pdf?ssbinary=true)

meat. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interests and Implementing documents thereof, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a conflict of Interest (level B). Pursuant to "EFSA's Procedure on Identifying and Handling Declarations of Interest", the said expert incurs in the limitations identified under point C.III.b5 that is not actively participating in the final discussion during the decision phase/adoption. However Dr. Rose can be present to answer questions addressed specifically to him.

#### **5. MEAT INSPECTION SWINE – CONTAMINANTS. DRAFT OPINION.**

The Head of the CONTAM Unit informed the members of the CONTAM Unit that EFSA has decided to organise a technical meeting with selected stakeholders in September 2011 to receive inputs on the overall draft swine meat inspection opinion. Comments which might be received during this technical meeting need to be considered by the respective Panels (AHAW, BIOHAZ and CONTAM Panel) before this opinion can be presented for adoption. Thus, a slight delay of delivering this opinion to the European Commission (EC) is anticipated, but EFSA is in the process of explaining this to the EC. This means for the current CONTAM plenary meeting that the members of the CONTAM Panel are invited only to endorse their respective parts of the opinion. The opinion will be presented for possible adoption at the 48<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011) after the technical meeting has taken place.

The chair of the CONTAM working group (WG) meat inspection – contaminants presented the draft chapter of the opinion on contaminants in relation to meat inspection for domestic swine (question number: EFSA-Q-2010-01019). The CONTAM Panel endorsed this chapter subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation to the members of the CONTAM WG meat inspection – contaminants and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft chapter.

#### **6. SMOKED SKIN ON SHEEP OPINION: DRAFT CONTAMINANTS CHAPTERS.**

EFSA was asked by the European Commission to issue a scientific opinion on a summary of scientific studies carried out by the UK Food Standards Agency to support a proposed production method for smoked "skin-on" sheep meat (M-2010-0413). In particular, EFSA should assess i) the scientific validity of the studies, and their relevance for the outcome and the conclusion on the safety of smoked "skin-on" sheep meat and ii) identify additional hazards, if any, and risks for public health which have not been addressed in the FSA report. This request was allocated to the BIOHAZ and CONTAM Panels. The BIOHAZ Panel established a WG on this matter including a member of the CONTAM Panel. A member of the CONTAM Panel presented the respective chapters in relation to contaminants to address the mandate (question number: EFSA-Q-2010-01273). The CONTAM Panel adopted the respective chapters, conclusions, recommendations, summary and abstract subject to

incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation to the member of CONTAM Panel who participated in the BIOHAZ WG and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft chapter.

## **7. CONTAM PANEL MEETING DATES FOR 2012**

The members of the CONTAM Panel agreed to meet in plenary on the following dates in Parma in 2012:

31 January to 2 February, 21 to 23 March, 2 to 4 May, 4 to 6 June (last meeting of the current Panel), 9 to 11 July (inauguration meeting 4<sup>th</sup> mandate CONTAM Panel), 25 to 27 September and 20 to 22 November.

The meeting will run from lunchtime (first day) to lunchtime (last day), if not communicated differently. The meeting dates from July 2012 onwards have to be confirmed with the members of the new (4<sup>th</sup> mandate) CONTAM Panel.

## **8. ZEARALENONE IN FOOD. DRAFT OPINION**

The chair of the CONTAM WG on Zearalenone presented the draft opinion on zearalenone in food (question number: EFSA-Q-2010-00958). The European Commission had asked EFSA to assess the potential increase of risks for public health by a possible increase of the currently existing maximum levels for zearalenone in breakfast cereals, and to review the health-based guidance value for zearalenone established by the Scientific Committee in Food in 2000. The CONTAM Panel adopted this opinion subject to incorporation of minor changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed her appreciation to the members of the WG Zearalenone and EFSA staff for the preparatory work of this draft opinion.

## **9. FEEDBACK FROM EFSA**

### **• Welcome by Director of RASA**

The director of the RASA directorate, Hubert Deluyker, welcomed the members of the CONTAM Panel. The members of the CONTAM Panel were informed about the reorganisation of EFSA, EFSA's efforts to move with EC, Member States, Third countries and international organisation from short-term to mid-term planning, what kind of resources EFSA can offer to experts (e.g. library, data collection and statistical analysis) and EFSA's in- and outsourcing activities (e.g. scientific grants and procurements). The CONTAM Panel members appreciated the exchange of views.

