European Food Safety Authority

ENDOCRINE ACTIVE SUBSTANCES (EAS)

Some needs for the future

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Scientific Committee & Advisory Forum Unit

Stakeholder Consultative Platform, 22 June 2010

The mandate

Internal task force, to:

- Identify trends and developments in the assessment of the health risks
- Identify risk communication and risk perception issues
- Develop a technical report, clarifying the state-of-play, and with recommendations

- *Provide a starting point for discussions with the Scientific Committee and the Advisory Forum*

Method

Addressing the assignments:

- Internal mandate approved by MRC, 02/03/2010
  - Task force (TF) created with participation of the RA, SCA and COMMS directorates
  - Three TF meetings and written contributions in between
- Inventory of past and ongoing work in:
  - EFSA Panels and Units
  - European Commission and other EU bodies
  - Member States
  - International
- A bibliometric study and brief literature review initiated

Terminology

Lack of coherence:

- Ambiguous terminology regarding endocrine activity and toxicity
- Failure to recognize the distinction between
  - hazard identification

    and
  - risk characterisation

A clarifying terminology and criteria would facilitate both assessment and communication

Developments in science

Fast growth in the literature and new assessment approaches

- Need to follow-up developments
- Encourage harmonisation
- Avoid diverging opinions between MS and internationally

Activities ongoing in several organisations (criteria and assessment frameworks)

Need of guidance

To be more detailed than the OECD framework

- Incoming requests from MS experts
  - Assessment of endocrine activity of plant protection products
- Standard evaluation procedures
- Assessment guidelines

Need for strategy

To address:

- Combined and cumulative exposure to endocrine active substances
- The issue of low-dose effects and non-monotonic dose-response
  - Applicability, constraints, and data requirements

Need for science policy

To clarify:

- Hazard assessment approach for “endocrine disruptors”?
- Traditional risk assessment approach for other endocrine active substances?

What problems will this infer for scientific and risk communication work?

Need for development

Method development and validation:

- *In vivo*
- *In vitro*
- *In silico*

Important to develop expertise and applications of computational toxicology and QSARs to food and feed

Need for research

Not only assessment methods and models, but also basic science

- **Mode of action for known human diseases that may be endocrine mediated**

A better understanding of the basic phenomena would facilitate in both the assessment and communication

Needs in risk communication

Public interest is increasing and media coverage is extensive

- An obvious interplay between the scientific discourse and the public debate
- How can we anticipate future needs in risk communication?
- More elaborated and targeted approaches to communicate?

New approaches must be carefully evaluated and tested, before being put into action

Acknowledgement

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