

## EFSA Stakeholder Consultative Platform

Parma, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2007

### Minutes<sup>1</sup>

#### Participants:

Members of the Platform: Sue Davies – Chair, BEUC, CEFIC, CELCAA, CIAA, COPA-COGECA, ECPA, EEB, EMRA, EPHA, ESA, EUFIC, FEFAC, FEFANA, ILSI – EUROPE, UEAPME

Guest speakers: Patrick Wall – Chair EFSA Management Board, Marion Dreyer – Safefood Project, Stuttgart University, Giacomo Fortuni – IFAH Europe – Associated-member of the Platform

European Commission, DG Sanco: Aude L'Hirondel

EFSA: Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, Herman Koëter, Christine Majewski, Victoria Villamar, Juliane Kleiner, Hubert Deluyker, Anne Theobald, Ana Afonso, Alun Keith Jones, Alessandro Gianini, Matty García Gómez.

**Apologies:** EFFA, EFFAT, EUROCOMMERCE, EURO-COOP, Eurogroup for animals, Europabio, Freshfel Europe, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace

**Observers:** AESGP, Clitravi, Confagricoltura, EAS, ELC, Eli, EMFEMA, Fediol Humane Society, S.A. Lilly, Ministero della Salute Italiano.

#### 1. Welcome and introduction by the Chair

Sue Davies, Chair of the Platform, welcomed Members of the Platform and Observers to the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Platform. She informed the Platform that John Wood, one of the Vice Chairs, is leaving his position at the UK Food and Drink Federation, a member of the CIAA and therefore resigned from his function as Vice-Chair. Therefore, new

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<sup>1</sup> The minutes follow the order of the agenda items: agenda is enclosed to the minutes.

elections for a Vice-Chair will be organized. Apologies were received from Annette Toft, the other Vice-Chair of the Platform, and from the rest of organisations that were unable to attend the meeting. Professor Vittorio Silano, Chair of EFSA's Scientific Committee, could not come on this occasion but stressed his willingness to participate at forthcoming meetings of the Platform.

The Chair invited the Platform to consider the draft agenda and to raise any additional points to be included under Any Other Business.

**Sue Davies** indicated that the EFSA secretariat had asked for the possibility of web streaming future meetings of the Platform to be considered. No other items were included to the draft agenda and therefore it was adopted.

Before concluding the introduction, the Chair reminded Members of the Platform that the Minutes of the December meeting were adopted in January and circulated to the Platform. In accordance to the terms of reference of the Platform, the minutes were posted on EFSA's website and circulated to EFSA's Management Board for information.

#### **Working Group: kick-off meeting – update by Victoria Villamar, Senior Policy Officer, External Relations Unit**

Victoria Villamar updated the Platform on the state of play of the two working groups (WGs) that would start operations after this meeting: a WG on transparency for risk assessment and a WG on criteria for public consultation. In particular Victoria informed the Platform about the steps taken by the secretariat as follow up the December meeting of the Platform. As a result of the invitation to volunteer to take part in working groups, the following organizations indicated their interest:

- WG on Transparency in Risk Assessment: ECPA, FEFAC, COPA-COGECA, ILSI Europe, CIAA, BEUC.
- WG on Criteria for Public Consultation: ECPA, FEFAC, EPHA, Eurocoop, CIAA, BEUC.

It is to be noted that at the end of the meeting **FEFANA** indicated their interest to take part in both working groups.

Victoria Villamar pointed out that EFSA is happy to provide the secretariat for the working groups and she reminded the Platform about the working methods that the two WGs would follow: the WGs will prepare the work that will be discussed at a later stage in the Platform as plenary. The work of the Platform as an advisory body will be communicated to EFSA's Executive Director and EFSA's Management Board for their consideration. The WGs will mainly work by e-mail. However, the secretariat could convene a meeting of the working group to progress with the discussions if in the course of these exchanges this was considered necessary. Terms of reference were drafted by the

secretariat<sup>2</sup> and were dealt with separately at the time of dealing with each of the working groups<sup>3</sup>. The provisions regarding the composition of the WG, the working methods and time frame to deliver the work were identical.

