Towards an improved stakeholder engagement approach (SEA)

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5 years of SEA. Success stories and lessons learnt
The SEA in a nutshell

Distributors & HORECA

Farmers & primary producers

Business & Food Industry

Consumer organisations

Practitioners’ associations

NGOs & advocacy groups

Academia

Registered organisations meeting defined criteria

Several engagement platforms to foster dialogue with stakeholders
Some highlights

130 registered organisations
of which:

- Distributors & HORECA: 3%
- Farmers & primary producers: 8%
- Business & Food Industry: 57%
- Academia: 5%
- NGOs & advocacy groups: 17%
- Practitioners’ associations: 8%
- Consumer organisations: 2%

Activities of the SEA platforms since 2016:

- 7 Stakeholder Bureau meetings
- 3 Annual Forum meetings
- 7 Active Discussion Groups
- 8 Roundtables with NGO & industry organisations
Success stories and lessons learnt

Thematic discussion groups (topic-based engagement)

Engagement platforms focusing on affiliation categories only

More effective

Less effective
Other achievements

Social science research and stakeholder dialogue working together to provide insights on food-related issues

50+ methods and 40+ best practices to inspire the design of engagement activities

Section 2
The way forward
Why should the SEA evolve?

**SH recommendations***

- Enhance *transparency* and *accessibility* of information
- Establish *new* and *more flexible* engagement formats
- Prioritise *topic-based engagement* over affiliation-based activities
- Establish a *feedback loop* on how stakeholder input was used by EFSA
- Be *time-efficient* (the right activities at the right time)

*Source: SEA review 2019 and feedback collected after meetings (evaluation forms)

**Other drivers**

- The ‘new normal’
- Societal concerns

**Transparency Regulation**

**Strategy 2027**
Our recommendations

Scope

- Re-organise the SEA around 3 distinct topical domains:
  - foresight and preparedness;
  - risk assessment process;
  - dialogue with stakeholders
- Ensure that each domain relies on appropriate engagement mechanisms to be effective

Principles, registration tool, platforms

- The ‘3 T’s’: Trustworthy, Targeted, Traceable
- Diversify and expand the catalogue of engagement activities based on EFSA’s Engagement Toolkit
- Prioritise topic-based engagement and rescope or deprioritise the platforms that focus primarily on affiliation categories.
- Launch a digital community platform for registered stakeholders
- Leverage Connect.EFSA to manage registrations

External communication

- Ensure the understanding of the engagement opportunities in the three engagement domains
- Better communicate the benefits of becoming a registered stakeholder to encourage new registrations
Expected benefits

For EFSA:
- Alignment with the Transparency Regulation
- Engagement as an enabler of the EFSA Strategy 2027
- Foster a closer relationship with SH
- Alignment with the latest trends (post-COVID)

For stakeholders:
- Better traceability of input, hence greater transparency
- Topic-based engagement based on interests and expertise
- Time-efficient and effective dialogue with EFSA
Overall good support for the evolution of the approach

Topic-based engagement very much appreciated

Limited resources of stakeholder organisations - EFSA was asked for focused engagement

Balanced input is still important (especially the NGOs) – EFSA to find ways to ensure it

Constructive reflections on future role of Stakeholder Bureau > an update of the MB decision establishing the Stakeholder Bureau might be required.
Next steps 2021-2022

Presentation to stakeholders:

• Annual Stakeholder Forum

(Main) Implementation steps:

JAN 2022

• New digital community platform for registered stakeholders
• Updated webpages
• Expanded catalogue of engagement platforms

DEC 2022

• Updated registration tool
Do you agree with the proposal to run the next SEA review within three years instead of 2022, to allow sufficient time for implementing the proposed changes before assessing their impact?