GLOBAL PERFORMANCE SERVICES

NOTE TO THE MANAGEMENT BOARD ON THE AMENDMENT OF EFSA BUDGET 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Article 34 of EFSA Financial Regulation foresees that EFSA submits for approval to its Management Board any amendment to the budget. This amending budget is subsequently published in the EU Official Journal.

Subject of this amendment:

A. Grant agreement to be concluded between EFSA and DG NEAR of the European Commission for the implementation of cooperation activities with the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) countries as of the 1st of December, 2017 in the amount of EUR 320,000,00

B. Contract of EUR 15,000,00 preliminary agreed in April 2017 between EFSA and Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations for the funding of cooperation project in the field of risk assessment of genetically modified organisms between the 2 organisations.

C. Bank interest for the last quarter 2016 in the amount of EUR 21,545,31

An additional amendment is expected to be submitted to the Management Board for approval, most probably by written procedure in the course of September, in relation to an Inter-agencies cost-sharing agreement in the context of the EU Network of Agencies (EUAN) that is expected to be finalised and signed in September. This agreement has the purpose to mutualise among the EUAN members the costs for two FTEs supporting EFSA for the time period of the EFSA’s EUAN Chairmanship. The two resources hired for that purpose are hosted and currently financed by EFSA. The mutualised costs include the salary and related allowances (146,000 EUR), as well as forfeit mission expenses (6,000 EUR).

Detailed information

A. Grant agreement between EFSA and DG Near

Through the grant contract of EUR 320,000,00 to be concluded with the European Commission (DG NEAR), resources will be available in order to finance the implementation of the action entitled: “Preparatory measures for the participation of the IPA countries in EFSA”, as indicated in the note from DG NEAR – Ref. Ares(2017) 1454530-17/03/5017. The grant will be paid in one instalment. The implementation period is 18 months and the action shall begin on 1st December 2017.

Pre-accession programme 2017-2019
The European Commission continues to work closely with the countries that wish to join the EU and helps to ensure that when the time comes, the new members will be thoroughly prepared for their future responsibilities and fully equipped to benefit from membership.

The EU helps the countries that wish to become members with financial and technical support through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). IPA supports the development of the necessary institutional structures or the training of the staff responsible for applying EU rules in the country.

EU agencies, including EFSA, are active contributors to the EU IPA programmes through the EC Multi-country action entitled “Preparatory measures for the participation of IPA beneficiaries in EU agencies” as from 2005.

The action is supporting EU agencies by allowing them to carry out preparatory measures with the IPA beneficiaries and stakeholders in view of their future participation in these EU agencies upon membership or earlier. The support aims as well at knowledge transfer and capacity building in the area of expertise of the EU agencies.

EFSA received confirmation from DG NEAR D5 in March 2017 that EUR 320.000,00 are available for EFSA for the next Pre-accession project, under the Commission Decision adopting a Multi – country Action Programme for 2016, in particular the Action 4 "Preparatory measures for the participation of IPA beneficiaries in EU Agencies". The funding will be made available by means of a grant agreement, PAGoDA 2 (pillar assessed grant or delegation agreement).

The IPA programme for the EU Agencies is now having a long-term perspective as EC confirmed that funds are stable and will enable continuation at least until 2021.

The specific objective of the Action is to progressively increase the involvement of IPA countries in EFSA’s work, reporting tools and networks through building capacity on risk assessment and risk communication methodologies of IPA food safety scientific community.

Expected outcomes:

1. Increased scientific cooperation and networking activities among IPA countries, Member States and EFSA, in particular on food safety issues of common concern (e.g. Lumpy Skin Disease).

2. Increased harmonisation of IPA risk assessment and data collection methodologies with EFSA’s methodologies and facilitation of data collection and reporting to EFSA.

Target groups:

The direct target groups are the experts from the Competent Authorities for food and feed safety in IPA (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo*1, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey) countries, in particular those with a similar remit as EFSA. The final beneficiaries are scientific academic and civil society organisations and ultimately the entire population of each of the countries involved.

