ONE Society

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: BRIDGING EU RESEARCH AND POLICY

Summary

In support of the EU Green Deal, the so-called ENVI Agencies (ECDC, ECHA, EEA, EFSA and EMA) contribute to a sustainable One Health approach. In the coming decade, billions of euros will be dedicated to Research & Innovation (R&I) needed to support a transition towards more sustainability. EU Agencies, individually and collectively, can make a difference in supporting the EU Research Agenda. During the thematic session, we will look at their peculiar role at the crossroads of the science–policy interface, and will discuss their current and envisioned research involvement. We will present case studies showing the benefits of EU Agency involvement in research and will formulate recommendations on how they could be involved even more and thus generate additional value. EU Agencies that work closely together, in research and other areas, provide the EU with more holistic answers, which are needed for our society and the environment.

Vision

At the heart of the EU's Green Deal, the European Commission's strategies on biodiversity, zero pollution and farm-to-fork aim for a renewed and improved balance between nature, food systems and biodiversity to protect the environment, people's health and well-being. In the coming decade, billions of euros will be dedicated to the necessary R&I needed to support this transition for example by significantly reducing the use and risk of chemicals and more hazardous pesticides, fertilizers and antimicrobials in agri- and aquaculture. EU agencies, individually and collectively, can make a difference in supporting the EU's research and the European research area.

Background – Challenges and opportunities

The ONE Conference provides a unique occasion for EU agencies working in the remit of Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) to come together and to demonstrate the added value that they currently provide, and could further provide in the future, in support of the EU's research agenda. EU agencies can help shape research agendas, avoid duplication of activities among research projects, maximise the results of R&I projects, and foster impactful research in support of regulatory science and policy. DG RTD is in contact with the agencies and other Commission services to agree on best practices on how to involve the EU decentralised agencies in Horizon Europe. In 2018, the European Union Agencies Network for Scientific

Organiser Co-organisers

efsa European Food Safety Authority · ecdc European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control · ECHA European Chemicals Agency · European Environment Agency · European Medicines Agency Science Medicines Health · European Commission Joint Research Centre

Advice (EU–ANSA) jointly published the EU-ANSA agencies' engagement in the EU research knowledge cycle. The technical and regulatory agencies that provide scientific advice to EU policymakers are both a source and a user of knowledge. Agencies have a deep understanding of the research knowledge available, as well as where knowledge gaps limit the quality of advice produced. The report illustrates how agencies engage with EU research funders and researchers in the research knowledge cycle, which is conceptualised as a sequence of identification of research needs, as advocacy of these needs to EU research funders and as an engagement with ongoing EU research projects.

The interim evaluation of the H2020 identified a number of areas for improvement where EU agencies can help, such as: greater outreach to civil society to better explain results and impacts, 'widening' to involve more low-performing R&I countries, more international cooperation, and making results more openly accessible to the wider scientific community and public. EU agencies already have well-established networks, involving many stakeholders, and offer a sustainable base on which to build partnerships under Horizon Europe.

In October 2020 the European Court of Auditors released a Special Report 22/2020: Future of EU agencies – Potential for more flexibility and cooperation. Its special audit assessed for the first time how well the EU agencies have been able to deliver EU policies for the public good. The report indicated further opportunities to strengthen cooperation by *Strengthening the role of agencies as centres for sharing expertise and networking*. Assessing how EU agencies can contribute more effectively to EU policies is essential for the future of Europe, because Europe relies on EU agencies more than ever – especially in a time of crisis [1]. Alex Brenninkmeijer, reporting Member of the European Court of Auditors, argued: *Cooperation between EU agencies also needs to reach another level. So far, synergies have been sought primarily in horizontal administrative processes such as IT and HR. Policy coordination and cooperation is a more promising area, and EU agencies can share views and need to learn to find their voice. Even agencies that do not seem very policy-driven … can actively contribute to cooperation on policies such as the Green Deal and Covid Recovery. …. In short, policy cooperation is crucial to EU agencies' success, and needs to be fostered by their institutional partners. As far as EU citizens are concerned, individual EU agencies succeed only if the policy as a whole succeeds*. [2]

