

EXTERNAL RELATIONS UNIT

Brussels, 13 January 2016  
EFSA/SHP/LdL/2016

## Minutes

### TWENTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE EFSA STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIVE PLATFORM BRUSSELS (ITALY) 13 JANUARY 2016

#### MEMBERS OF THE EFSA STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIVE PLATFORM

**Chair:** *Andreas Varlamos*

AESGP – Association of the European Self-Medication Industry	<i>Hubertus Cranz</i> <i>Maud Perrudin</i>	Eurocoop – European Community of Consumer Cooperatives	<i>Federica Mamini</i>
AMFEP – Association of Manufacturers and Formulators of Enzyme Products	<i>Aalten Henk</i>	EPHA – European Public Health Alliance	<i>Nikolai Pushkarev</i>
BEUC – The European Consumer Organisation	<i>Ilaria Passarani,</i> <i>Pauline Castres</i>	EUROPABIO – European Association for Bioindustries	<i>Violeta Georgieva</i>
CELCAA European Liaison Committee for Agricultural and AgriFood Trade	<i>Claudia Vinci</i>	EuroCommerce	<i>Els Bedert</i>
CEFIC – Food & Feed Cluster	<i>Line Jensen</i>	Euroseeds	<i>Alessia Cogliandro</i>
COPA-COGECA - European Farmers European Agri-Cooperatives	<i>Annette Toft</i> <i>Javier Valle</i>	FEFAC – European Feed Manufacturers Federation	<i>Alexander Döring</i>
ECPA – European Crop Protection Association	<i>Aurelie Dhaussy</i>	FEFANA – European Association of Speciality Feed Ingredients and their mixtures	<i>Elena Miceli</i>
EEB – European Environ-	<i>Martin</i>	IFAH Europe - Interna-	<i>Roxane Feller,</i>

mental Bureau	<i>Dermine</i>	tional Federation of Animal Health Europe	<i>Peter Oostenbach</i>
ELC – Federation of European Specialty Ingredients	<i>Maryse Herve</i>	PFP – Primary Food Processors Association	<i>Kalila Hajjar</i>
DG SANTE	Jeannie Vergnettes Andrea Haller	UEAPME – Union Européenne de l'artisanat et des petites et moyennes entreprise	<i>Birte Day</i>

### **APOLOGIES**

Michael Gore, EFAD – European Federation of the Associations of Dieticians

Beate Kettliz, FoodDrinkEurope

Marco Contiero, Greenpeace

Philippe Binard, Freshfel Europe – European Fresh Produce Association

### **OBSERVERS**

<i>Ahern Patrick</i>	European Federation of Associations of Health Product Manufacturers (EHPM)	<i>Kate Trollope</i>	EU Food Policy
<i>Biasotto Silvia</i>	Movimento Difesa del Cittadino	<i>Charron Melanie</i>	FERRERO
<i>Coppens Patrick</i>	Food Supplements Europe	<i>Roberto Menta</i>	FERRERO
<i>Lewis Sara</i>	EU Food Law	<i>Reid Kiristy</i>	Eurogroup for Animals
<i>Selanikli Magdalini</i>	EHPM		

### **REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY**

#### **Stakeholder Consultative Platform Secretariat:**

*Lucia de Luca, Erika Cavalli*

<i>Bernhard Url</i>	<i>Gisèle Gizzi</i>
<i>Sue Davies</i>	<i>Hubert Deluyker</i>
<i>Piergiuseppe Facelli</i>	<i>Doreen Dolores Russel (via phone)</i>
<i>Juliane Kleiner</i>	<i>Steve Pagani</i>
<i>Hans Verhagen</i>	
<i>Alberto Spagnoli</i>	

### **WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY 2016**

#### **1 WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE MEETING**

The Chair, Andreas Varlamos, welcomed members, representatives of the EFSA Management Board and observers to the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the

Platform which had to be rescheduled due to events beyond EFSA's control in November 2015.

## **2 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Doc SHP 13 01 16 – 1

The Chair noted that apologies were received from FoodDrinkEurope, the Vice-Chair Euros Jones, EFAD and Greenpeace.

The Chair suggested to discuss the recent resignation of one of the members of the Platform under point 5 and with no further points raised for discussion, the Chair adopted the draft agenda.