**Action:** The Chair invited organisations that have not yet indicated their interest to take part in the WGs to contact the secretariat should they wish to join a WG - 9th May was fixed as deadline for other volunteers.

## 2. WG on Transparency in Risk Assessment

### **Update on progress within the SC WG on transparency in risk assessment: Part II – by Dr Juliane Kleiner, Senior Scientific Officer of EFSA’s Scientific Committee and Advisory Forum Unit**

Juliane Kleiner updated the Platform on the status of play of the work that is currently been carried out by EFSA's Scientific Committee in the second part of the project on Transparency in risk assessment<sup>4</sup>. Juliane Kleiner reminded the Platform that this second part deals with scientific aspects as procedural aspects were already dealt with in the first part of the work that concluded with a Guidance Document adopted last year that was shared and commented by the Platform. In the Guidance document, the Scientific Committee pointed out that criteria for public consultations should be developed and therefore the work on the Platform in this respect is welcome by EFSA.

In her presentation, Juliane Kleiner focused on the aim of the working group of the Scientific Committee, mainly the provision of a guidance to ensure confidence in the process and output of EFSA’s scientific work, by focusing on specific areas, such as human/animal chemical and biological risk assessment, animal welfare, human nutritional assessment, plant health and environmental risk assessment. She underlined that it is impossible to identify all uncertainties, but it is essential to nominate types of uncertainties considered with their weights and its contribution to the final judgement.

With regards to the composition of the SC WG Juliane Kleiner informed that the WG is made up by the 9 chairs of Scientific Panels, 5 members of Scientific Committee, 1 representative from the European Commission and 2 experts from the Panels. By February 2008, it is likely the adoption of a draft guidance document by Scientific Committee. Public consultation is foreseen before the final adoption, and autumn was indicative as likely period for such public consultation.

Before concluding her presentation Juliane Kleiner briefly referred to on-going work of the SC that deals with an internal and external review of EFSA's scientific opinions. This

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<sup>2</sup> The draft terms of reference were circulated to the Platform ahead of the meeting and discussions in the two WGs can be followed in separated chapters of the minutes.

<sup>3</sup> ToR will be enclosed to the draft Minutes

<sup>4</sup> A JK presentation is enclosed to the Minutes.

work is in progress and the mandate given to the SC is available on EFSA's website. Stakeholders will be also approached in the context of this exercise.

**ILSI Europe** asked her about the possibility of having documents available in the medium term of the work of the SC for consultation with members of the Platform. EFSA responded that the secretariat of the Platform and of the SC will be in touch to further explore possibilities of exchanges between the groups.

**CELCAA** asked whether and how EFSA could take into consideration opinions issued by national bodies out of Europe, i.e. American food safety agencies. Juliane Kleiner pointed out that the requirements for the opinion to be taken into account are to be scientific and based on data always checkable.

**CIAA** raised the topic already discussed at previous meetings about confidentiality versus transparency. Juliane Kleiner confirmed that indeed the challenge of the SC is to respect both transparent and confidentiality rules.

After general comments raised by the Platform regarding the work of the SC, the Platform considered the Terms of Reference of its working group that will mirror the work of the SC paragraph by paragraph.

The representative from **the European Commission** asked how the topics for the working groups have been selected and who was involved in the selections of the topics for the working groups. Furthermore, it was indicated that perhaps there was an overlap between the purpose of the working groups and the nature of the working group. The later aspects were clarified by Victoria Villamar who reminded that the Platform advises the Executive Director and its work is communicated to the Management Board as well.

With regards to the choice of topics for the WGs, the Chair reminded that these two topics were identified by the Platform as important topics where the input of the Platform would be very relevant to EFSA. Other issues were suggested at the meetings in December, however, it was agreed to start with two working groups to see if this was an effective way of working and as organisations have limited resources and might have difficulties taking part in many WGs.

