

ONE Society

ADVANCING ENGAGEMENT IN AN EVOLVING FOOD SAFETY ECOSYSTEM: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Summary

The European food safety ecosystem is a community of diverse actors – part of a wider, global ecosystem – which creates and captures new value through both collaboration and competition. At the same time, the ecosystem evolves by way of knowledge sharing and innovation. Therefore, investments made in partnerships and cooperation in the said ecosystem are set to result in further economies of scale and more capacity to deliver on even the most complex regulatory science. The increase in scientific complexity, changing societal expectations, new policy and strategy initiatives, and new market trends create opportunities but also pose new challenges to the food safety ecosystem. These challenges trigger the need to rethink how the actors within the ecosystem can continue to ensure safe and healthy food and feed, and thereby also contribute to sustainable food systems and One Health goals. The Transparency Regulation has set up a new legal framework enhancing openness and transparency throughout the risk assessment process. It also provides the means for more comprehensive and timely scientific advice through collaboration and cooperation. This session will explore how each actor can help to address the outlined challenges to reach the overarching food and feed safety goals of the ecosystem, taking into account individual values, needs and possible limitations, and how the ecosystem approach can directly impact on the quality of regulatory science. We will also explore new ways of engagement, cooperation, and collaboration among the ecosystem actors, and how they can contribute to more fit-for-purpose and trusted food and feed safety advice.

Vision

To reach the One Health objectives, it is crucial that the different actors involved in trying to achieve an optimal one health outcome collaborate with each other, recognising the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment. The European food safety ecosystem is a small player in meeting the overarching one health goals but can play a key role in applying the one health principles when providing integrated food and feed safety advice. By addressing the challenges of increasing scientific complexity, changing societal expectations, new policy and strategy initiatives and new market trends in an integrated manner, ecosystem actors will not only ensure a fit-for-purpose and trustworthy food and

Organiser



Co-organisers



feed safety outcome but also live up to one health principles. The vision of an ideal European food/feed safety ecosystem would be that all actors in this ecosystem understand and accept the ecosystem goal(s) and contribute to them by engaging/collaborating/cooperating with each other. With that in mind, all actors should understand the opportunities offered by the ecosystem and explore possibilities to go beyond conventional boundaries.

Background – Challenges and opportunities

"Business ecosystems are dynamic and co-evolving communities of diverse actors who create and capture new value through both collaboration and competition" (*"Business ecosystems come of age"*, Deloitte University Press, 2015). The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is an integral part of the EU's food safety ecosystem and contributes by providing scientific advice to support the European Commission, the European Parliament and EU Member States on areas related to food/feed safety and the environment. Over the past years, some of the basic building blocks of that food safety ecosystem have evolved and novel issues have emerged that might make us reconsider how different actors within this ecosystem engage, collaborate, and cooperate. Five main drivers for change have been identified:

- Increasing scientific complexity due to the growing volume of evidence, evolving methodologies, the consideration of new endpoints, and the implementation of cross-domain approaches.
- Increasing societal expectations due to the need for more openness and transparency and a desire to participate in a more holistic and sustainable food safety approach.
- Erosion of trust within the food safety ecosystem due to mis/disinformation, insufficient, fragmented or incoherent communication and misperception.
- New market trends including new technologies, mobility of goods and hazards and globalisation of trade.
- New policy and strategy initiatives coming from the European Union policy makers (e.g. Green Deal), as well as relevant global policy approaches.

To realise the opportunities and address the challenges that stem from these drivers of change and to ensure EFSA's continued preparedness to provide high-quality and timely scientific outputs, engagement and collaboration of all actors of the food safety ecosystem is key.

With the implementation of the Transparency Regulation, a new legal framework has been created that brings increased openness throughout the risk assessment

process. It has also provided the necessary resources for increasing the efficacy and comprehensiveness of EFSA's scientific advice related to new food and feed products and the environment. It offers the opportunity to further engagement with ecosystem actors and identify ways of sustainable collaboration that add tangible value to the risk assessment system and its participants/beneficiaries.