During the 21st century, several health threats have emerged, linked to zoonotic and (re)emerging infectious diseases (e.g. COVID, SARS), climate change and environmental sustainability. These health threats are complex and cannot be solved by one sector alone. A comprehensive strategy and transdisciplinary collaboration on all aspects of health for people, animals and the environment are required, often

referred to as the One Health approach. The COVID-19 pandemic reminded us of how public and animal health are intrinsically linked and showed the need for science-based interventions.
The focus of the thematic session will be on the science – policy interface. Agencies are knowledge centres bringing together the necessary know-how to inform policies. Agencies help to formulate policy-relevant research in support of public health, bring added value to Member States and citizens. EU agencies that work together closely, also in the area of research, provide the EU with integrated solutions that are needed for our society and the environment.

Scope and objectives

Making a difference! This thematic session will showcase the benefits that EU agencies already bring to the EU's research agenda and explore what additional involvement they could have to add value. The session will discuss EU agency involvement 'as is' (what is the added value of EU agency involvement today) and 'to be' (what other involvement would be beneficial). The session will explore how EU agencies broker knowledge both upstream (from science to policy) and downstream (from policy/funding to science/society) by:

Science to Policy

- Strengthening the science-policy interface and helping research to deliver impact.
- Enhancing synergies between research efforts in respective EU agency domains of expertise.
- Making use of the outcomes of research projects and providing follow-up and sustainability.
- Providing capacity to facilitate innovation and digitalisation – helping basic research to lead to necessary systemic changes.

Policy to Science

- Providing policy-relevant knowledge and access to established expert networks.
- Disseminating research results and access to data: engaging with stakeholders and civil society.
- Offering cross-agency cooperation on issues demanding an integrated approach to knowledge development.

[1] *https://www.eipa.eu/more-important-than-ever-eu-agencies-in-times-of-crisis/*

[2] The unknown agents of European cooperation, and their future in ERA Forum (2021).

People behind the session

Session Coordinator: Stephan Bronzwaer, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
Chairpersons: Mike Catchpole, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
Moderators: Mike Catchpole, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
Rapporteurs: Stephan Bronzwaer, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA); Clémence Foltz, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA); Konstantinos Paraskevopoulos, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

ONE Society – Session affiliate profiles

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: BRIDGING EU RESEARCH AND POLICY

Stephan Bronzwaer, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
Rapporteur

Stef Bronzwaer works at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), initially on the monitoring of antimicrobial resistance and food-borne outbreaks, later to lead the scientific cooperation with the Member States, and now as EFSA's Research Coordinator: informing research agendas, promoting food research priorities, and coordinating EFSA's research involvement. He graduated as medical doctor at the University of Amsterdam and completed his PhD at the University of Groningen (the Netherlands). As a medical doctor he worked shortly at the Social Medical Centre 'Bukas Palad' in a slum-area near Manila, the Philippines. He then moved to the Infectious disease unit of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità in Rome, Italy, where he worked as project manager of an EU-project on communicable diseases. From 1998 to 2002 he worked in the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), where he helped establish the European Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance System (EARSS), as project leader. From 2002 to 2005 he worked at the European Commission in Luxembourg where he held responsibility for several European surveillance networks on communicable diseases and lead the implementation of the Community strategy against antimicrobial resistance.

Clémence Foltz, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
Rapporteur

Clémence Foltz is a trainee at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), where she is working in the Chief Scientist Office to reinforce EFSA's knowledge broker function through informing research agendas, promoting food safety research funding opportunities, and coordinating EFSA's research involvement. She is also supporting the work of the EU Agencies Network on Scientific Advice (EU-ANSA) on learning from the response to COVID-19, coordinating the delivery of two reports that she co-authored. Prior to this, Clémence acquired professional experience in research administration and management at The Francis Crick Institute and then at The Institute of Cancer Research in London (UK). From 2015 to 2021, she has been driven to support scientists at different levels achieve their research aims by providing expert advice and help with the scoping, application, and management of

grants. She also led on some aspects of research governance, focusing on activities related to good research practice and research integrity. Clémence brings her interest and expertise in infectious diseases, with research experience in the fields of virology, bacteriology and parasitology. She holds an engineering degree in biotechnology from the Ecole Superieure de Biotechnologie de Strasbourg (France) and completed a PhD in Infection and Immunity at University College London (UCL, UK).

