

92ND ADVISORY FORUM
PARMA, 22MAY-23MAY 2024

EVALUATION REPORT OF EFSA NETWORKS

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EFSA NETWORKS - BACKGROUND

EFSA promotes the networking of scientific organisations of EU Member States

RAL unit coordinates **14 networks** and 8 sub-groups

EFSA [Management Board decision](#) (2021):

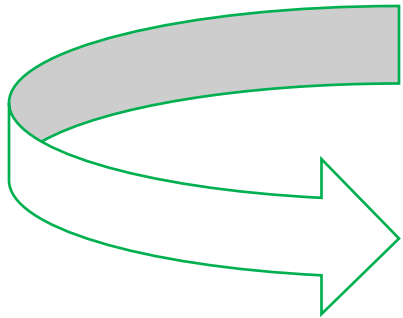
- EFSA shall evaluate the work of each Network at least every three years, beginning in 2021
- EFSA shall **report the outcome** of such evaluations of networks to the **Advisory Forum** and **Management Board**
- **Advisory Forum non-binding recommendation** on either the continuation or discontinuation of each network; the **Management Board** shall then **decide**



EFSA NETWORKS – EVALUATION OUTSOURCED

EFSA Management Board decision (2021):

- **EFSA shall evaluate the work of each Network** at least every three years, beginning in 2021



EFSA outsourced the evaluation, developed Terms of Reference (ToRs), asking the analysis of each individual network and sub-group during the period 2021-2023 to evaluate:

- **Effectiveness**
- **Efficiency**
- **Sustainability**
- **Adequacy (relevance)**
- **Impact**



EFSA NETWORKS – EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation addressed **five evaluation questions**, applying 22 judgement criteria.

The findings are based on

- **online survey** (426 valid answers = 30%)
- **interviews** EFSA network coordinators (22)
- **desk research** and documentation



RESULTS



EFSA NETWORKS - HIGHLIGHT FINAL REPORT

Question 1:

Has each network/sub-group **enhanced the work of EFSA? YES**



- **valuable inputs**
- **useful support** to EFSA
- **common activities:**
 - exchange of data/information
 - exchange of risk assessment methodology (including method, guidelines and sometimes simulation exercises)
 - collaboration in data collection.



EFSA NETWORKS - HIGHLIGHT FINAL REPORT

Question 2:

Has each network/sub-group **enhanced collaboration** between EFSA and the Member States in the risk assessment activities?

YES



- **enhanced** collaboration
- **more effective** risk assessment activities
- **common activities:**
 - exchange data/information
 - exchange expertise/best practice
 - data collection
- variable engagement
- **unique and irreplaceable**



EFSA NETWORKS - HIGHLIGHT FINAL REPORT



Question 3: **overarching MB objective? YES**

- in line with MB objectives set in Art.2
- diversity of networks/sub-groups

Question 4: **individual targets from ToR? YES**



- objectives **fulfilled**
- some network's ToR are not always relevant to sub-group
- top **accomplishments**: networking, sharing information and data, knowledge, experience/best practices, upcoming EFSA activities and addressing specific questions

EFSA NETWORKS - HIGHLIGHT FINAL REPORT

*Question 5: Is the topic of each network/sub-group of **current interest and/or efficient** in addressing it? **YES***



- **relevant** to health/safety risks and scientific developments
- **respond promptly** to emerging health/safety challenges and crises
- EFSA budget on networks is sustainable
- network participants' and network coordinators' time is **sustainable** (next 3-5 years)



CONCLUSIONS



EFSA NETWORKS – CONCLUSIONS 1/2

EFSA managed 14 networks and 8 sub-groups during the period 2021-2023



- overall **found positive outcomes**
- **all** individual networks and sub-groups have **confirmed positive** on 5 evaluation criteria
- **unique** opportunities to collaborate, network, share information and data among MSs/EFSA on a specific subject, share risk assessment methodologies, react promptly to urgent health & safety issues
- **unique and irreplaceable role** in fostering collaboration between MSs towards common goals



EFSA NETWORKS – CONCLUSIONS 2/2

Areas of improvements



- EFSA networks/sub-groups are very **diverse** and target different activities
- clarify the **criteria and process** for establishing networks/sub-groups (time/length/scope)
- improve the process and criteria of **experts' nominations**
- explore ways to **improve the support** of Network representatives at MS level
- optimise the **technological tools**
- enhance the **knowledge sharing** and best practice sharing
- explore the opportunities of **further collaboration**





NEXT STEPS



TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

- **Collect AF** non-binding recommendations
- EFSA reflects on **additional improvement opportunities**
 - establishment process
 - engagement process
 - logistic aspects
 - technical tools
- **Present** overview of both 1) AF final non-binding recommendations; 2) EFSA improvement opportunities



TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

NEXT TIMELINES

May 2024

- ❖ EFSA presents final evaluation report
- ❖ EFSA sends final evaluation report
- ❖ EFSA collects Advisory Forum recommendations by written procedure

15 July 2024

- ❖ Advisory Forum sends recommendations
- ❖ EFSA reflects on improvement initiatives

October 2024

- Presentation
- ❖ Final Advisory Forum recommendations
 - ❖ Proposed EFSA improvement initiatives

December 2024

Management Board to decide



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