**FEFANA** asked at which stage the work of the WGs the Platform would be updated on the discussions and progress at the WGs. **The Chair** indicated that the idea is that the secretariat keeps the Platform regularly updated on the state of progress of the work within the WGs and that at the next meeting of the Platform, it would consider the work prepared by the WG. Both working groups should finish their work in advance so that it can be circulated in plenty of time for members of the whole Platform to consider and to prepare for the October meeting.

Juliane Kleiner suggested that at a later stage in the process there could be a possibility to have a joint meeting between some members of the Platform and the SC working groups

on transparency to exchange views and to find the way forward. The secretariats of both WGs will collaborate to find out a possible way to input the work of the SC.

### *Membership*

With regards to the number of organisations in the WGs, the representative from **the European Commission** asked what EFSA would do in case organizations willing to join the WGs exceeded the 6 organisations indicated in the terms of reference and which criteria EFSA would be using to select them.

Victoria Villamar stressed that the number of 6 organizations in the terms of reference is an indicative number that should cover the representation of interests and a manageable number of organisations. The number will be re-considered if there are more volunteers and will be reflected in the terms of reference.

**The Chair** stated that it is not the intention to limit the involvement of any organization; however, the focus was on a limited number of organisations that would allow progress in the work to be carried out and a balance of interests within the WG. The aim of the WGs is to exchange information among the members of the Platform, to enhance the cooperation among them and to prepare the work that will be brought to the Platform in plenary.

**CIAA** asked whether a member of the Platform could be represented by another expert that might not regularly attend the meetings of the Platform.

Victoria Villamar answered that members of the Platform are the organisations and not the individuals and, therefore, every organization can decide internally who they wish that represents the organisation itself in the WGs. It was explained that the organisations are to be represented by one expert.

### *Final Terms of Reference*

**FEFANA** asked when EFSA would start circulating an updated version of documents discussed at the meeting. The Chair indicated that if the terms of reference were agreed at the meeting subject to the changes indicated, the WGs would start working after a few days to allow other organisations to re-consider their participation in the WGs.

<p><b>Action:</b> Victoria Villamar to circulate a note to the Platform informing about the discussions on the WG. A deadline - one week- should be indicated to allow other organisations to reflect about participation in the WG.</p>
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**EEB** expressed its concerns about the work of two parallel WGs. In EEB's view if they would work in parallel without a harmonious structure, it would be difficult for them working together. The Chair invited EEB to put forward any ideas on how the WGs could better operate.

Victoria Villamar pointed out that EFSA only provides the secretariat for the operation of the working groups and as secretariat it will ensure that there is no overlap between areas covered by the WGs and in any case the Platform will be informed regularly.

*Interaction WG of the Platform - WG of the SC*

**FEFANA** highlighted the importance of coordination and keeping the possibility of a joint meeting open. It was asked if the terms of reference of the SC on transparency included also the topic of controversies/divergent opinions. The areas covered by the WG of the Platform reflect the areas that will be covered in the opinion of the WG of the SC.

**Action:** Juliane Kleiner/Victoria Villamar will consider the possibilities of interaction between the working Group of the Scientific Committee and the Platform.

*Timeframe*

With regards to the timeframe for the work of the WG, the Chair indicated that the WG should be ready to share a draft paper with the Platform before the next plenary of the Platform in October, and therefore the WG should commit to prepare a draft well in advance so organisations can discuss internally and be prepared for the discussions in October. Sue Davies underlined that the main issue remains, however, on how to actively involve the Platform in the process and that the secretariat of the WG has an important role to ensure that the platform is kept informed.

**Action:** Victoria Villamar will inform the Platform about the start of operations and once the organisations will indicate the names of experts and the "co-ordinator" of the work. The secretariat will then make all necessary arrangements, i.e. mailing list distribution, phone call conference, to ensure the proper functioning of the WG.

The terms of reference were adopted subject to minor changes and will be circulated by the secretariat in the days following the meeting.

