European Food Safety Authority

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE & ADVISORY FORUM UNIT

Parma, 25 November 2008

MINUTES OF THE 32ND PLENARY MEETING OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE HELD ON 25-26 SEPTEMBER 2008 IN PARMA

(adopted by written procedure on 25 November 2008)

PARTICIPANTS

Scientific Committee (SC):
Susan Barlow[1], John Dan Collins, Andrew Chesson, Albert Flynn, Anthony Hardy, Klaus-Dieter Jany, Ada Knaap[2], Harry Kuiper, John Christian Larsen[3], Pierre Le Neindre, Jan Schans, Josef Schlatter, Vittorio Silano (Chair), Staffan Skerfving, Philippe Vannier.

European Commission (EC):
Michael Walsh (DG SANCO/Unit 03 – Science and Stakeholder relations)

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA):
Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle (Executive Director), Elisa Aiassa[4] (Assessment Methodology Unit) Bernhard Berger[5] (Scientific Cooperation Unit), Stef Bronzwaer[6] (Scientific Cooperation Unit), Hubert Deluyker (Director of Scientific Cooperation and Assistance), Stefan Fabiansson[7] (Data Collection and Exposure Assessment Unit), Pietro Ferrari[8] (Data Collection and Exposure Assessment Unit), Riitta Maijala (Director of Risk Assessment), Carola Sondermann[9] (Scientific Cooperation Unit), Didier Verloo[10] (Assessment Methodology Unit), Karen Talbot[11] (Communications advisor).

Secretariat of the Scientific Committee:
Silvia Bellocchio (Administrative Assistant), Sergio Beltra-Martinez (Administrative Assistant), Bernard Bottex (Scientific Officer), David Carlander (Scientific Officer), Daniela Maurici (Scientific Officer), Jeffrey Moon (Advisory Forum Team), Torben Nilsson (Advisory Forum Team, Acting Deputy Head of Unit).

[1] Present as of 25 September 2008 p.m.
[2] Present on 25 September 2008
[3] Present as of 25 September 2008 p.m.
[4] Present for item 10
[5] Present for item 14
[6] Present for item 14
[7] Present for item 10
[8] Present for item 10
[9] Present for item 14
[10] Present for item 10
[11] Present for item 5

1. OPENING, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as tabled.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Sue Barlow declared an interest in relation to item 13 of the agenda (draft mandate on the Threshold of Toxicological concern – TTC). A few years ago, she drafted the ILSI Europe Monograph on the TTC concept. This interest has been declared in her annual declaration of interest and was not considered as a conflict. The other participants had no additional interest other than the ones listed in their annual declarations of interest.

4. FEEDBACK FROM EFSA ON ISSUES RELEVANT FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Report back from the Advisory Forum meeting, 18-19 September 2008 - Paris

The participants were updated on the outcome of the discussion on the EFSA strategic plan 2009-2013. Member States (MS) were supportive of the priorities and content of the plan.

The questionnaire regarding the review of the strategy on cooperation and networking between MS and EFSA was agreed.

The proposal for the organisation in 2009 of a meeting of national experts on dietary reference values was welcomed.

Early in 2009, EFSA will also hold a meeting of national experts on aspartame. There is broad consensus internationally amongst food authorities on the absence of adverse health effects of aspartame. Consequently, aspartame is allowed globally by regulatory authorities for a wide variety of food uses. However, some studies have raised questions about the health implications of exposure to aspartame. Thorough and independent scientific evaluation of these studies has not resulted in the need to reconsider the safety of aspartame, although there continues to be a certain level of public concern with respect to the risks of aspartame use in food. EFSA and its Advisory Forum (AF) therefore agreed on a consorted European-wide initiative to address in a comprehensive manner the concerns about the safety of aspartame for use in food. The aim is to identify possible areas of discrepancies, or gaps, in the body of evidence on aspartame safety and to consider options to address these discrepancies and/or gaps, if any.

DG Research presented its work to the AF and it was suggested that a similar session on research priorities should be arranged for a future SC plenary, possibly in the spring of next year.

The status of the ESCO (EFSA Scientific Cooperation) projects will be reviewed at the Steering Group on Cooperation meeting in Berlin on 23-24 October 2008. The Advisory Forum and the

Scientific Committee will have the possibility to review the ESCO reports during their next plenary meetings.