### **• Occurrence data collection**

The head of the DCM unit outlined the current data collection activities in the area of chemical occurrence data, pesticide and veterinary drug residues data, and the efforts in terms of harmonisation and standardisation of data collection. In

addition, the efforts in relation to harmonised food consumption data were briefly outlined. In the area of chemical occurrence data the CONTAM Panel was informed on the evolution from *ad hoc* requests to Members States to a more systematic annual data collection approach in relation to 27 chemical contaminants to future projects such as total diet studies. The members of the CONTAM Panel appreciated very much the efforts of the DCM unit as this work plays an important role in the exposure assessments of the CONTAM Panel. As the network of chemical occurrence data will meet soon the CONTAM Panel was asked to provide inputs to improve the current data collection on chemical contaminants. The members of the CONTAM Panel raised the following points: i) validation of occurrence data is very important; ii) identification of data gaps for chemical occurrence data and ways to overcome these gaps are critical; and iii) the current occurrence data used by the CONTAM Panel are not designed for exposure assessment purposes but to fulfil legislative purposes, hence ways forward to overcome this issue would be welcomed.

- **New audio/webconference tool**

A colleague from the IT department introduced a new audio/webconference tool called Lync 2010 to the members of the CONTAM Panel. Compared to the current system this tool offers the possibility to vote, to ask for the floor and is simpler to use. However, this programme needs to be installed on the expert's computer. Some members raised concerns of installing such software on their computer as this would need to be approved by their respective administrations. The IT colleague agreed to send the specific requirements to the members of the CONTAM Panel in order that the application settings can be checked.

- **Other matters**

The members of the CONTAM Panel were informed that the call for expression of interest to become an expert in the Scientific Committee or one of the Scientific Panels was prolonged to 14 June 2011.

During the last Advisory forum meeting (25 to 26 May 2011) the grant and scientific procurement work programme for 2012 was discussed. This plan will be submitted for possible adoption to the upcoming Management Board meeting (15 to 16 June 2011). In addition, the members of the Advisory forum discussed the science strategy of EFSA. This paper will also be submitted to the upcoming Management Board meeting.

The members of the CONTAM Panel discussed the reimbursement of rapporteurs as according to the Management Board Decision from 7/12/2009 Art. 24 and 31 one or more rapporteurs can be appointed for the preparation of a draft opinion and for particularly complex opinions or scientific reports an amount of up to two or three rapporteur indemnities can be applied. Currently the CONTAM Secretariat and the chair of a WG agree on three or four rapporteurs. However, most outputs of the CONTAM Panel are complex opinions and require inputs

from the whole WG. Therefore, the members of the CONTAM Panel decided that in case of complex opinions each member of the WG shall be considered as rapporteur.

## **10. WORKING PROGRAMME**

### **10.1. OFFICIAL REQUEST TO EFSA FOR CONTAM PANEL**

In relation to the request for a scientific opinion on the maximum hygiene criteria to be applied to clean seawater and on the public health risks and hygiene criteria for bottled seawater intended for domestic use (M-2011-0129) which was allocated to both the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) and CONTAM Panel, the CONTAM Panel asked to receive further clarifications from the European Commission on the terms of reference in relation to chemical criteria to be identified for domestic use of bottled clean seawater. For this purpose Paolo Caricato from the EC joined by conference call to the plenary meeting and provided further background to this request. The EC official indicated that the main priority of the original request is to address the first term of reference which applies to microbiological criteria. The second term of reference related to chemical criteria is currently not clearly defined and is not of a high priority. Therefore, the EC agreed to inform EFSA to split the current request into two separate opinions and to come up with a refined definition of chemical criteria for bottled seawater. The members of the CONTAM Panel agreed to set up a small WG chaired by Rolaf van Leeuwen to assist the EC in framing the second terms of reference.