Catherine Ganzleben, European Environment Agency (EEA)

Panellist

Dr Catherine Ganzleben is Head of Group on air pollution, environment and health at the European Environment Agency. She leads a team working on environmental risks to health, including air pollution, chemicals, noise and climate change, assessing exposure and estimating the associated burden of disease. In addition, the team explores how high-quality environments, such as clean urban environments with access to green space, foster health and well-being and can support disease prevention. Another focus is on the social distribution of environmental pollution both across Europe and within countries.
Prior to that, Catherine worked as a senior consultant at Milieu Ltd. delivering studies to the EU and UN institutions on environment and public health issues. Prior to that she worked for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research delivering technical assistance on chemicals and waste management. She has also worked as a team leader for the Earther Negotiations Bulletin covering multi-lateral environmental negotiations, as well as an expert for the European Environmental Bureau. Catherine has a doctorate in economic geography from the University of Oxford and a post-doctorate on urban ecosystems from the Institute of Advanced Studies in Tokyo

Zoe Dingwall, European Parliament

Panellist

Zoe Dingwall has worked for over five years as a policy adviser for the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament Committee for Environment, public health and food safety (ENVI) committee. She graduated from the University of Abertay Dundee with an honours degree in law. She has more than 10 years experience working in banking and finance before deciding to change career path towards research, analysis and international policy making. Zoe has worked on cross cutting issues including Brexit, public health, chemicals, the climate and environment, biodiversity

and food safety and was part of the European Parliament negotiating team for the Farm to Fork Strategy and the recent revision of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Zoe has strong interest across a wide-variety of subjects including environmental crime and liability, corporate and financial crime, climate disinformation, zoonotic diseases, food contaminants, corporate sustainability reporting and due diligence in our food supply chains as well, more recently the effect of the Ukraine war on foods systems and food security. Passionate about nature, in her spare time, Zoe is most happy outdoors, gardening or walking in the Cairngorms national park in the Scottish Highlands.

Pikka Jokelainen, Statens Serum Institut

Panellist

DVM, PhD, Adj. prof. working at Statens Serum Institut, Copenhagen, Denmark, with a focus on One Health and infectious disease preparedness. Member of Project Management Team of , Deputy Leader of Workpackage 3, Coordinating Joint Research Projects, and Deputy Leader of Workpackage 5, Science-to-Policy Translation. Leader of multidisciplinary TOXOSOURCES consortium. Co-chair of One Health sustainability module. President of Scandinavian-Baltic Society for Parasitology; 1st Vice-President of World Federation of Parasitologists. Dr Jokelainen has produced over 85 peer-reviewed publications, mostly focusing on zoonotic pathogens in humans, domestic animals, pets, wildlife, food and the environment.

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: EU Agencies as transdisciplinary agents of change

Abstract of talk

The world is facing many challenges, including related to our primary need for food. Think how climate change, changing food habits and societal expectations impact food production systems. Our food policies and food systems will have to shift dramatically towards sustainability to achieve the ambitious goals of the EU Green Deal.
The challenges are complex and cannot be met by one sector alone – we need a One Health approach. Transdisciplinary collaboration is needed to consider all aspects of health for people, animals and the environment. The Commission and Member States need strong independent research and scientific advice that go beyond traditional boundaries between scientific disciplines and organisations. EFSA and its sister agencies have a key role to play in bringing together the knowledge generated by research, exploring scenarios and formulating fit-for-purpose scientific advice to policymakers. EU agencies have recently advocated for an enhanced inter-agency collaboration and for policymakers to capitalise on the collective value the agencies bring [1].
At EFSA, we are already strengthening regulatory science to support the necessary transition of food systems. EFSA organised its first Risk Assessment Research Assembly (RARA) 4 years ago, and has since become more engaged in external research activities. Upstream, we proactively inform research agendas by advising the Commission on regulatory research needs and priorities (for example, we published the Food Safety Regulatory Research Needs 2030 [2]). Downstream, we established a Research Platform [3] as a one-stop-shop for our community to find food-related research information and disseminate funding opportunities. We are also actively engaged in several research projects (e.g. OneHealth EJP and FoodSafety4EU) and European partnerships (e.g. PARC), utilising useful research outcomes in our work. EFSA is convening RARA again on 7 December 2022 to stimulate synergies among EU and national research activities and funding efforts. In this session, case studies on the benefits that EU agencies already bring to the