### 3. WG on Criteria for Public Consultation

#### **Presentation of SAFEFOOD Project and in particular the model developed to consult interested parties – by Ms Marion Dreyer, University of Stuttgart**

Marion Dreyer, assistant-co-ordinator for the Safefood Project, University of Stuttgart, presented the model developed by Safe Foods to legitimate interested parties in the governance of food safety<sup>5</sup>.

Mrs Dreyer pointed out that the frame on which the model presented was developed stands on EC White Paper on Governance (2001) and on Article 9 of General Food Law, which envisages open and transparent public consultation. Stakeholders would be engaged at different governance stages for different purposes. . The public involvement of stakeholders would take place through two food safety interface institutions, namely an "interface Committee" and an "Internet Forum" Marion Dreyer highlighted that this model could structure engagement with different social groups by improving the coordination between politics and society, increasing transparency and creating more accountability of all partners involved in the food safety structure.

The representative from **the European Commission** wondered about the methodology of this model and asked in which countries the model works and how would the forum lay down a broader debate.

**FEFANA** also asked what the line between the European Commission and EFSA is and who should start the evaluation and what the roles of risk managers and risk assessors are.

Marion Dreyer stressed that what risk managers need would be a scientific result. Therefore, it could be difficult to strict about the line between managers and assessors and a connection between the two can be created only via supervision of an advisory forum.

Marion Dreyer pointed out that the model presented was developed following 4 workshops with the industry, NGOs, risk managers and risk assessors. It aims at building an interaction between the risk assessment and the management of risk, and based on lessons learnt from experiences in Germany and in France. Notwithstanding, it has not already been applied.

**ILSI Europe** wondered if economical and ethical considerations were also included in the Safefood model and how this model builds up an interface between risk assessors and risk managers, especially in the evaluation phase.

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<sup>5</sup> The presentation is enclosed to the minutes.

Marion Dreyer said that the assessment phase is already included in the mandate from the European Commission to EFSA but that the responsibility lies on risk managers and not on assessors.

**ESA** argued that the model tries to resolve two problems with only one solution and therefore it might work in some cases but not in others. It was indicated that the model might be too academic and theoretical and lacks implementability.

**EMRA** asked if the internet Forum proved to be effective in other areas and therefore this is the reason for such a proposal. Marion Dreyer mentioned that the model was recommended to them as a tool to ensure open participation; however, the model was not tested.

#### **Discussion on organization of work within the WG of the Platform, including discussion on the draft terms of reference.**

After a brief presentation by Victoria Villamar on the draft terms of reference for this WG, Members proceeded to analyse the Terms of reference on Criteria on Public Consultation paragraph by paragraph as the case was for the previous WG. The Chair indicated that in the parts of the document that were identical to the previous WG the terms of reference will be amended according to comments expressed by members. Therefore, the terms of references would be revised accordingly.

**EBB** indicated that aspects regarding reporting relationships and the follow up that would be given to comments by interested parties should stand alone and be a separated bullet point. The terms of reference would be revised accordingly.

The terms of reference were adopted subject to minor changes and will be circulated by the secretariat in the days following the meeting.

#### **4. Update on EFSA's external review of stakeholders activities, including outline of the Terms of Reference for an external consultant and the involvement of the Platform - by Victoria Villamar**

After preliminary considerations, aimed at stressing the importance of an open dialogue with stakeholders, Victoria Villamar pointed out that, as already announced in December 2006, EFSA would like to activate an external review, with the objective of evaluating the effectiveness and the value of its activities with stakeholders, and to receive recommendations for improving the current relations<sup>6</sup>. Stakeholders will be asked to give their contributions by interviews with an external consultant. An outcome of this review will be useful to prepare the 2008 Stakeholder Strategy and for consolidating /revising

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<sup>6</sup> The presentation is enclosed to the Minutes.

the current activities with interested parties. By the next plenary of the Platform, this review is supposed to be completed, so it will be presented to Stakeholders at the meeting

The review would in principle cover the following areas: efficiency and timeliness of the involvement of stakeholders, openness and transparency, confidence in the process, interface between EFSA and interested parties, input from stakeholders on the most relevant topics, and a comparative analysis, focusing on best practices of other organizations.