Scope and objectives

The thematic session aims to bring the different ecosystem actors together to discuss new ways of engaging, collaborating and cooperating and respond to the key challenges of increasing scientific complexity, societal expectations, erosion in trust and new market-stemming needs that relate to food safety.

Specific objectives are:

- Setting the scene with examples of good cooperation/collaboration and what benefits and challenges cooperation entails.
- Better understanding the values and needs of the different actors within that ecosystem, and what the limits are for each of them to be able to contribute to and benefit from the ecosystem.
- Better understanding how the actors of the ecosystem can help each other to address these challenges and how more engagement, better collaboration and cooperation between the actors can contribute to a more fit-for-purpose and trustworthy food safety outcome.
- Better understanding the obstacles that prevent closer and more organic collaboration to be realized.
- Starting to explore solutions to remove or circumvent the identified blockers.
- Inspiring participants to be part of the further shaping of the collaborative ecosystem.

People behind the session

Session Coordinator: Max Blanck, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Chairpersons: Nikolaus Kriz, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Moderators: Marc Gramberger, Prospex bv; Katharina Faradsch, Prospex bv

Rapporteurs: Max Blanck, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA); Chaima Elyahmadi, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA); Cinzia Percivaldi, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

ONE Society – Session affiliate profiles

ADVANCING ENGAGEMENT IN AN EVOLVING FOOD SAFETY ECOSYSTEM: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Cinzia Percivaldi, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Rapporteur

Cinzia Percivaldi is an Engagement Officer at EFSA's Engagement and External Relations (ENREL) Unit, where she is involved in the design and implementation of stakeholder engagement plans and large-scale multi-actor participatory processes. After leading EFSA's Events Team from 2012 to 2020, Cinzia has been involved in the revision of EFSA's stakeholder engagement framework and is now supporting EFSA's foresight projects and risk assessment mandates from the engagement perspective. She has a background in marketing and communication and has had over 20 years of professional experience, both in the public and private sector, mostly focusing on external relations, event management and stakeholder engagement. Before joining EFSA in 2006, she worked for the regional government of Lombardy in Italy and for a communication agency near Milan.

Cinzia holds a Bachelor's degree in Translations and Interpreting from ISIT Milan and a Bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Parma. She has been a certified PMI-PMP project manager since 2016.

Max Blanck, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Rapporteur

Max Blanck is External Engagement Officer at EFSA. He has dedicated most of his professional career to building partnerships and fostering stakeholder engagement for international policy dialogue. His current thematic focus lies on designing strategies to foster the engagement of stakeholders and interested parties in a dialogue to advance EFSA's scientific cooperation and networking across the food safety ecosystem. Prior to joining EFSA Max worked 12 years for FAO, designing multi-stakeholder policy dialogue initiatives in the field of food security and nutrition. He developed and managed expert networks and engaged in partnership-building activities with projects, clients, multi-agency initiatives and stakeholder groups. In addition to global activities where he collaborated with bodies such as the Committee on World Food Security he focused in particular on policy dialogue in Africa and Central Asia. He holds Master degrees in Development Economics from

Organiser



Co-organisers



the Università degli Studi Roma Tre and in Human Rights Law from the University of Malta.