EU's research agenda will be presented, and we discuss how the agencies can further make a difference to the science-policy interface. EU agencies that work together closely, including in the field of research, provide the EU with integrated solutions that are needed for our society and the environment.

1. 10.2903/sp.efsa.2022.e200101
2. 10.2903/j.efsa.2019.e170622
3. https://bit.ly/3Iw85FV

Wim De Coen, European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

Panellist

Wim De Coen is head of unit in the Directorate of Hazard Assessment in the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) dealing with various regulatory processes (e.g. REACH Dossier & Substance Evaluation, SVHC identification, POPs regulation). He started in ECHA in 2008 and gained experience with various aspects of REACH and has held previous management positions in the Agency (e.g. Executive Office, Directorate of Evaluation). Previously he worked one year in the European Chemical Bureau (DG-JRC) as a part of his sabbatical.
Before joining DG-JRC and ECHA, he was Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Antwerp (Belgium) where he was leading a pioneering research group on molecular methods (NAMs) for risk assessment of chemicals. As (co)author he holds over 300 publications in this discipline. He holds various degrees (Masters in Chemistry-Biotechnology, in Environmental Sanitation, in EU Law Studies), a PhD in Applied Biological Sciences (Environmental Technologies) (University Ghent, Belgium) and an Executive MBA from Vlerick Management School, Belgium (University of Leuven & Ghent, Belgium).

Tony Humphreys, European Medicines Agency (EMA)

Panellist

He started work in 1983 in the area of development pharmaceutics for a national branded generics manufacturer and an international research and development company before moving into international regulatory affairs in 1991. Joined the EMA in May 1996 and fulfilled a variety of managerial positions including Head of Sector Regulatory Affairs and Organisational Support (2000-2009) and Head of Sector for Regulatory, Procedural and Committee Support (2009-2013), Head of Scientific Committee Support Department (2013-2016), Head of Procedure Management and Committees Support Division (ad interim) (2015-2016) and Head of Scientific Committees Regulatory Science Strategy (2016-2020). In the context of the most

recent organisation at the Agency from 1st March 2020, appointed Head of the Regulatory Science and Innovation Task Force. Within this capacity, responsible for four major functions: (1) operation of a regulatory science observatory addressing emerging innovations (2) operation of the SME office (3) coordination of regulatory science research activities and (4) supply and availability of medicines and medical Devices.

Mike Catchpole, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

Chair/Co-chair

Mike Catchpole is a medical doctor who has worked in infectious disease epidemiology and response at the national and international level since 1991. He is Chief Scientist at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Prior to that he was Director of Public Health England's national Centre for Infectious Disease Surveillance and Control. His experience of management of communicable disease surveillance and response includes the management of many national outbreak investigations and leadership of the national epidemiological response to the 2009 influenza A(H1N1) pandemic in England, developing and managing the surveillance systems for the 2012 London Olympics and of the surveillance systems that were instrumental in driving the dramatic reductions in MRSA and C.difficile in England. He also led the public health follow up of those exposed to the terrorist bombings in London in 2005. His primary research interests have included HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, the wider health effects of major incidents, and public health information systems development. He has also been a member of the steering groups for a number of European projects, and chaired the Steering Committee of the European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET) from 2001 to 2006. He has an academic appointments as visiting professor at Imperial College London.

