



**MINUTES OF THE 1ST PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC
PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH, PLANT PROTECTION PRODUCTS AND
THEIR RESIDUES HELD ON 22 May 2003**

PARTICIPANTS

Members PPR Panel

Mr. J. BOESTEN, A. BOOBIS, A. HARDY (Chair), A. HART, H. KOEPP, R. LUTTIK, Mrs. K. MACHERA, Mr. M. MARONI (Vice-chair), D. MCGREGOR, O. MEYER, A. MORETTO, Mrs E. PAPADOPOULOS-MOURKIDOU, Mr. E. PETZINGER, K. SAVOLAINEN (Vice-chair), A. SCHAEFER, W. STEURBAUT, Mrs. C. VLEMINCKX.

European Commission

Mr. M. WALSH (Interface Unit, DG Health and Consumer Protection)

EFSA

Mr. G. PODGER¹ (executive director), Mrs. C. MAJEWSKI² (communication)
Mrs. M. DUNIER-THOMANN, Mr. H. BRUNO (Scientific Co-ordinators)
Mrs. M. FEUILLET (Administrative secretary)

APOLOGIES

PPR Panel

Mrs D. TSIPI-STEFANITSI

I. GENERAL INAUGURAL MEETING (MORNING SESSION)

The Executive Director welcomed all attending the meeting. The objective of the first part of the meeting was to brief the Members of the Scientific Panels and Committees on their role, the role of EFSA and the joint interrelationship with other European Institutions and with National Authorities. The first session was intended to provide opportunities for everyone to participate in the discussion. It was hoped that there would be strong and lively interaction between EFSA and members of the Scientific Committee and Panels in all future dealings, as this was the way to build mutual confidence and make best use of the very considerable scientific expertise that was available.

¹ attending the morning session only

² attending the morning session only

The Executive Director stressed that EFSA wished to build on the many achievements of the previous scientific committee system. Equally EFSA had not been created to simply replicate the previous system but to make innovations in a number of key areas. In particular, there was a need:

- (i) to develop and make open and transparent the science of risk assessment. The Scientific Committee would have a particular role in this;
- (ii) to provide greater opportunity for stakeholder participation in the risk assessment process the delivery of a final opinion;
- (iii) to provide public and realistic timeframes for work which was undertaken and, except in exceptional circumstances, to adhere to these;
- (iv) to engage, in liaison with national authorities, in more timely and meaningful communication of risk assessments. This would in itself require considerable dialogue between EFSA and its Scientific Committee and Panels
- (v) to ensure that the best expertise available was used. The Scientific Committee and Panels should be ready to form Working Groups or use other means to obtain the external expertise they needed.

In concluding his opening remarks, the Executive Director took the opportunity of congratulating the members of the Scientific Committee and Panels on their selection by the EFSA Management Board. The standard of selection had been high and many very good candidates had unfortunately had to be disappointed, although it was hoped there might be opportunities for them to participate in Working Groups. EFSA staff very much looked forward to working with and supporting those present.

Practical information was then given to participants on the administrative functioning of the EFSA (C. MAJEWSKI) and on the role of the Interface Unit of the Commission (M. WALSH).

II. 1ST PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PPR PANEL (AFTERNOON SESSION)

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The scientific co-ordinator of the Scientific Panel M. DUNIER-THOMANN, welcomed the 17 participants and congratulated them for their nomination on the PPR Panel. D. TSIPI-STEFANITSI (GR) apologizes for not being able to attend the meeting.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted without amendment.

3. TOUR DE TABLE: INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

The EFSA staff in charge of the PPR sector briefly introduced themselves, they will ensure the smooth transition from the ex Scientific Committee on Plants to the PPR Panel on questions from the European Commission.

The members of the Panel present introduced themselves and their expertise to each other. A short resume of their CV will be placed on the EFSA website. As the Panel could have up to 21 members, it could be possible to increase slightly the size of the panel with some missing expertise when needed in a new sector. A written procedure will be used for nominations by the Management Board for candidates on the reserve list.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIRS

The panel members were given the opportunity to propose themselves to be candidate for the task of Chair and Vice-Chairs before and during the meeting.

Professor Anthony HARDY(GB) was elected chairman, supported by unanimity by raising hand as he was the only candidate.