### **2.1 Follow-up actions from the previous meeting**

Doc SHP3 01 16 – 2

Doc SHP3 01 16 – 3 (Minutes)

The Chair went through the pending actions from the previous meeting. Regarding Action 1, the Chair suggested to keep the item open and extended an open invitation to members to send to EFSA suggestions regarding topics to be discussed in 2016 and topics to be discussed in a possible annual conference. The remaining open points will all be addressed in the course of the current meeting.

*Action 1: Members to send to EFSA suggestions regarding topics to be discussed in 2016 and topics to be discussed in a possible annual conference.*

## **3 STRATEGIC TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Report back from EFSA on topics relevant to stakeholders**

Power point presentation – 1

The Chair gave the floor to Bernhard Url, EFSA Executive Director, who presented some of the highlights of EFSA's latest activities. Bernhard explained some of the scientific initiatives EFSA has initiated with various members of the Advisory Forum to explore possibilities for joint work and sensible use of capacities and knowledge among Member States. Bernhard also referred to the joint project on molecular typing data for foodborne pathogens EFSA is working on with ECDC. Discuss-

ing the usefulness of aligning risk assessment methodologies at European and international level, Bernhard also clarified the importance of global cooperation, if responsible bodies wish to tackle food safety issues resulting from global trade. To this end, EFSA is interested in stimulating the exchange of risk assessment experiences at a global level, bearing in mind the differences in regulatory and political contexts and standards.

Bernhard responded to requests from members referring to Commissioner Moedas's statement from 16 October 2015 on 7 leading scientists to head the European Commission's High Level Group of Scientific Advisors, the new EU Science Advice Mechanism. Bernhard referred to how EFSA is closely following developments of this Mechanism and reaffirmed EFSA's full support - together with the other EU agencies - for the work of the Group. The Representatives from the European Commission were given the floor to update members about their activities.

### **3.2 EFSA Strategy 2020: an update**

Power point presentation – 2

The Chair gave the floor to Bernhard Url to present the key features of the strategy, which is guiding EFSA's work until 2020, to the Platform. Bernhard provided a quick overview of the initial outcome of the public consultation, which ran until December 2015 and is taken into account in the document, and discussed the range of feedback gathered. Bernhard focussed on explaining how the Strategy's suggested objectives will make it possible to realise EFSA's vision and mission. Members highlighted specific aspects of the Strategy EFSA should pay attention to, such as the joint work with national authorities and other agencies for harmonised working methodologies, specific requests from representatives of regulated products and the difficulties some organisations face in following EFSA's work due to resource issues. Bernhard also invited members to share any further suggestions they may have with EFSA and reminded members that the document will be finalised by the end of January, to be then shared with the EFSA Management Board for written consultation and possible adoption in March 2016.

### **3.3 The contribution of stakeholders to EFSA's work: a view from the Management Board**

The Chair warmly thanked Sue Davies and Piergiuseppe Facelli, respectively Chair and Vice-Chair of the EFSA Management Board, for their interest and the time devoted to the work of the Platform.

Sue Davies said the invitation came at a very timely moment as the Board will be finalising the Strategy and also agreeing on the approach to stakeholder engagement at their next meeting in March 2016.

Sue highlighted the importance of effective stakeholder engagement for meeting the EFSA's Strategy Strategic Objective 1: "Prioritise public engagement in the process of scientific assessment".

Sue provided an overview of the range of mechanisms which EFSA has used to engage stakeholders, including consultations on draft opinions, colloquia, specific meetings with stakeholders, surveys, and of course the Platform - which has been the main and constructive forum. Sue pointed out that since EFSA's work become broader, and so has the scope of the stakeholders that have an interest, hence the need to bring stakeholder engagement to another and more technical level. Effective stakeholder engagement should be present across the breadth of EFSA's work and at all key stages of the scientific assessments with a broader range of interested parties than i previously. Sue pointed out the inevitable change of the role of the Platform in the new system; EFSA will count on the experience of the members and on the personal interaction built so far to determine how to strike the right balance between engagement on wider, cross-cutting and more strategic issues, as well as more specific opinions and technical issues. Sue reminded EFSA to bear in mind that the nature of EFSA's location presents certain challenges and to

make full use of available technologies to ensure effective stakeholder involvement, as well as to ensure that new forms of engagement will ensure a balanced representation of interests without favouring any specific group of stakeholders.

Piergiuseppe pointed out the Board has always closely followed EFSA's interaction with stakeholders and reminded participants that in March 2015 the Board extended the mandate of the Platform by one year to

give EFSA and its stakeholders sufficient time to discuss together with a broad range of interested parties how best to devise stakeholder engagement so it is in line with the Open EFSA approach.