Karen Fabbri, European Commission

Panellist

Dr. Karen Fabbri, Deputy Head of Unit Bioeconomy and Food Systems, Healthy Planet Directorate, DG Research and Innovation (DG RTD) - European Commission, Brussels. Karen has over two decades of work experience at the European Commission, where over the years she has held various positions focusing on the interface between science and policy in areas such as food systems and nutrition, environment and sustainable development, early warning and disaster risk reduction, sustainable urban, land and coastal management, responsible research and

innovation (RRI), multi-actor and public engagement in science, research and innovation. Karen currently leads the Food 2030 work at the Directorate General for Research and Innovation, where she is responsible for the development of EU research and innovation policy for sustainable healthy and inclusive food systems, and its deployment through Horizon Europe. A key publication in this respect is the "Food 2030 pathways for action - Research and innovation policy as a driver for sustainable, healthy and inclusive food system" (2020).

Konstantinos Paraskevopoulos, European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
Rapporteur

Konstantinos (Kostas) is currently working at EFSA's chief scientist office (CSO) as a scientific project coordinator in the SPIDO (Science Studies and Project Identification and Development Office) team which supports EFSA's preparedness for future risk assessment requirements by advancing selected scientific themes while fostering connectivity and partnerships with Member States and other EU Agencies as well as international organisations and third countries. Prior to joining the CSO, Kostas worked in the genetically modified organisms Unit of EFSA for 6 years Before joining EFSA in 2014, Kostas held an academic career working as researcher in molecular and cell biology and biochemistry in several research institutes (e.g. the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Germany and the Medical Research Council (MRC) in UK) Kostas obtained his Bachelor's degree in Biophysics followed by a Master's in cheminformatics and a Ph.D. in molecular and structural biology. Kostas is an interdisciplinarily trained scientist with skills in several scientific areas (molecular biophysics and biochemistry, in silico-based drug design and bioinformatics, molecular and cell biology and genetics).

Robert van Gorcom, Wageningen University and Research (WUR)
Speaker

Robert van Gorcom (1956) is General Director of Wageningen Food Safety Research. WFSR is the Official Laboratory for NL, the major NRL, EURL and as part of Wageningen University & Research (WUR) a research institute. We also serve other national governments, EFSA and the EU. Robert is molecular biologist and graduated from Wageningen University in 1981. He obtained his PhD degree from the University of Amsterdam in 1997 on the analysis of gene expression in Aspergillus. The first 20 years of his career he worked for TNO on applied molecular microbiology and plant biotechnology. in 2000 he became head of the glasshouse horticulture research stations of WUR and in 2002 he was appointed as BU manager Safety & Health of

RIKILT, the food safety institute of WUR, where he was appointed as managing director in 2010. RIKILT merged in 2019 with the Laboratory on Food and Feed Safety of the NVWA (the Dutch food safety authority) into Wageningen Food Safety Research. Robert is member of the board of directors of WUR. From 2014 to 2018 he was member of the Management Board of EFSA, first as chair of the Audit Committee and next as vice-chair of the MB. He currently holds next to his position at WUR several advisory and supervisory positions all in the public domain.

Title of talk: Research collaboration across Agencies and national stakeholders

Abstract of talk

Since the Maastricht Treaty was signed, the EU has created 37 decentralised agencies. Many significant tasks have been delegated to these agencies by national and EU authorities, between which there is an intricate relationship. As the EU agencies continue to evolve, they also seek to reorient how they interact with citizens, with their institutional partners and with each other. A special report by the European Court of Auditors on the cooperation of European Agencies, for which the late Alex Brenninkmeijer was the reporting member, underlined the potential of scientific collaboration between the agencies. For EFSA, collaboration with national institutes and academia doing risk assessment and hazard-related research is crucial. The primary process of producing scientific advice relies on the Scientific Committee and 10 panels made up of top scientists coming (mostly) from organisations in the Member States. EFSA relies on external scientific capacity and is tied to national organisations by a kind of umbilical cord. Therefore, capacity building in risk assessment at the national level will continue and research collaboration between EFSA and the relevant institutes and academia will be of mutual benefit. Agencies have an important function in the science-policy-interface as they manage the knowledge coming from research outputs, bringing it together to facilitate informed policy decisions. The relevance of both types of research collaboration will be discussed.