**CELCAA** stated that EFSA's website should be easier to read. EFSA responded that the website will be re-designed in July.

**BEUC** asked what the final users could say about the external review that EFSA wants to address to stakeholders. He expressed his concern about the study, in particular on the possibility that an external evaluation could pass to EFSA the right information of stakeholder perceptions, especially when Member States sometimes do not pass it on.

Victoria Villamar replied about the importance to know and to follow the best practices. **FEFANA** welcome the exercise and expressed that the timeframe indicated was very ambitious.

#### **5. Presentation of EFSA's draft Management Plan for 2008: consulting the Platform by Christine Majewski, Head of External Relations**

Christine Majewski pointed out that the structure of the MP 2008 is different from previous year's management plans as it follows an activity-based approach. The preliminary draft management plan was sent for consultation to the Advisory Forum, Scientific committee, European Commission, European Parliament and the Platform. With all the comments received the Management Board will further discuss this document in view of adoption at the December meeting.

The Management Plan for 2008 is an activity based work programme that is divided into three main parts: general objectives, priorities, actions and resources. The following for main areas are covered: i) providing scientific opinions and advice to the EU Institutions and the Member states; ii) enhancing risk assessment methodologies in Europe; iii) communicating scientific advice and dialogue with interested parties; iv) and managing and providing administrative support.

It was highlighted that EFSA needs to know that it does not create any scares when it launches public consultation and to whom our messages are addressed. Equally, EFSA needs to invest resources in communication with risk managers but also wit EP and the Council. On the international side, it was stressed that EFSA will collaborate and exchange information with OIE, WHO, FAO, Codex, FSANZ, USDA, FDA, EPA, Japanese Food Safety Commission, Canada Health by formalising agreements with them and by envisaging possible exchange of personnel with DG Sanco. EFSA is carrying on

the pre-accession programs with Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey and an exchange of personnel between EFSA and international organizations is envisaged in order to reach a face-to-face cooperation. In addition, EFSA wants to create an internal environment able to guarantee the best career progression to its personnel in order to attract the best scientists.

**EMRA** asked by whom EFSA intends to be globally recognized.

**BEUC** asked if EFSA could be active in a post-market monitoring of GMOs after decisions taken by risk managers and if this activity could be added to the Management Plan.

Christine Majewski indicated that EFSA is responsible only for recommendations, and not for any post-market monitoring.

**ILSI Europe** expressed strong appreciation on the possibility to comment on the Management Plan and asked in which ways the stakeholders could address some comments.

**Action:** the Management Plan will be circulated to the Platform for comments to reach EFSA in the course of June. A deadline will be indicated by the secretariat in the correspondence to the Platform.

*After this agenda item the Chair closed the meeting for the first day. The meeting would continue the next day at 8:30 a.m.*

## **6. Keynote speech by Dr Patrick Wall, Chairman of EFSA's Management Board**

The Chair welcomed all the participants and in particular welcomed Dr Patrick Wall, Chair of EFSA's Management Board, and Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, Executive Director of EFSA who joined EFSA for the second day of the meeting.

Patrick Wall addressed the Platform by reminding them that the scares of BSE were the catalyst of the creation of EFSA and also for other food agencies in the Member States, that EFSA has experienced the enlargement of the EU from 15 to 27 MS and also the change of its Executive Director and the move to Parma in the first years of operation. Patrick Wall welcomed the external challenge for the Authority to be responsive and flexible in facing all changes and all concerns from European consumer organizations, who want EFSA to increase the protection of consumers. He stated that all European policies and EFSA work will be based on science and not on media. Furthermore, he stressed that risk assessors as well as risk managers have to be open to transparency, because the level of risk that the European society can tolerate depends on them. In order

to guarantee consumer confidence, EFSA needs to improve the network with the Commission, the Parliament and Member States and it will focus on high value scientific advice. EFSA is keen to accept big challenges such as cloning, GMOs and nanotechnology, but it has to be given the proper time and resources to fulfil at best its tasks. To conclude, the Chair of the MB welcomed the current work of the Platform and encouraged the Platform to pursue their activities as are very relevant to the stakeholder community and consumers but also to EFSA and its MB.