Update on INEX implementation

The scientific advice adopted by the Scientific Committee on an Internal and External Review system for EFSA's scientific work is being implemented within EFSA. An internal guidance document has been developed and is used during the preparation of the scientific opinions. An internal review of a sample of published opinions is ongoing. Based on this exercise, a report will be produced. The external review process is under preparation to be launched in 2009 where a sample of scientific opinions will be reviewed by external experts. These procedures will ensure an internal quality control and serve to harmonise the quality of EFSA's outputs.

Definitions of EFSA's scientific outputs

The document describing the EFSA's scientific outputs has been published on the EFSA website.
The EFSA's scientific outputs can be classified into two broad categories:

- opinions of the Scientific Panels and the Scientific Committee; the opinions are subject to adoption by a Panel or the Scientific Committee in all cases and can be subcategorised into scientific opinions, statements or guidance;
- other scientific outputs that are prepared by EFSA staff or other external experts; the document can be statements, guidance, scientific or technical reports.

Visit of the Commissioner A. Vassiliou

The European Commissioner for Health, Androulla Vassiliou, visited EFSA on the 17th July 2008. The Commissioner had the opportunity to meet the Scientific Committee and members of the Management Board. The Commissioner stressed the importance of a dialogue with the European Commission for a mutual understanding of EFSA's and the Commission's priorities. The Commissioner expressed her appreciation for the establishment of the two EFSA new Panels, ANS and CEF, and for the priorities that have been identified together with DG Health and Consumers. It was agreed to put more emphasis on the alignment of priorities, work-programmes and on the coordination of communication between DG Health and Consumers and EFSA.

Informal meeting with the Council of Ministers of Agriculture

On the 9th October, the French Presidency organised in Annecy a conference on animal and human emerging diseases. The Executive Director had the opportunity to present EFSA's activities in the area of animal diseases and zoonoses. The Council of Ministers was impressed by EFSA's activities and by the number of opinions delivered in this area. Speaking notes of the Executive Director are available on the EFSA website[12].

Experts' satisfaction questionnaire

A survey to assess the satisfaction of the experts working for EFSA will be launched in October 2008. An anonymous questionnaire will be sent to all Panel members and external experts contributing to

[12] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902123073.htm

EFSA's work. The results will help EFSA in identifying ways to improve the working conditions for the experts.

5.- 6. DRAFT OPINION ON THE APPLICATION OF NANOTECHNOLOGY IN THE FOOD AND FEED AREA

For discussion and endorsement for public consultation

The Chair of the working group presented the draft opinion which addresses nanotechnologies and their possible applications in the food and feed area. The draft indicates possible risks arising from their use and provides guidance on risk assessment. The Scientific Committee expressed its appreciation of the draft as developed by the working group. During the discussions of the draft, comments and suggestions for clarifications and restructuring some of the sections were provided. The revised version of the draft opinion was endorsed in principle by the Scientific Committee and will be amended according to the suggestions of the Scientific Committee. The final endorsement for the public consultation will be by written procedure. The public consultation will be launched in the middle of October and will last at least 6 weeks. The comments received will be considered before adoption of the final opinion by the Scientific Committee.

7. EFSA STRATEGY PLAN 2009-2013

The draft strategic plan 2009-2013 was presented. The draft strategic plan is intended to develop a medium and long term vision of EFSA's work and role and sets a basis for the annual work programmes and resource allocation.

A preliminary discussion was held at the Management Board meetings in April and June 2008. The draft plan was circulated for comments to the Advisory Forum, the Scientific Committee and Panels, the European Parliament and the Presidency of the European Council.

The responses received during the consultation were generally positive and supportive of the plan.

The Scientific Committee made a number of recommendations to improve the plan:

- Themes such as globalisation, climate change, migration etc., should be also reflected in the section on "meeting the challenges".
- More emphasis should be put on the way the plan will be implemented and how the balance between existing work and future work would be found.
- More prominence should be given to EFSA's activities such as evaluation of products, substances and claims subject to the regulatory process.

A public consultation will be launched on the EFSA website in early October 2008. The strategic plan should then be adopted at the December 2008 meeting of the Management Board.

8. DRAFT RESERVE LIST OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

EFSA is in the process of creating a reserve list of external experts who could assist the Scientific Committee in providing additional expertise. The selection committee composed by scientists of the

Scientific Committee secretariat and members of the Scientific Committee completed the evaluation of the eligible candidates and have made a proposal for a candidate to be appointed as external expert of the Scientific Committee. The Scientific Committee expressed a positive view on the selected expert. EFSA is now in the process of evaluating the declarations of interest as a last step in the finalisation of the selection process.