Nikolaus Kriz, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Chair/Co-chair

Nik Kriz is Head of EFSA's Risk Assessment Services Department. He is a veterinary surgeon with 28 years of professional experience having worked in general practice, veterinary clinics and academia in four continents before moving to risk assessment in One Health at the European Medicines Agency. He then took on managerial functions in the area of parallel distribution and certificates, as well as supporting the work of the seven EMA scientific committees. In these roles Nik was responsible, among other things, for the EU regulation on substances essential for the treatment of Equidae and the development of guidance for multi-strain dossiers plus the early development of the new veterinary medicines regulation. He also implemented the public register for parallel distributed products in the EU, a major step towards improved transparency in the sector. Nik joined EFSA on 1 January 2017 as Head of Unit for Animal Health and Welfare and Plant Health, where he was responsible for delivering risk assessments for topics as diverse as *Xylella fastidiosa*, African swine fever, avian influenza and the welfare of farmed rabbits. The main achievements of his tenure were the scientific support provided to the European Commission in implementing the Animal Health Law, the setting up of an animal disease data model, partnering on data collections to analyse risks from diseases shared between wildlife, livestock and humans, the introduction of commodity risk assessment of high risk plants.

Georg Winkel, Wageningen University and Research

Speaker and panellist

Georg Winkel is a Full Professor and Chair of the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. He holds an MSc (Forest Sciences) and a PhD (Forest and Environmental Policy) from University of Freiburg, Germany. He has worked at the University of Freiburg (2006-2015) and the European Forest Institute in Joensuu (2015-2017, leading the Institute's 'Forests for Safety' research programme) and Bonn (2017-2021, leading the newly formed research programmes 'Resilience' and 'Governance'). He was also a Member of the Institute's Management Team (2018-2021). Next to working for EFI, since 2018, he has been an Associate Professor at the University of Bonn's Faculty of Agriculture since 2018, and was an Associate Professor at the University of Freiburg's Faculty of

Environment and Natural Resources (2017-2021). In 2011, he spent a year as a DFG research fellow at the University of California, Berkeley. Georg Winkel's main research interest relates to understanding how societies shape forests and nature and vice versa, and how this translates into forest and nature conservation policy and governance. A part of his work has been oriented towards the science-policy interface: he has been a leading author of several studies on land use and environmental issues for European and German governmental institutions, and has presented his work to many audiences, including the European Parliament and UN conferences.

Title of talk: Forest ecosystems – what can they teach us on collaboration?

Abstract of talk

Forests are complex ecosystems that are characterized by often high biodiversity, highly specialized organisms and a web of interdependencies – ranging from competition (e.g. between trees for light and water) to symbiosis (e.g. through mycorrhiza between fungi and trees). In many cases, forests evolved over thousands or even millions of years, but they were and are also facing constant adaptation pressure. Organisms have developed varying strategies to deal with disturbances such as droughts, forest fires, and storms. Climate change puts an increasing challenge there. In addition, in all world regions, humans have strongly altered forest systems through management, ranging from small interventions to huge clear cuts and deforestation.

In this talk, I will take up the perspective of forests as social ecological systems and will explore how the diversity of species that make up a forest has evolved over time, how species have been adapting to changing conditions, and which forms of competition and collaboration have developed amongst them. Including human activities and management, a focus will then be put on forest management and conservation strategies. How do forest managers respond to ever changing societal demands, how do they deal with striking uncertainty relating to the future – including climate change, but also uncertain demands of future societies towards forests? The concept of social-ecological resilience will be central here, focusing on the idea to enable forests to provide multiple ecosystem services to humans even if the ecosystem is changing. Key considerations in this regard are diversity, working with natural adaptive processes, but also the possibilities to adapt human needs. Yet, the talk will also shed light into controversies and strikingly different approaches taken, emphasizing the importance of human interests and beliefs.

Abstracting from the forest, I will conclude with considerations of what can be learned from forests for managing human networks being confronted with

uncertainties, possibly rapid change, and the necessity to both specialize and collaborate to best deal with complexity and evolving challenges.

Bernhard Url, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Speaker

Dr. Bernhard Url was appointed Executive Director of EFSA in June 2014, having served as Acting Executive Director for seven months. His mandate for a second term in office was extended in June 2019 for another 5 years. Dr. Url joined EFSA in June 2012 as Head of the Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance Department. A qualified veterinarian by training, he brings high-level management experience from food-safety organisations to his role at EFSA.