The election of the first vice-chairman was done by secret ballot as there were two candidates left (a third withdrew). A second ballot was needed, as the required two-thirds majority was not reached at the first ballot; Professor Kai SAVOLAINEN (FIN) was elected.

The second vice-chairman, Professor Marco MARONI (IT), was elected by the raising of hands, as he was the only candidate.

The chairman, assisted by the scientific co-ordinator, ran the remainder of the meeting.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/CONFIDENTIALITY/INDEPENDENCE

The members of the panel were invited to fill the three forms requested by the EFSA regulation on the annual declaration of interest, confidentiality and independence.

6. ORGANISATION OF WORKING GROUPS

The former two permanent working groups (WG) which existed in the SCP should be reconsidered; a more flexible organisation should be tried in the PPR Panel according to needs. It was suggested to create smaller and more focused expert groups (as a WG “Ecotoxicology” and a WG “Fate and behaviour in soil”). When the question justifies it, a joint Working Group could be temporary created between any of the WG (i.e. a joint WG “Toxicology” and WG “Ecotoxicology”; WG “Ecotoxicology” and WG “Fate and behaviour in soil” or WG “Toxicology” and WG “Fate and behaviour in soil”). The new organisation could be reconsidered after some time of use.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

The Scientific Panels, under Article 28.1 of Parliament and Council Regulation 178/2002 establishing the Authority, shall be responsible for providing the scientific opinions of the Authority, each within their own spheres of competence. The mandate of the PPR Panel, under Article 18 of the Decision concerning the establishment and operations of the Panels, adopted by the Authority’s Management Board on 17.10.2002, is set out as follows: it will deliver opinions on scientific questions relating to the safety of the plant protection products for the user/worker, the consumer of treated products and the environment and plant health.

In principle the questions can be raised by the Commission, European Parliament, the Member States or on the initiative of the EFSA (i.e. peer review of the 2nd stage of active substances). The questions will reach the EFSA via the Interface Unit (DG SANCO D5) following a new procedure according to a guidance document in preparation.

7.1 Questions sent to the PPR Panel:

Two questions were sent by the Commission (DG SANCO E1) so far:

- A question concerning whether or not a threshold mechanism for tumour formation can be assumed for the liver tumours found in rats and mice exposed to mepanipyrin, to be discussed by the Working Group Toxicology.

A rapporteur was designated to prepare the first draft of the opinion on the question.

- A question on the impact of azinphos-methyl on non-target arthropods and birds to be treated by the Working Group Ecotoxicology.

The colleagues from DG SANCO E1 and the interface Unit have still to finalize the terms of references to stay in the remit of the risk assessment and not use a wording typical of risk management, they should deliver the final draft (two separate questions) and the background documents by early June.

A rapporteur was designated to address the question on birds and on arthropods.

The Panel members who were involved in the preparation of the monograph when their country was rapporteur Member State were *de facto* excluded from this selection due to the potential risk of conflict of interest.

The opinions will be published on the EFSA website after adoption.

7.2 Peer review of the 2nd stage of active substances, link with the panel work:

H. BRUNO gave a PowerPoint presentation on the EFSA proposal on the Peer Review of the 2nd stage, already presented to the MS in the WG Legislation Pesticide of the DG SANCO mid-April. A discussion followed, where some Panel members expressed their concerns about the tight time constraint to deliver an opinion in the new system, when it starts dealing with questions on the active substances of the second 2nd stage.

The need for another brainstorming session on the subject was identified.

8. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2003

8.1 Dates of the plenary meetings:

2nd panel plenary: 7 October 2003

3rd panel plenary: 2 December 2003

N.B.: A quorum (2/3 of the Panel members) has to be reached to be able to held a plenary and adopt an opinion.

8.2 Dates of the WG meetings:

The first WG meeting will be on 25 June 2003: for the first time we will try to hold two WG in parallel, one WG in toxicology on the question on mepanipyrin and one WG in ecotoxicology on the question on azinphos-methyl.

The two WG will combine in the afternoon for a feed-back discussion, followed by a brainstorming discussion on the role of the PPR Panel in the new context of EFSA responsibility in the Peer review of the 2nd stage of active substances.

The 2nd WG meeting will be held on 11 September 2003.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The scientific co-ordinator informed the panel that the former Commission archiving system CIRCA can no longer be used; a new EFSA Document Management System (DMS) is in preparation and should be implemented in the future. In the meantime background documents will be sent to Panel members by email.