9. REPORT BACK FROM THE SCIENTIFIC PANELS

The Scientific Committee was updated on the outcome of the plenary meetings of the Scientific Panels since the last plenary meeting (for more details, please see the WebPages of the respective Panels on EFSA's website). In particular, the following issues were brought to the attention of the Scientific Committee:

AHAW

The Panel adopted 3 opinions at the last plenary in the beginning of September. Two opinions were on fish welfare (eel and trout). The third adopted opinion was on aquatic susceptible species to different infectious agents.

As a self mandate, the Panels will develop a guidance document on modelisation in the areas covered by the Panel's mandate. It is intended to finalise this guidance document before the end of the present mandate of the Panel (summer 2009).

ANS

The Chair of the Panel informed the Scientific Committee about the outcome of the second plenary of the newly established Panel. Fourteen compounds (food additives and nutrient sources) were discussed at the last plenary and 10 opinions were adopted. Two working groups were created on food additives and nutrient sources.

BIOHAZ

The Panel is working closely with the GMO Panel on a common opinion on the use of antimicrobial resistance genes as marker genes used in genetically modified plants.

TSE infectivity in milk and milk products from small ruminants has been an important item on the agenda of the last plenary. The Panel is considering whether new information should lead to a revision of previous statements on this issue.

A scientific colloquium on Campylobacter organized by EFSA will be held in Rome in December 2008.

The Panel Chair drew the attention on the need of new research data on TSE and on avian influenza and its possible transmissibility by eating contaminated food. This request has been transferred to DG RTD. An informal forum in DG SANCO has been proposed to gather priorities for European research; EFSA has been invited to contribute.

The Panel discussed working priorities for the coming years. The resulting document will be shared with the Scientific Committee, once adopted by the Panel.

CEF

The Panel adopted 5 opinions at the last plenary. 120 flavouring compounds for which no safety concern could be identified have been placed on a positive list. At present, there is a list of 319 flavourings that remain to be evaluated.

The Panel has also issued an opinion concerning the elimination of Bisphenol A (BPA) from the human body. The Panel considered recently published data and evaluated its implications for the existing EFSA advice on BPA published in 2006.

CONTAM

No opinions were adopted at the last plenary of the Panel. The workload is increasing especially considering the new requests for risk assessment of contaminants in food such as cadmium and arsenic. The Commission requested EFSA to issue an opinion on uranium as food contaminant. The Panel will address only the chemical toxicology of the substance without assessing the toxicity linked to the radioactivity of uranium. With respect to cadmium, the Commission requested to issue an opinion evaluating the current provisional tolerable weekly intake (PTWI). The exposure data for cadmium were compiled and evaluated by the Data Collection and Exposure Assessment Unit and will now be used by the Panel to finalise the opinion.

Good progress was made regarding the evaluation of marine biotoxins and regarding undesirable substances in animal feed. In total 4 to 5 draft opinions are expected to be ready for adoption at the next plenary in December 2008.

FEEDAP

The Panel celebrated its 50th plenary meeting.

As a self task, the Panel has produced 11 guidance documents to help applicants to fulfil the obligation set in the Regulation 1831/2003. Five guidance documents relate to specific categories of additives and the remaining six cover more horizontal issues. The guidance documents are designed to be used in an electronic form. Work is ongoing for three more guidance documents, one of them dealing with environmental safety assessment.

The Chair raised an issue concerning the consistency of approach to the safety assessment of enzymes. Enzymes used as feed additives have been regulated for over ten years and the data requirements for their safety assessment embedded in legislation. Although most enzymes used as feed additives were first developed as processing aids for food, they are only now subject to a safety assessment when used for this purpose. There is a concern that due to differences between the food and feed safety legislation, the same substance may undergo different safety assessments within EFSA depending on the intended use.

The Commission has requested an opinion on the use of a specific beta agonists as feed additives in advance of a Codex meeting. Beta agonists are prohibited in Europe. The request aims at clarifying the scientific ground of concern that exists on the beta agonists.

The Chair informed the Scientific Committee that one member of the Panel has resigned due to private reasons.

NDA

The Panel has launched a public consultation on its draft scientific opinion on food-based dietary guidelines (FBDG). The Panel's draft opinion provides scientific advice to the European Commission and Member States on how to approach the translation of general nutrient-based recommendations into specific food consumption recommendations, while taking into account the diversity of the European Union population and different countries. The consultation is open until 15 December 2008.
Nine opinions on health claims submitted under art. 14 of Regulation (EC) 1924/2006 have been discussed at the last plenary. Eight opinions were adopted and have already been published.