### **3.4 Input of the Platform to the EFSA Transparency and Engagement in Risk Assessment project (TERA)**

Power point presentation - 3

The Chair gave the floor to Gisèle Gizzi, project manager of the EFSA Transparency and Engagement in Risk Assessment project (TERA). Gisèle explained how TERA shows EFSA's effort toward increasing trust by continuously enhancing transparency and engagement in the scientific processes and approaches of the agency, in the access to the data used and in its opinions. This relies on greater involvement of stakeholders and other EU institutions in the framing and formulation of requests and the improvement of the accessibility and usability of information of its communication tools. Gisèle provided clear and practical examples of the measures which are the core of the TERA project and the outcome of extensive stakeholder consultation, in which the Platform and its discussions group on transparency played a key role in 2013 . Gisèle called for further contribution of members in the impact assessment to better define the measures, understand costs and benefits, validate the impact analysis and understand preferences and potential drawbacks among stakeholder groups. The survey which will run until March 2016 will offer stakeholders the chance to provide quantitative and qualitative assessments and to rate measures. This study is of crucial importance for EFSA, as EFSA will have to take a decision on the measures and the extent of their implementation.

*Action 2: The Secretariat to approach members for taking part in the TERA impact assessment study by February/March 2016.*

### **3.5 EFSA's journey towards a Stakeholder Engagement Approach: update**

Power point presentation – 4

- The Chair gave the floor to Lucia de Luca, stakeholder engagement officer at EFSA, to illustrate EFSA's new approach to stakeholder engagement. Referring to the previous presentations, Lucia reaffirmed that any stakeholder engagement at EFSA would ensure the highest level of transparency and a wider inclusion of interested parties. Lucia explained how EFSA carried out a literature review of all stakeholders' surveys run by EFSA so far, to identify areas and topics for the target audience research aimed at identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Agency's current engagement approach, and at better understanding how EFSA can engage with those stakeholders currently outside engagement mechanisms. Lucia explained how the three main groups of civil society stakeholders interviewed, namely industry, academics and NGOs pointed out the need for engagement to be part of all stages of EFSA's work, to broaden the number and kind of stakeholders EFSA engages with, to define a proper follow-up mechanism for stakeholder input. Interviewed stakeholders also called for EFSA to seek applied expertise in certain areas to ensure EFSA decisions fit the real-world context, for more relevant and efficient engagement mechanisms which do not exclude any group of stakeholders, as some interviewed stakeholders opined the Platform excluded certain stakeholders from a dialogue with EFSA. In light of these results, Lucia pointed out to be successful the future approach would consider stakeholders as partners, who EFSA would consult for input, enlarge the plurality of interests represented by stakeholders and define engagement modalities, targeted to the different knowledge stakeholders hold and to EFSA's different areas of work, at the same time ensuring equal treatment of all parties involved.
- Lucia said that EFSA aims at defining a broad list of accredited stakeholders, who, as a result of an open application process, will be able to express their interests in different areas through modalities of targeted involvement. This is a key feature of the future approach. The activities of the Platform will cease at the end of the current mandate in June 2016 and a new and more articulated system will be put in place. Exchange between stakeholders representing different views will be ensured through a regular Forum of accredited stakeholders – bringing

together all accredited stakeholders – while input into EFSA’s strategic priorities will be ensured through the Stakeholder Steering Bureau – a smaller group of stakeholder representatives -, while a series of targeted modalities are currently being defined, such as Discussion Groups on specific issues – like the groups currently reporting to the Platform – and a communicators’ community.

As agreed the Chair suggested holding a discussion at the end of the following presentation.

### **3.6 Role and contribution of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform: reflections**

Power point presentation – 5

The Chair recapped for everybody’s convenience the key characteristics of the current Platform, on the basis of its many years of operation and as indicated in the Terms of Reference of the Platform. With the support of a power point slide, prepared by the Chair, in collaboration with Vice-Chair Annette Toft, Andreas explained the progress achieved so far, which led to the outline of suggestions for improvement expressed by the members over the past year. He pointed out the appreciation of the members for the Platform and their inclination for the Platform to continue to operate in the future. The Chair pointed out that to be in line with EFSA’s Strategy the Platform should seek ways to assist EFSA more with its scientific work, increase the scientific collaboration, while safeguarding the independence and transparency of EFSA’s activities and of course strategic role of the Platform. The Platform could input into the three main stages of the risk assessment process from the definition of the mandates, to the collation of data, to the outline of methodologies and expertise, up to the production of the output. The Chair concluded by reaffirming the wish of the Platform to play a more strategic role in EFSA’s work and the validity of the current Platform model.