Prior to joining the Authority, Dr. Url was Managing Director of the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES), which represents Austria on EFSA's Advisory Forum. From 2008 to March 2012, he also served as a member of EFSA's Management Board.

During his 10 years at AGES, he was in charge of technical and scientific affairs with a remit that included the timely delivery of risk assessment and risk management services across a wide range of areas. This included ensuring effective risk communications during urgent food safety-related events.

Prior to AGES Dr. Url spent five years as an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Milk Hygiene and Milk Technology at the University of Veterinary Medicine in Vienna before running a food quality control laboratory from 1993 to 2002.

Dr. Url graduated from the University of Veterinary Medicine in Vienna in 1987 and became a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 1990. He has published in the field of veterinary medicine with a particular focus on listeria and milk hygiene.

Title of talk: Opening and welcome

Gerda Verburg, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement

Panellist

Since August 2016, Gerda Verburg (The Netherlands) has served as UN Assistant Secretary-General and Coordinator of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, working with the 65 country governments that lead the SUN Movement, united with UN agencies, civil society, business and donors, in a common mission to defeat malnutrition in all its forms. She was appointed by the UN Secretary-General based on her extensive experience in politics and international cooperation.

Prior to her appointment, she served as Chair of the Agenda Council for Food and

Organiser

Co-organisers

Nutrition of the World Economic Forum (WEF), 2014; was elected as Chair of the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS), 2013, and served as Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations Rome-based agencies (FAO, IFAD and WFP) from 2011.

Ms. Verburg was elected as Chair of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 17) in 2008. In 2007, she was appointed Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality in the Netherlands. In her period as Minister, she gave priority and special attention to innovative and sustainable agriculture and food security, both at national, EU and international level.

The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, renewed her position as Coordinator of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement for a third term, effective from 1 August 2020.

Sarah A Hartley, University of Exeter

Speaker and panellist

Sarah Hartley is an Associate Professor in the Department of Science, Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Exeter Business School where she researches science and technology governance. She is a qualitative social scientist studying efforts to open up governance to new actors through case studies involving global health, sustainable agriculture and conservation. Current research explores the governance of gene drive technology and she has several projects funded by the British Academy and Wellcome exploring engagement, collaboration and knowledge co-production in gene drive development and risk assessment in Africa, North America, Australia and Europe. She publishes in a wide variety of journals including Environmental Science and Policy, Regulation & Governance, Social Science & Medicine, Science, Malaria Journal, and Journal of European Public Policy. She is Associate Editor of the Journal of Responsible Innovation and has a PhD in Politics and Environmental Studies (University of Toronto).

Title of talk: Engagement in the ecosystem from a research perspective

Abstract of talk

New ways of thinking about engagement in risk assessment can build on EFSA's existing policies and practices and contribute to the goals of both scientific excellence and legitimacy. I will draw on my social science research on EFSA's role in risk assessment for GM and gene drive technology, including guideline development, to reflect on the opportunities and challenges of employing different forms of engagement in a changing ecosystem.

Chaima Elyahmadi, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Rapporteur

Chaima Elyahmadi, a Tunisian young woman dedicated to European Affairs. With an engineering degree in Agriculture and Rural Development and a Master's Degree in European Studies from the European College of Parma, Chaima had a professional experience in agri-food, energy and pharma both in the public and private sector. As multilingual person, she perfectly speaks four languages. Recently started as external engagement and international cooperation officer in EFSA, but previously known as the technical assistant to the Chief Scientist Office. Before joining EFSA, Chaima worked as a public affairs specialist in the pharma industry and had a previous experience in the Commission's DG AGRI in Brussels and in the Agri-food Industry in Parma. Back in Tunisia, Chaima worked as well in the energy sector as an engineer to a private oil company and to a research center.