The Panel received from the Commission a list of health claims under art. 13 of Regulation (EC) 1924/2006 at the end of July. The list contains more than 2000 claims and the Panel is in the process of evaluating the completeness of the information provided. Claims with incomplete information will be sent back to the Commission for clarification. The pre-screening process is expected to be completed in October 2008. The Panel is asked to produce an advice on the consolidated version of the art. 13 list by July 2009.

GMO

The Panel launched a public consultation on a draft report on the use of appropriate statistical models for the analysis of the data from field trials for compositional studies and animal feeding trials, and their design. The consultation was closed on 21 September 2008. Comments received will be addressed by the working group. The Commission will also have a consultation with Member States on this document. Another public consultation was launched on the updated guidance document for the risk assessment of genetically modified plants and derived food and feed. The consultation was closed on the 21 September. The revised document provides more specific guidance in certain areas such as the design of field trails and the application of specific test protocols for toxicity testing.
A third public consultation was launched on the draft opinion on the risk assessment of genetically modified plants used for non-food or non-feed purposes. The consultation was closed on 16 September 2008. All comments received will be addressed by the Panel.
Work is in progress on the consolidated scientific opinion on the use of antibiotic resistance marker genes used in GM plants that will address the question on whether the use of each particular antibiotic resistance marker gene is likely or not to have adverse effect on human health and the environment.
The Panel was also asked to write a guidance document on the risk assessment of GM animals with respect to human/animal health and the environment. A call for tender has been launched to invite organizations to present a proposal for the design of such guidance document regarding environmental aspects.

PLH

The PLH Panel had a special session together with PPR and CONTAM Panels during the 9th International Congress on Plant Pathology that was held in Turin (Italy) end of August 2008. Around 80 participants attended the session. The work of the Panel was very well received. The impact of EFSA's work also on non-European countries national legislations was underlined.
A close collaboration between the Panel and the Joint Research Centre in Ispra (Varese - Italy) has been established on the Citrus diseases.

The Panel has initiated a self task activity to develop a guidance document for the evaluation of pest risk assessments which are prepared by third parties to justify phytosanitary measures under Council Directive 2000/29/EC. The draft guidance document will be published for public consultation by the end of May 2009.

PPR

A new draft of Directive 91/414 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market, and that is currently under revision, will be proposed for a second reading to the Parliament in October 2008. The Panel felt that the EFSA opinions commenting the draft data requirements of the revised Directive were not sufficiently taken into consideration. Major concern was expressed by the Panel on the non-use or non-acceptability of human data for the assessment. The non-use of human data is intended to prevent non ethical studies but the panel experts are of the view that data from self-poisoning are useful, in complement to the data generated from animal studies, for the safety assessment.

10. REPORT BACK FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE DIRECTORATE

Draft programme grants and procurement for 2009

The draft work programme for grants and procurement for 2009 has been presented. A budget of 6.5 million euros has been foreseen for 2009. Main areas covered by the draft programme are:

- Support for risk assessment of application towards potential marketing approval
- General risk assessment
- Data collection
- Horizontal issues and scientific cooperation

EFSA has launched the procedure for updating the list of art. 36 organizations. The deadline to receive new nominations from the Permanent Representations of Member States is 30 September 2008. The updated list will possibly be adopted by the EFSA Management Board in December 2008.

The Data Collection and Exposure Unit (DATEX) presented a progress report on their activities.
The European food consumption concise database provides data on the average daily consumption of food for adults, for a number of broad food categories. The database was published in Spring 2008 and contains data from 19 countries. Work is still in progress, as it is intended to extend the database into a pan-European harmonized comprehensive database.

Draft mandate for a WG on "Left censored data handling"

A draft mandate on handling of left-censored values in occurrence data was presented. The project concerns the handling of chemical contaminant data reported to be below the limit of detection. These data are typically left-censored and this presents difficulties in statistical analysis of the data. The aim of the mandate would be to explore in depth the robustness of the four different statistical approaches currently in use for handling left-censored data. Moreover, the accuracy of the currently used substitution methods for censored data in relation to the use of more advanced alternative statistical

approaches for the calculation of contaminants in food will be evaluated. A working group will be appointed to fulfil the mandate. The work would be completed by spring 2009.
The Scientific Committee welcomed the proposal from the DATEX Unit. The CONTAM Panel has been faced in the past with the difficulty of handling chemicals contaminant data reported to be below the limit of detection (LOD). The chair welcomed the proposal by the DATEX Unit to have a joint working group addressing this topic.