### **10.2. UPDATE FROM WG ALKALOIDS**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

### **10.3. UPDATE FROM WG ALTERNARIA TOXINS INCLUDING APPROACH DISCUSSION**

The chair of the WG on Alternaria toxins informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that approximately 10,000 occurrence data have been received. Some of these data arrived very late and therefore an extension of the deadline to deliver this opinion was asked to the EC. In addition, as for most of the Alternaria toxins the toxicological database is incomplete and Alternaria toxins can be considered as genotoxic the members of the WG are currently discussing whether the threshold of toxicological concern (TTC) approach could be applied. The members of the CONTAM Panel provided some steering to the WG in relation to the TTC approach. The opinion will be scheduled for possible adoption to the 48<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011).

### **10.4. UPDATE FROM WG ASPERGILLUS TOXINS**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **10.5. UPDATE FROM WG BROMINATED FLAME RETARDANTS**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **10.6. UPDATE FROM WG DIOXINS IN SHEEP LIVER**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **10.7. UPDATE FROM WG FUSARIUM TOXINS INCLUDING T-2 AND HT-2 APPROACH DISCUSSION**

The chair of the WG on *Fusarium* toxins reported that the WG is busy in preparing its first out of five *Fusarium* toxin opinions related to risks for public and animal health due to the presence of T-2/HT-2 in food and feed. A substantial number of occurrence data in food and feed related to the sum of T-2/HT-2 were submitted by Member States to EFSA. The risk assessment related to animals will follow a more comprehensive approach compared to previous risk assessments and therefore an extension of the deadline to deliver this opinion was asked to the EC. In terms of the health-based guidance value discussions are still ongoing in the WG. It is proposed that at the next CONTAM Panel meeting the chapters related to dietary exposure assessment and the derivation of the health-based guidance value is discussed. The opinion will be scheduled for possible adoption to the 48<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011).

#### **10.8. UPDATE FROM WG MEAT INSPECTION - CONTAMINANTS**

Besides the work presented under agenda item 5 it was not possible to give an update on the progress of the draft opinion on poultry meat inspection to the CONTAM Panel due to lack of time. This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011).

#### **10.9. UPDATE FROM WG MINERAL HYDROCARBONS**

The chair of the WG on mineral oil informed the CONTAM Panel that the exposure assessment is ready and that the work is progressing in relation to the toxicological considerations. However, as this work has started late due to the lack of an expert's contribution an extension of the deadline will need to be asked to the EC. The members of the CONTAM Panel were informed by EFSA that the CEF Panel would like not to be involved in the co-adoption process of this opinion as no exposure assessment in relation to food contact materials is possible. Under these circumstances, the CONTAM Panel agreed to adopt this opinion without co-adoption by the CEF Panel. The CONTAM Secretariat is invited to inform EFSA's Mandate Review Committee on this proposal.

#### **10.10. UPDATE FROM WG PHOMOPSINS**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **10.11. UPDATE FROM WG POPPY SEEDS INCLUDING APPROACH DISCUSSION**

The chair of the WG on poppy seeds reported that the WG has made good progress with the opinion. However, an extension of the deadline to deliver this opinion needs to be asked to the EC due to the late submission of occurrence data by Member States, challenges in considering the co-occurrence of opiates and challenges in the derivation of the health-based guidance value e.g. incomplete toxicological database for co-occurring opiates and how to take into account combination effects of different opiates. The members of the CONTAM Panel provided some steering on these issues to the WG. It is proposed that the chapters related to dietary exposure assessment and the derivation of a health-based guidance value is discussed at the next CONTAM Panel meeting. The opinion will be scheduled for possible adoption to the 48<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 October 2011).

#### **10.12. UPDATE FROM WG PREVIOUS CARGOES – EVALUATION**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **10.13. UPDATE FROM WGS OF SC OF INTEREST TO CONTAM PANEL**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **11. FEEDBACK FROM THE LAST SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETING**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **12. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION SERVICES ON MATTERS RELATING TO CONTAM**

This agenda item was deferred to the 47<sup>th</sup> CONTAM Panel meeting (4 to 6 July 2011) due to lack of time.

#### **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No any other business was raised.