The Chair and Vice-Chair underlined the benefits the Platform delivered to its members and to EFSA ensuring balanced participation, representativeness and dialogue. This resulted in a win-win approach over



the years for EFSA, but also for the members. It was pointed out it was important for these benefits to be ensured in the future as well.

The Chair then opened the floor to questions which extended from I) capitalising on the technical expertise of stakeholders as in the case of the Platform's discussion groups; II) to ensuring that the personal relations with stakeholders - a result of the activities of the Platform - are preserved; and III) to take into account the fact that certain stakeholders may wish to only be kept informed, while others are more inclined to engage in the activities. Many members expressed interest in engaging on a more technical level, as long as the transparency of the dialogue and a balanced representation of the different interests are safeguarded, and provided that expectations are clarified at each stage of the engagement process. All these aspects will facilitate stakeholders' input and increase the impact of engagement. Any new approach should be flexible enough to mirror changes in EFSA's work. Some members questioned the implications on EFSA's resources the new approach could have, also in light of the fact the new approach questions the cost-effectiveness of current stakeholder relations practices, such as the Platform. Some members pointed out they did not find it necessary to change the concept of the Platform.

The Chair emphasised that the Platform contributed to improving EFSA's reputation, to stimulating dialogue with different parties for the benefit of all parties involved and that it was important the future initiative did not do away with the progress and the improvements achieved so far.

### **3.7 Concluding remarks**

The Chair gave the floor to Sue Davies and Piergiuseppe Facelli who welcomed the interesting exchange of views and concluded by thanking the current Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Platform for the excellent and useful work done so far. They stated that now was the time for EFSA to bring discussions to another level to ensure that all stakeholders' views, not only those of on the members of the Platform, feed into EFSA's work and that input is as targeted as possible. Sue welcomed the proposal to set up a more permanent forum, which is to be complemented by a series of on-going opportunities for engagement.

While an annual stakeholder workshop will ensure EFSA receives the feedback it requires, the approach will ensure for stakeholders who do not wish to engage are informed. The importance of early planning was mentioned as well as the fact that the new engagement approach should be tested for a trial period to ensure it meets EFSA's, as well as stakeholders' needs.

Representatives of the EFSA Management Board also stated that the review aims at achieving improvement and should not be viewed as a reflection of the usefulness of the work of the Platform or of its Chair and Vice Chairs. It was also said that the key characteristics of the current platform and the points raised in the discussions and contained in the presentation of the Chair will be taken into account by EFSA in view of presenting the final proposal for stakeholder engagement at the next Management Board meeting in March 2015.

### **3.8 Taking stock of experiences so far:**

#### **a) EFSA's communications**

Power point presentation - 7

The Chair gave the floor to Alberto Spagnolli, Head of the Communications and External Relations Department a.i., who illustrated some of EFSA's work to be presented soon and how it will be communicated to the wider audience. Alberto also explained EFSA's improved platform for the publication of the Authority's scientific publications, which will see the move of the EFSA Journal to the Wiley Online Library – the largest society publisher and third in the world for open access journal publishing - in the first months of 2016. Alberto explained how these efforts will ensure consistent editorial quality, greater visibility and impact of EFSA's work and improved access to data. Alberto passed the floor to Lucia who illustrated in detail one of the mechanisms of EFSA's future stakeholder engagement approach, that is the Communicators' community. The creation of such a community bringing together the communications specialists working for the various stakeholder organisations will ensure EFSA will benefit from input from the specific fields. Through this initiative, EFSA's communications products will be even more comprehensive and useful for stakeholders to be further disseminated to their audiences. The process will foresee the involvement of

different stakeholders representing various and sometimes diverging views on a piece of communication. The exchange will ensure a higher degree of transparency while safeguarding the independence of EFSA in terms of defining its communications products.

## **b) The work of the Platform's Discussion Groups**

Doc SHP 13 01 16- 4

Doc SHP 13 01 16- 5

Doc SHP 13 01 16- 6

Power point presentation - 6

The Chair gave the floor to Lucia who invited members to refer to the written update on the work of the two groups provided before the meeting. Lucia indicated some progress made by the Group on Emerging Risks in terms of raising issues to be brought to the attention of the Advisory Forum and the Member States Network on Emerging Risks (EREN). The Group also worked on revised Terms of Reference which have been submitted to the Platform for approval.