Workshop systematic review and meta-analysis: application in food and feed safety

The Assessment Methodology Unit (AMU) presented the programme of a workshop on "Integration of systematic review methodology with risk assessment" to be held at EFSA in spring 2009.
The evidence-based systematic review methodologies have been already used in EFSA for some specific opinions. It is proposed to organise a tailored workshop for EFSA scientific staff and experts on systematic review in food and feed safety risk assessment. The proposal was welcomed by the Scientific Committee. A more detailed programme will be presented at the next SC plenary.

Review of the strategy of cooperation and networking

The status of the review of the implementation of the strategy on cooperation and networking between EFSA and Member States was presented.
At the Advisory Forum meeting in June 2008 it was proposed to circulate a questionnaire to all Member States for the assessment of the current situation on the implementation of the strategy for cooperation and networking. The questionnaire was prepared and distributed to Member States via the Advisory Forum. The deadline for completing the questionnaire is 10 October 2008. The results will be discussed at the next Advisory Forum meeting in November and presented at the next SC plenary in December 2008.
The different ESCO (EFSA Scientific Cooperation) projects will be discussed at the Steering Group on Cooperation meeting in Berlin on 23-24 October 2008. The ESCO reports will be presented at the SC plenary meeting in December.

11. TRANSPARENCY IN RISK ASSESSMENT – SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS

A draft of the document "Transparency in Risk Assessment – Scientific Aspects" was circulated to the EFSA Panels for consultation between May and July 2008. A working group meeting held in the beginning of September addressed the comments received. The working group proposed to split the document in two parts: the first part dealing with general principles to ensure transparency in the scientific aspects of the risk assessment and the second part addressing how each Panel can ensure the specific transparency issues in their field of competence are addressed.
The Scientific Committee welcomed the proposal of the working group and decided to support the development of a guidance document covering the general scientific principles to ensure transparency. It is intended to finalise the document in November and to submit it to the SC plenary of December 2008 for adoption.

12. REPORT BACK FROM WORKING GROUPS

SC Working Group on Risk-Benefit Assessment

The drafting of the opinion is currently ongoing, with the aim to publish it for public consultation by July 2009. Several members of the working group have participated in the workshop on methodology of the DG Research-funded project BRAFO that took place in September 2008 in Rome. The current activities of EFSA regarding risk benefit assessment will be presented during the Stakeholders Platform meeting that will take place in Brussels on 20 and 21 October 2008, as well as during the 4th meeting of the Chairs and Secretariats of the Scientific Committees and Panels of the European Commission and European Agencies that will be hosted by EFSA on 4-5 November 2008.

SC Working Group on Welfare of Experimental Animals

The Scientific report on the possibility to reduce, refine and replace animal testing in the area of food and feed safety is in preparation. The WG is currently focussing on the possibility for the reduction and refinement of animal testing for selected toxicological endpoints and is discussing with the EFSA Panels the differences in testing requirements for the same toxicological endpoint. The draft report will most probably be presented for discussion to the Scientific Committee in December 2008.

SC Working Group on Benchmark Dose (BMD) Approach

The draft opinion will be discussed with the Scientific Committee in December 2008, prior to being proposed for endorsement in February 2009; it is then intended to circulate the opinion to the Scientific Panels for comments and testing. The opinion compares the strengths and weaknesses of both the BMD and NOAEL approaches and provides practical guidance for applying the BMD approach for the assessment of genotoxic and carcinogenic compounds.

ESCO WG on Fostering Harmonised Risk Assessment Approaches across Europe

The ESCO working group is finalizing the report on "Fostering harmonised risk assessment approaches across Europe". The report will be presented at the SC plenary in December, together with the reports of the other ESCO projects.

ESCO WG on Emerging Risks

The work of the two subgroups (data collection and processing, existing networks) is close to finalization and the final reports will be presented and discussed at the Steering Group on Cooperation meeting that will be held the end of October. The reports will then be presented for information and discussion at the SC plenary meeting in December.

ESCO WG on Botanicals

This activity, initiated in April 2008 is currently in progress; two subgroups of experts are responsible for (i) completing the compendium of botanicals reported to contain toxic, addictive, psychotropic or other substances of concern, and (ii) testing the draft guidance of the Scientific Committee for the safety assessment of botanicals and botanical preparations used as ingredients in food supplements with a selected number of examples. The working group is expected to deliver to the Executive Director of EFSA the finalised compendium, an advice on the adequacy of the scientific framework

developed by the Scientific Committee and the risk assessment reports for the eight selected examples by April 2009. An interim report for this activity will be presented during the meeting of the Steering Group on Cooperation in Berlin on 23-24 October 2008.