Main activities:

1 This designation (*) is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence
• Coordinate appointment/confirmation of IPA national coordinating institutions, final beneficiaries of the project (Ministries and Agencies responsible for risk assessment or competent food authorities) - based on the information provided by IPA countries in BfR food safety Almanac;
• Sign the Letters of Intent with IPA National coordinating institutions;
• Conduct a survey with IPA experts to collect their input on the important areas for technical cooperation;
• Employ an SNE, preferably from IPA country;
• Financially support IPA national coordinating institutions in project coordination at national level. Coordinate implementation of Assistant coordinators agreements.
• Coordinate the nomination, participation and follow up activities of IPA observers in Advisory Forum and Focal point networks;
• Coordinate the nomination and participation of IPA observers in EFSA’s scientific networks for data collection, animal and plant health and communication expert network.
• Coordinate capacity building activities on harmonisation of risk assessment and data collection methodologies with IPA countries.
• Liaise with Commission services (DG SANTE, TAIEX, DG NEAR) and other EU agencies on cooperation with IPA and related developments of interest to EFSA;
• Prepare narrative and financial reports for the commission services, as per contract and agreed reporting timeframe.

The programme is funded by the European Commission - DG NEAR D5 that makes the funds available to EFSA through a grant PAGoDA 2 agreement. The implementation of this agreement will start on 1 December and will cover a period of 18 months. The full amount of EUR 320.000,00 will be paid in one instalment upon the contract signature (due in September). This amount will be integrated into the 2017 budget to cover EFSA’s actions and activities linked to this project.

B. Collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organisation

The foreseen collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has been discussed during the Management Board meeting in December. In April 2017, a preliminary contract price has been agreed between EFSA and FAO for the funding of a cooperation project in the field of risk assessment of genetically modified organisms between the two organisations.

The purpose of the grant contract is to support the implementation of a programme to provide assistance to update the FAO training tool entitled “GM food safety assessment – tools for trainers”.

EFSA and FAO will establish a collaboration agreement where FAO will financially contribute a total amount of EUR 15.000,00, which will be paid in one instalment. The agreement will enter into force upon the date of signature by both organisations and will terminate within 15 months from the entry into force of the agreement.

The Management Board is asked to integrate into EFSA 2017 Budget the EUR 15.000,00 financial contribution from FAO.

**EFSA-FAO collaboration to update the FAO training tool on GM food safety**
Scientific excellence and international cooperation are core values for EFSA. The EFSA-FAO collaboration will place EFSA at the forefront of the international community on food safety risk assessment, fostering its scientific credibility.

The FAO “GM food safety assessment – tools for trainers” document was developed in 2006 and published in 2008. This initial training tool consists of three parts: Part one “Principles of safety assessment of foods derived from recombinant-DNA plants”; Part two “Tools and techniques for trainers”; and Part three “Case studies”. The case studies were mainly provided by Health Canada and therefore focusing on the Canadian risk assessment approach. More than 1,500 copies of the training tools have been disseminated to the government officials around the world. Many (developing) countries are using such tool as the basis to establish food/feed risk assessment programs dealing with genetically modified (GM) organisms, as well as to train individuals responsible for the implementation of such programs. FAO wishes to expand the training tool to cover risk assessments approaches from countries other than Canada, in order to provide a broader picture of the different existing ways of performing the safety assessment of food/feed derived from GM plants. In such a frame, the collaboration with EFSA has three objectives: first, to explain the pillars of the Codex Alimentarius guidelines, which constitute the internationally agreed basis for several risk assessment requirements around the world, using illustrative flow-charts; second, to illustrate how the European Union (EU) risk assessment approach is framed within the Codex Alimentarius strategy; and third, to incorporate into the existing training tool practical case studies illustrating how the EU risk assessment approach is applied.

To do so, EFSA seeks contractor support to assist EFSA GMO scientists to include into the already existing FAO training tool: an illustrative explanation of Codex Alimentarius risk assessment principles; a description of the European risk assessment approach; and elaborated case studies to illustrate its application to real-case scenarios.

The programme will be supported by FAO that will make the full amount of EUR 15,000,00 available to EFSA in one instalment upon the signature of the contract. The preliminary agreement between EFSA and FAO was achieved in April 2017.

C. Bank interest for the last quarter of the year 2016

Article 58 of EFSA Financial Regulation states that the interest generated by funds paid to the Authority by the Commission by way of the contribution shall not be due to the general budget of the Union.

Bank interests have been credited on EFSA’s bank account at the end of every quarter until the end of the year 2016. From the beginning of the year 2017, the interest rate will be accredited annually. Beginning 2018, the interests generated during the full year 2017 shall be subject to a similar budget amendment. This decision however covers the interest amount for the last quarter of 2016, cashed-in beginning 2017.

The Management Board is asked to integrate into EFSA’s 2017 Budget the amount of EUR 21,545,31, corresponding to the bank interests received from the 1st of October 2016 to the 31st December 2016.

The amount shall be allocated to the budget line 2001 – “Acquisition” that covers the payments (capital and interests) for the purchase of the EFSA seat. It therefore shall offset part of the interests paid.