



## Note to the Management Board: Managing EFSA resource gap

### 1. Introduction

EFSA faces an increasing workload and incremental complexity of the scientific areas within its remit, with a systematic increase in the amount of evidence to be assessed and an increased need for interdisciplinary approaches. Despite the extra-resources granted by the European Commission in 2021<sup>1</sup> and various measures such as interims and consultants, internal reallocation of resources, or re-prioritisation of activities, this results in a significant capacity gap<sup>2</sup>, mainly for the safety assessment of regulated products. In specific areas, the number of pending requests (dossiers, mandates) in the scientific production queue (the "stock") is high (covering much more than one year of work capacity) and generally not reducing at a reasonable pace, in some cases growing. The increasing stock of dossiers complicates the achievement of planned targets and legal deadlines. This puts at risk the effectiveness of EFSA in its role to support the EC Food Safety risk management - EFSA's main reputation challenge is 'timeliness in addressing customer requests' - and is putting the EC in a critical position in terms of the fulfilment of legal obligations. In addition to the above, and in accordance with its 2027 Strategy, EFSA committed to ensure preparedness for future risk analysis needs. Against this background, EFSA looks forward to reinforcing its technical support to risk managers in the implementing phase of the policies pertaining to the sustainability of food systems (Farm to Fork; Chemical Strategy for Sustainability).

We welcome the opportunity to provide the Management Board with an overview of ongoing and future initiatives aiming at saving resources throughout the scientific production process. The material supporting the discussion gives details on the following activities:

- 1) Leaning the internal processes,
- 2) Sourcing (parts of) the scientific production process through various mechanisms of grants and procurements.
- 3) Partnering with Member States and other EU agencies.

### 2. Next steps

- 1) In the spirit of continuous improvement, certified staff will foster further LEAN projects for efficiency gain.
- 2) Alongside the development of new process pertaining to workforce planning (stemming from new organisational structure), sourcing will become an integral part of the operating model, exploring, to the extent possible, various options.
- 3) New EFSA business model (as foreseen in the TR regulation) is being developed aiming at entrusting tasks and sourcing capacity to Member State competent Organizations in line with article 36 of its Founding Regulation.
- 4) EFSA also takes advantage of the Green Deal impetus to expand existing cooperation with other EU agencies.

<sup>1</sup> 15 contractual agents with 3-years contract allocated to Units on Regulated Products in 2021

<sup>2</sup> The capacity gap - that is essentially related to the regulated products area - has been estimated at **around 150 FTE-years** extra-capacity (before allocation of 15 CAs in 2021)