Paul Amedeo Devalier, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Speaker and panellist

Paul is an organisational change agent and creative business futurist. He is passionate about campaigning to free human potential in public service and deconstructing the corporation. He is driven to "jiggle" organisations and people out of 20th century archetype patterns and into 21st century social collaboration. Paul works for EFSA since 2013 where he is responsible for EFSA's digital transformation and enterprise architecture. He was previously Chief Information Officer for one of Tetra Laval's industry groups. His career prior to the 10 years in Tetra Laval was built in technology startups and financial services. He started his career at Andersen Consulting (now Accenture). Paul is an Italian citizen and holds a degree from Brown University.

Title of talk: Ecosystems from a digital perspective

Harald Gjein, Norwegian Scientific Committee for food and environment (VKM)

Speaker and panellist

Dr. Harald Gjein is the current director of the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and the Environment. He served previously as director-general of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority from 2011 to 2019. In 2019, he was appointed a special adviser in the Ministry of Health and Care services. Gjein graduated as a

veterinarian at the Norwegian Veterinary College in 1980, where he gained his doctoral degree. From 2000 to 2007, he served as CEO of the pig producers association Norsvin. He served as deputy director of the Norwegian Veterinary Institute from 2007 to 2009 and as director from 2009 to 2011.

Title of talk: Perspectives from a National Risk Assessment Agency

Abstract of talk

Handling complex societal challenges needs independent knowledge bases and an interdisciplinary and cross-sectorial approach. Collaboration on different levels, both in risk assessment, risk management and risk communication, is key to better solutions.

The mandate of the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and Environment (VKM) is to carry out independent, scientific Risk Assessments (RA) and other knowledge summaries related to food and the environment, and to ensure open communication about these. VKM carries out RAs for the Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) and the Norwegian Environment Agency (NEA), either individually or on behalf of both institutions at the same time, the latter resulting in a more holistic assessment. VKM may also undertake risk assessments on its own initiative. After chronic wasting disease (CWD) was diagnosed in a wild reindeer in Norway in 2016, VKM published several RAs and knowledge summaries on human and animal interactions in the ecosystem and the consequences thereof. The opinions were prepared at the request of the NFSA and NEA, covering aspects such as zoonotic potential, disease transmission between animals, risk factors that contribute to disease transfer and assessments of risk-reducing measures. VKM's opinions have served as a scientific basis for the Norwegian authorities' choice of strategies and measures for handling CWD. Another example of a cross-sectorial assignment is the RA on wild boar. Wild boar is considered an invasive alien species in Norway, and during the last decade wild boar populations have been re-established in the south-eastern part of the country. As a basis for a national cross-sectorial action plan against wild boar, VKM has assessed the potential for further spread and establishment, and the possible impacts on food safety, animal health (particularly regarding African swine fever) biodiversity, and agriculture. Ongoing self-initiated knowledge summaries on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the environment is another example. Today, there are national programmes to monitor AMR in disease-causing bacteria in humans, and in organisms from feed, animals and foodstuffs, but AMR in the environment is not monitored. In this project, VKM will compile and assess the evidence found concerning AMR in the environment and, on this basis, identify the challenges and opportunities that lie in

establishing such a monitoring programme, and what added value such a programme would provide.

Marc Gramberger, Prospex bv

Moderator

Dr. Marc Gramberger is an internationally recognized facilitator of workshops, conferences, dialogue- and consensus-building processes, including in complex multi-stakeholder settings. He is an international authority in stakeholder engagement, foresight-to-strategy, negotiation, and behaviour change processes. With co-creative, innovative and thoroughly delivered interventions, he helps his clients identify, understand & master strategic challenges in their organisational context, building buy-in and commitment for achieving strategic results. Marc has 25 years of experience working in many sectors and with a variety of organisations in the international arena, including e.g. the OECD, the European Commission, ETF, EEA, EIT, UNEP. In the health and life sciences sector, Marc worked with organisations such as EFSA, WHO, OIE (World Animal Health Organisation), Novartis, GSK, Chiesi, UCB, EIT Health and many others. Among the many participatory foresight processes Marc led is the Asia Europe Foundation's Future of Pandemics (ASEF ASAP). Marc is the author of many publications in the field, including the official OECD handbook Citizens as Partners (2001), the STIR approach to Stakeholder Integrated Research (published in Climatic Change) and the upcoming official OIE handbook on behaviour change. He is managing director of Prospex bv (www.prospex.com), the international consultancy, based in Belgium.