This intervention was followed by an update on EFSA's activities by EFSA's Executive Director Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle.

#### **7. Progress report on EFSA's activities, by Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle, EFSA's Executive Director.**

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle presented the Progress Report on EFSA's activities since the last meeting of the Platform in December. She updated the Platform on main activities in the area of pesticides, blue tongue, contaminants, plant health and GMOs<sup>7</sup>. In particular she focused on EFSA's activities in the area of nutrition as follow up of the Regulation on health and nutritional claims and the two mandates on nutrient profiles and guidance for applicants received by the European Commission. Moreover, she emphasized that EFSA wants to further involve stakeholders in this area and therefore public consultations will be foreseen during the process. With regard to the draft guidance for applicants EFSA's Director mentioned that EFSA would like to organize a session with the Platform and the NDA Panel on nutrition.

In relation to EFSA's workload and timeframes on regulated substances, Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle pointed out that EFSA troubles are not the deadlines indicated by the Commission, but what is important is to have the possibility to-stop-the-clock when it is necessary to collect data to produce an opinion.

Finally, Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle informed the Platform about a series of meetings with the German Presidency, the Commission and the European Parliament. On the latter, she referred to her appearance before the ENVI Committee at the end of February, as it was a very constructive exchange of views. Furthermore, meetings were held in Brussels and Lisbon with the forthcoming Portuguese Presidency to explain EFSA's activities for its 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and to seek cooperation and offer assistance as risk assessors to the Presidency.

Before concluding, Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle suggested the Platform web streamed future meetings should the Platform wish to pursue this practice. She indicated that the decision relies on the members on the Platform and indicated that EFSA is prepared to cover this in case of a positive feedback.

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<sup>7</sup> The presentation is enclosed to the Minutes.

The Chair thanked EFSA's Executive Director for her presentation and suggested that the issue of web streaming could be dealt with under the last point of the agenda.

**CIAA** asked whether the liaison between EFSA and DG Sanco could be extended also to DG Research.

Herman Koëter stated EFSA discusses internally this matter every year and that both institutions work on several fronts at the same time.

**EEB** congratulated with EFSA's work on the peer review of pesticides and encouraged the Authority to continue the public consultations on the DARs.

Responding to **BEUC** to clarify the mandate of EFSA on cloning, Herman Koëter stated that EFSA do not address any ethical issues on cloning but limits its competence to risk assessment.

<p><b>Action:</b> Copies of the Annual Report 2006 and a glossy version of the Management Plan 2007 will be sent to the Platform.</p>
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## **8. Focused discussions: Animal Health in general Blue Tongue in particular**

### **Views of IFAH Europe, associated member of the Platform, by Mr Giacomo Fortuni**

The IFAH Europe representative in response to an invitation for a stakeholder perspective on this issue gave an overview of the work of its organisation.

### **Work of EFSA in the area of animal health in general – presentation by Dr Ana Afonso, Scientific Officer within the AHAW Team**

Ana Afonso apologised for the absence of Philippe Vannier, Chief of the Panel, because of the plenary meeting of the AHAW panel the very same day of the Platform.

She presented the activities of her panel which deals with questions on all aspects of animal health and animal welfare, primarily relating to food producing animals, including fish<sup>8</sup>. She underlined the number and the areas of opinions issued by her panel from 2004, focusing on the opinions of 2007.