The Chair, who is also a member of this Group, spoke in detail about some of the progress achieved by this Group and referred to a proposal to create another discussion group on allergens. The proposal was discussed by the members of the Platform and it was suggested to present a written proposal highlighting objectives and goals at the next meeting before a decision can be taken.

The Chair gave the floor to Doreen Russell, Scientific Assistant, Evidence Management Unit (DATA) Unit at EFSA, who coordinates the work of the Discussion Group on emerging risks.

Doreen, connected by phone from EFSA's Headquarter in Parma, took stock of the activities of the group since it was established in 2013 and explained some of the results achieved so far such as the adaptation of the food additive template for food additives for data collection, the public planner for food additives re-evaluation now available on the EFSA website and the considerable amount of data and information shared among the members. In light of these positive results, despite the short time of activities, Doreen sought the extension of the man-

date until 2017 and submitted to the members of the Platform the revised Terms of Reference for the Group - drawn up by the Group's members - which now includes a proposal for the Group to look at occurrence data on specific chemical contaminants.

The representative of the Federation of European Specialty Food Ingredients Industries (ELC), who has been a member of the Group since its creation, highlighted the usefulness of the Group which was able to fulfil its goals due to the presence of representatives of EFSA's DATA as well as the Food Additive Units and of colleagues from the European Commission. It was suggested to look into a separate agenda or meeting to discuss chemical contaminants, since the experts may differ from those involved in the discussions on food additives. The Group Secretariat thanked for the feedback which will duly be taken into account.

The Chair also invited the representative from the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) to share his views on the StaG-ER Group. It was pointed out that more attention should be paid to the choice of members included in the group to ensure a high level of purely technical debate; members on the Group representing the various organisations should have purely technical knowledge and not merely a corporate or legal background.

To facilitate the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the Groups, some members suggested highlighting the changes in the new documents to have a clearer view of the changes made. The Secretariat will proceed accordingly and seek written approval of the new Terms of References

The Chair thanked Doreen and concluded the session dedicated to the discussion groups.

*Action 3: The DG on Emerging Risks (StaCG-ER) to present a detailed proposal for the setting up of a DG on allergens to be looked at by EFSA.*

*Action 4: The Secretariat to circulate versions of the revised ToR of the two Discussion Groups which highlight the changes suggested in the revised versions when seeking written approval of the new ToRs.*

### **3.9 Conclusions of the EFSA's 2nd Scientific Conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together"**

Power point presentation – 8

The Chair gave the floor to Hubert Deluyker, who, as coordinator of the EFSA Second Scientific Conference, shared details about the conference, which with 900 participants from 63 countries, 57% of which had not attended any to EFSA events before, and more than 1400 web viewers from 92 countries, can be considered a success. Hubert underlined the interest this event triggered among different groups of people and professionals. EFSA acted as facilitator of exchanges and debates on advances in regulatory science bringing together experiences from very different parts of the world. The international scientific community benefitted from the various opportunities offered by the conference. Hubert invited members to watch the numerous videos of the various debates and sessions which are now all available on EFSA's Youtube channel.

## **4 STANDING ITEMS**

### **4.1 Dates and topics for 2016 meetings of the Platform**

Power point presentation – 9

The Chair invited Lucia to present the next meeting dates. In light of the postponement of the November 2014 meeting, the next suggested date in 2016 is 1<sup>st</sup> June (before the mandate of the Platform expires at the end of June 2016).

It was agreed for members to determine their availability on the suggested date and to indicate whether they would prefer Parma or Brussels for this date.

*Action 5: The Secretariat to look into the feasibility of organising 1-day meeting and to ask members for their availability on the proposed date.*

## **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Rolling Work Plan of EFSA's activities with its stakeholders

Doc SHP 13 01 16- 7

The rolling plan was shared ahead of the meeting with the members as per the Platform's working procedures.

The Chair referred to the recent resignation from the Platform of the member Friend of the Earth Europe, indicating that, although he considers it regrettable, he took note of the decision of the organisation. He also informed the members that in light of the facts there is no legal obligation to replace a leaving member and the mandate of the current Platform expires in June, it was decided not to proceed with the replacement of the member.

With no further points on the agenda, the Chair closed the meeting. The Chair thanked everybody for the very interesting meeting and discussions.

*ENDS---*