Noa Simon Delso, BeeLife European Beekeeping Coordination

Speaker and panellist

Noa Simón Delso became Scientific Director and Project Manager at BeeLife at the beginning of 2021. She holds a PhD in Agricultural Science and Bioengineering from the Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium), an MSc in Economy, Management and Consumer Studies from Wageningen University (the Netherlands) and she is a DVM from the University of León (Spain). In her scientific career, Noa has specialised in environmental toxicology, particularly on bees, environmental policy and honey bee health, fields in which she has published several papers in peer-reviewed international journals in the field of environmental research, health and toxicology. In 2019 she started diversifying her activities, evolving towards the implementation of data science for pollinators' health. In parallel, she has provided technical assistance to Belgian and European beekeepers and decision-makers. Since 2009, she has

provided scientific-technical assistance to the European organisation BeeLife, following the evolution and implementation of European legislation on the subject of pesticide authorisation, agricultural and environmental policy.

Title of talk: The EU Bee Partnership - a successful multi-stakeholder partnership

Abstract of talk

Food safety becomes increasingly complex where there is a will to integrate scientific, political and social considerations. Indeed, the inclusion of diverse understandings of food safety allows for the concept of One Health to evolve and incorporate multiple field realities. Furthermore, new policies bring extra constraints to the food safety environment. Engagement, consultation and communication with stakeholders may help achieve comprehensive and inclusive approaches. EFSA and other EU agencies started a process of systematic inclusion of stakeholder contributions. Here, stakeholders integrate representatives of institutions linked to administration and policymaking, field practitioners, civil society, academia or industry. However, several challenges limit stakeholders' optimal contribution and engagement in the process. First, the large gap between the capacity of different stakeholders in terms of economic and human resources hampers the optimal participation of many. As a result, it creates frustration among the contributors to ever-increasing complex and abstract risk assessment approaches: it becomes difficult for small (or even large) organisations to contribute in a meaningful way or even understand the consequences of decisions taken at different food safety management or assessment levels. As a result, there is a lack of trust in the developmental process of food safety policy implementation. Workable collaborative frameworks need to be in place to encourage empathy among stakeholders and transparency in decision-making, in order to create an inclusive environment that allows all relevant stakeholders to contribute to the process in similar conditions. Finally, each institution needs to understand its role and embrace its responsibility so that the feeling of justice and trust required to achieve the full engagement of stakeholders can be created.

Katharina Faradsch, Prospex bv

Moderator

Katharina Faradsch is a Senior consultant and facilitator. She combines a background in management, development cooperation and academic research with excellence in multi-stakeholder project coordination and implementation. She has worked both across Europe as well as internationally, in a variety of multi-cultural

and multi-lingual settings. Katharina has coordinated and facilitated stakeholder engagement processes in a range of (research) projects in areas such as ecosystem services and natural capital, international food security, resource efficiency, education, training and many others. She has designed and facilitated numerous multi-stakeholder projects and events for research, communication, exchange, and consensus building for various European Commission DGs (e.g. DG EAC, DG ENV, DG ENER) and European agencies (e.g. EFSA, ETF, EIOPA, EIGE or EBA). With previous work experiences for a Dutch University and a Belgian NGO, Katharina understands the challenges of bringing different types of organisations and expectations together in research and engagement processes and works towards turning these into opportunities for a high degree of engagement by participants and stakeholders on the issues “ and commitment to address the next steps.

Organiser**Co-organisers**