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<sup>8</sup> The Presentation is enclosed to minutes

## **Work of EFSA in the area of Blue Tongue– presentation by Dr Hubert Deluyker, Head of EFSA’s Scientific Cooperation and Assistance Department**

Hubert Deluyker explained the background of this animal disease and the mandate from the Commission to EFSA<sup>9</sup>. The report that was recently produced by EFSA was presented and focused on the identification of the geographical area first affected, in the nature and severity of the disease in cattle and sheep, on the seroprevalence within herds, on a time-space analysis of the characterisation of the spread and finally on an epidemiological characterisation of the control measures. Moreover, he concluded by reporting the environmental and climatic factors affecting the vector and the disease. Hubert Deluyker stressed on the importance of cooperation with Member States. Therefore, for a better understanding of the current situation, EFSA is working actively with the States affected by Bluetongue and which have conducted risk assessments as a result of outbreaks. Furthermore, EFSA has asked Member States to work with it in collecting data and sharing risk assessments. This co-operation will allow an integrated and comprehensive European approach in order to better understand the dynamics and spreading patterns of this disease.

### **9. Focused Discussions: Cloning - Nanotechnology**

#### **Update on Cloning and Mandate of EFSA - by Herman Koëter, EFSA’s Deputy Executive Director and Director of Science**

Herman Koëter, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Science, informed the Platform of the mandate that the Authority received from the European Commission on cloning<sup>10</sup>. The Commission asked EFSA to advise on food safety, animal health and welfare and environmental implications of lived cloned animals, their offspring and the products from them. The timeframe indicated by the Commission was August; however, the complexity of the mandate would require more than few months and therefore EFSA will deliver an opinion by the end of the year. The project, managed by the Scientific Committee, will prepare a draft opinion. First step will be a public request of data and input and the draft will be open to public comment and review. Scientific input will also be required by external experts (academia, EU and USA animal breeding institutes, and NGOs)

Herman Koëter stressed the difference between cloning and GMOs as those are two different technologies and follow different methodologies. He reminded about EFSA’s mandate and that ethical matters related to cloning have been addressed to European Group on Ethics in Science.

**BEUC** asked how an opinion from the ethical group can be incorporated into EFSA’s work.

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<sup>9</sup> The presentation is enclosed to the Minutes.

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Herman Koëter replied by saying that both institutions received different mandates and therefore would lead to two separate and independent opinions. However, EFSA would appreciate staying in contact with the group on ethics and therefore both institutions will keep each other informed on the progress on this topic.

Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle explained the reason of such a short deadline from the European Commission for cloning is that animals could be likely to be cloned and put on the American market by 2010, and therefore, the Commission would like to receive advice from EFSA as soon as possible. That would allow the Commission to legislate in this area should this be the outcome/decision of the Commission after EFSA's opinion. This is a complex matter and therefore EFSA will deliver scientific advice by the end of the year.

**The Chair** asked for clarification about reference to EFSA interaction with experts involved in the FDA's assessment and how EFSA would make sure that the judgements of the experts are independent and transparent, especially if these experts sit in other organisations that have already taken a position on cloning.

Herman Koëter stated that EFSA briefly discussed with FDA the wish to collaborate with experts from FDA on cloning. The way of involving these experts would be to exchange views and expertise with them, but the experts would not sit in the working group of EFSA's SC.

#### *Parallel debates - Social dialogue*

Christine Majewski indicated that EFSA would like to further involve stakeholder and experts from other disciplines, i.e. social scientists, consumer scientists, risk communicators, etc. in the debate on cloning. Therefore, EFSA is looking at possibilities to embark on a series of parallel debates with these groups. The aim of this exercise would be to understand the concerns of the public and other interested parties on cloning. This would not interfere in the work of the SC, however, it could be beneficial for EFSA when communication on this issue.

**ESA** asked if EFSA wants to play a leading role in this debate: by asking advice to others, EFSA could risk to mix responsibilities.

**Other organisations** welcome this initiative and looked forward to be involved in these debates with EFSA.

EFSA replied that EFSA will stick to its tasks will not interfere in the risk management arena; however, social debate on sensitive issues would help to understand the outcome of EFSA's opinion.

