

Note to the Management Board

Governance of EFSA's Scientific Activities

In July 2017, EFSA adopted the new Decision Making Framework (DMF) which summarises the overarching governance structures that support the decision-making process in EFSA. After implementing the DMF, there was a need to install a compatible governance for managing EFSA's scientific portfolio. To further improve the strategic fit of EFSA's scientific development activities, EFSA decided to add a strategic top-down steering, complementing the traditionally strong bottom-up approach. At the same time, facing resource constraints, the prioritisation choices were extended to business as usual activities requiring a more holistic approach to resource allocation.

To implement this new governance both structural (operating bodies) and process redesigns had to be done. The portfolio building and associated processes were further optimised, assigning clear accountabilities and integrating the recently created Risk Assessment Methodology Programme (RAMPRO). Two new bodies were created, a Science Council and a 4D extended, respectively giving strategic guidance and taking the decisions on the composition of the science portfolio. Existing meetings like the Project Coordination Office (PCO) and the Joint Science Meeting (JSM) were adapted to a more distinctive role in the governance process.

As a result, the portfolio building process has become a powerful resource allocation tool taking into account business as usual and development needs/priorities and matching those with budget and expertise availability. The latter only recently became possible as a result of the EFSA Expertise Management Programme (EMP).

By setting budget envelopes, dedicated to identified strategic priorities and gaps, the bottom-up collection of business as usual and development initiatives is steered and execution of the strategy is secured. The full portfolio building process can be best described by a U shape in which the Science Council is both the start (setting strategic priorities) and ending point (endorsing the scientific portfolio). In between, all science related bodies (e.g. Units, Panels, Scientific Committee, JSM, networks, Knowledge and Innovation Communities, ...) feed into this process.

EFSA is currently piloting the new approach and has integrated the governance structures into the DMF, created new templates, expanded the role of the PCO and applied the new detailed process of portfolio building. During this exercise the urgent resource needs in certain areas of the business as usual (e.g. Novel Foods) are also taken into account. The implementation will continue by further integrating all scientific initiatives and deploying some change management activities (e.g. info sessions, portal news, etc.).

The pilot will run for one year (until beginning 2019) to understand if the designed framework is delivering the expected benefits and allows EFSA to optimise its scientific activities both from a strategic and resource allocation perspective.