13. TTC WORKING GROUP

The draft mandate on "Exploring options for providing preliminary advice about possible human risks based on the concept of threshold of toxicological concern (TTC)" was discussed and adopted with minor amendments. A working group will be established chaired by Sue Barlow. The composition of the working group was discussed and approved. The kick off meeting will most probably take place in January 2009.

The PPR panel has launched an art. 36 call for the "Applicability of the TTC in the dietary risk assessment of metabolites, degradation and reaction products of active substances of plant protection products". The call closed in August and the contractor has been selected. Since there are overlapping issues to be addressed by the SC working group and by the contractor of the art. 36 call, it has been recommended that members of both projects are mutually updated on the progress and the achievement to be able to benefit from the work done.

14. RAISING EFSA'S SCIENTIFIC VISIBILITY

Update on the various projects

The project on the information exchange platform (IEP) which was presented at the SC plenary in July has been presented to the Advisory Forum and the Focal Points. The IEP should facilitate access to relevant scientific information available in the public domain but not easily accesible; no confidential papers will be shared through the IEP. On the 8th September, a pilot study was lauched; a revision of the project will take place after the first 6 months of the pilot phase.

The development of the online EFSA Journal is progressing. A proposal has been made with regard to the composition and the role of the editorial board and the editorial team. The editorial board will guarantee the quality of the edited articles and ensure that the standard requirements are met. The Scientific Committee underlined once again that, for legal reasons, no external peer-review can occur after an opinion has been adopted by a Scientific Panel or Committee.

The third part of the strategy to increase the awareness of EFSA's scientific work is the publication of special issues and supplements. A survey has been launched in EFSA Science Units to gather ideas for journal supplements.

Two proposals have been made for 2009:

- Analysis of the EU-wide baseline survey on the prevalence of Salmonella in animal population,
- Folic acid: outcome of the conference that will be held early 2009 in Sweden.

Further proposals address the possibility to publish short scientific news articles on EFSA Colloquia in scientific journals shortly after the events. This would give better visibility to the EFSA Colloquia in the scientific community. The Scientific Committee will be kept posted on further developments.

Scientific Colloquia planning 2009

Two scientific colloquia have been proposed for 2009:

- Nanoscience and nanotechnologies on food and feed safety and the environment,
- Emerging risks.

The members of the Scientific Committee have been invited to propose subjects for scientific colloquia to be held in the near future. The proposals will be collected by the secretariat and re-discussed again in due time.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

4th Chairs' meeting, 4-5 November 2008, draft agenda

The 4th Chairs' meeting will be hosted by EFSA on the 4-5 November 2008. The meeting brings together Chairs and Secretariats of the Scientific Committees and Panels of the European Commission and European Agencies. The draft agenda was shared with the Scientific Committee.

Renewal of the Scientific Panels and Committee in 2009

The mandate of the Scientific Committee and of the Scientific Panels, except the ANS and the CEF, will expire in June 2009. The call for the renewal will be published in the Official Journal by the end of October 2008. Interested scientists will be able to apply online from the EFSA website until the beginning of January 2009. EFSA will then evaluate the applications and draws up a shortlist for adoption by the Management Board. The new Scientific Committee and Panels members will take up duties in July 2009.

1st International Conference on Risk Assessment, November 2008

The 1st International Conference on Risk Assessment will be organised in Brussels on 13-14 November 2008 by DG SANCO. This Conference is intended to facilitate a global dialogue on risk assessment, among risk assessment practitioners, with the involvement of bodies dealing with risk analysis in the EU and internationally. The Conference follows the Transatlantic Risk Assessment dialogue between the European Commission with the US and Canada that was held in Washington DC in July 2008, and in which the Chairs of the CONTAM and PPR Panels participated. At that meeting, participants were asked to propose 3 top priorities regarding *methodologies* for a future dialogue and 3 top priorities regarding *specific issues* for a future dialogue. It was proposed to include an item in the agenda of the next SC plenary meeting to have a more in-depth discussion on the priorities to be suggested for future risk assessment dialogues.

WHO document on "Principles and methods for the risk assessment of chemicals in food"

The public consultation on the WHO document "Principles and methods for the risk assessment of chemicals in food" was closed on the 15 September 2008.