<b>Action:</b> EFSA to keep the Platform informed on any activities in this area.
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## **Nanotechnologies in food production: a challenge- by Dr Anne Theobald, EFSA's scientific officer within the AFC Team**

Dr Anne Theobald gave an overview of nanotechnology<sup>11</sup>, by starting with a definition of nanoparticles. She presented the expected areas of application, in particular on food packaging, taste and texture, functional foods, seed production, pesticides and animal health. She mentioned the open questions and challenges on this topic, in particular the methods of analysis and detection, the applicability of current risk assessment paradigm, the need of toxicological data and the need of additional legislative framework.

Several of EFSA's Panels could be addressed in the future with this matter, i.e. AFC, FEEDAP, NDA; and CONTAM Panels, and that AFC has already received an application that contains nanoparticles. At the moment the experts are evaluating if the current guidance is still valid or if by contrast might need to be updated to cover nanotechnologies.

**ILSI Europe** mentioned that many products already on sale contain particles of nanometer size and therefore in risk assessment a clear distinction should be made between existing and novel nanoparticles.

**BEUC** suggested EFSA spend time better defining on what work should focus and what are the implications of the use of these new technologies.

Herman Koëter mentioned that the AFC Panel already started work in the area and that EFSA will be more pro-active in this field. Therefore, an internal working group will be set up. Furthermore, several Member States indicated to EFSA the Authority should work more on that and it is likely that this topic would be subject to a project with interested member states. Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle mentioned that at the last Advisory Forum in April several AF members raised this issue and EFSA agreed to further develop its work in this area.

## **10. Standing Matters**

### **Recent and up-coming communication activities – By Alun Jones, EFSA Press Officer**

Alun Keith Jones in his presentation<sup>12</sup> highlighted the main topics that are or were covered during the last months, i.e. aspartame, ITX in food packaging, hormones in beef, nitrate in vegetables, MON 863, renewal dossier on GMOs products, and on Avian Influenza Vaccines.

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<sup>11</sup>The presentation is enclosed to the Minutes.

<sup>12</sup> The presentation is enclosed to the Minutes.

## **Emerging issues to be addressed by Platform Members**

**ILSI Europe** indicated that risk assessment might be needed regarding contamination of food crops with crops grown for biofuels (e.g. rapeseed) and bioplastics that may contain components, natural toxins or pesticide residues that are not suitable for food use.

### **11. Any Other Business**

Since Mr John Wood has resigned from his position of Vice Chair of the Platform, and with the aim of ensuring that every member organization has the possibility to propose candidates to stand for election, a new election procedure will follow.

**Action:** Victoria Villamar will e-mail a message to invite all the members to express their availability to Chair the Platform.

The Chair reminded that the next plenary meeting of the Platform will take place on 18-19<sup>th</sup> October and that the venue was not yet confirmed.

Members were reminded about EFSA's initiative to have a meeting in June to exchange views with the NDA Panel on nutrition issues.

**Action:** Victoria Villamar to circulate further information to the Platform in the next weeks.

**EUFIC** indicated that the documents for the meeting on nutrition in June should be distributed in advance so organisations could prepared the meeting properly. Victoria Villamar indicated that the documents will be distributed in due time before the meeting.

The possibility of web streaming the meetings of the Platform was discussed. Different views were expressed and there was no consensus. It was agreed that this issue would be re-visited in the next meeting of the Platform so organisations would have more time to reflect on this possibility. As indicated by EFSA's Executive Director the decision is up to the Platform.

**ESA** suggested that the Platform should have a more active role in the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EFSA and in particular in the events in November in Brussels. It was indicated that the Platform should support EFSA and welcome EFSA's commitment towards stakeholders.

Before concluding the meeting, the Chair reminded about the follow up actions of the meeting, in particular the distribution of the Management Plan for 2008 for comments,

the invitation to volunteer for the WGs, the elections for the position of Vice-chair and the meeting on nutrition in June.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking all participants for active participation and the secretariat for all support and arrangements for the meeting.

END