



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL  
Public Health and Risk Assessment  
**Risk assessment**

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON EMERGING AND NEWLY IDENTIFIED HEALTH RISKS**  
**27<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING**

*Held on 26 November 2008*  
*in Brussels*

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chairman, Prof. J. Bridges, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Prof. D. Stahl.

**2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA**

The draft agenda was adopted as written, with a few changes in the order of points under discussion.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

The Chair of the SCENIHR Working Group (WG) on electromagnetic fields (EMF) informed the Committee that four of the invited external experts had declared an interest in view of their affiliations.

Furthermore, Anders Ahlbom declared that his membership at the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) ended in October 2008. He also declared his Chairmanship of the EMF Expert Group for the Swedish Radiation Protection Agency and for the Electrical Hypersensitivity expert group for the Swedish Government (via the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research). Finally, he declared that some of his research activities on EMF and health are sponsored by research councils which obtain some of their funds from industry. However, mechanisms for these are in place to prevent a direct influence from industry.

Taking into account the nature of all the declarations, the Committee decided that they did not constitute a conflict of interest and that Prof. A. Ahlbom and the external experts could participate in the discussions on those matters.

**4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PLENARY MEETING**

The draft minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting were adopted without modifications. The minutes are available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_risk/committees/04\\_scenihr/docs/scenihr\\_mi\\_026.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_mi_026.pdf)

## **5. CHAIR'S/MEMBERS' REPORT**

### **5.1. Inter Committee Coordination Group on 24 September 2008**

The Chairman informed members, inter alia, about the revision of the working conditions of members and the new Scientific Committees.

### **5.2. Other**

Members discussed in particular the following three meetings and the status of two joint WGs.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Dialogue on Nanotechnology – Safety for Success (Brussels, 2-3 October)**

Members involved in the meeting reported back to the Committee. The meeting was considered a useful and informative initiative in particular for establishing a regular dialogue with different stakeholders. Transparency and communication with the public on scientific matters were identified as key issues to improve knowledge, understanding and trust. The launch of a network on risk assessment on nanomaterials was foreseen as a result of this meeting to exchange and pool information. Members were asked for suggestions on experts and the agenda.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Chairs of the Community Scientific Committees and Panels, EFSA, Parma, 4-5 November 2008**

The Chairman informed about the meeting, which was useful for the exchange of views between Scientific Committees and Panels involved in risk assessment. The need for harmonization in data collection and emerging issues were subjects of group discussions. The next meeting would be organized by DG Health and Consumers (SANCO) and would be held in Brussels in November 2009.

#### **International conference on Risk Assessment (Global Risk Assessment Dialogue, Brussels, 13-14 November 2008)**

Members involved in the meeting reported back to the Committee. The meeting was considered an interesting and global initiative, highlighting the strong will to collaborate internationally on risk assessment issues. Discussion focussed on emerging issues and challenges, exposure assessment, terminology, and non-threshold carcinogens. Continuing collaboration on these topics was foreseen and bi-annual meetings were planned for future cooperation.

#### **Use of the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) approach for the health risk assessment of chemicals**

A member informed the Committee about the ongoing work. The preliminary report had been approved by written procedure on 19 November and would be in public consultation until 2 January 2009 followed by an additional WG-meeting.

#### **The risk assessment methodologies and approaches for Mutagenic and Carcinogenic substances**

A member informed the Committee about the ongoing work. The preliminary report had been approved by written procedure on 24 October and would be in public consultation until 2 December. Additional WG-meetings to assess the comments received were foreseen.

## **6. ONGOING REQUESTS**

### **6.1. Biocides – antibiotic resistance (public consultation)**

The Chairperson of the WG informed the Committee about the ongoing work. The preliminary report had been approved for public consultation by written procedure on 4 November. The public consultation would close on 30 November. An additional WG meeting had been scheduled after the deadline of the public consultation to assess the comments received. Members stressed the relevance of the opinion in light of the meeting on the "Review of Work Underway on Antimicrobial Resistance" held in Brussels on 17 January 2008<sup>1</sup>.

### **6.2. EMF (for discussion)**

The Chairperson of the WG informed the Committee about the ongoing work. An additional external expert to support the WG had been identified. Additional WG-meetings were foreseen before the discussion of the opinion in the next plenary meeting. It was suggested to circulate an advanced draft of the opinion to members well before this final plenary meeting.

The Secretariat informed about a Workshop on "EMF and Health: Science and Policy to address public concerns", to be held in Brussels on 11-12 February 2009. The results of the opinion and its underlying methodologies would be presented at the workshop (see the following link for more information):

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_risk/ev\\_20090211\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_risk/ev_20090211_en.htm)

### **6.3. Nanotechnologies Risk Assessment (for discussion)**

The Chairperson of the WG informed the Committee about the ongoing work. Additional WG-meetings were foreseen before the discussion of the opinion in the next plenary meeting. It was suggested to circulate an advanced draft of the opinion to members well before this final plenary meeting.

## **7. FEEDBACK BY COMMISSION SERVICES ON FOLLOW-UP TO OPINIONS**

Colleagues from various Commission services informed the Committee on the follow-up to SCENIHR opinions which were adopted during 2008. All services involved thanked SCENIHR for the high quality of the opinions delivered.

### **7.1. Dental Amalgam**

The Commission services informed that after considering the SCENIHR opinion on the safety of dental amalgam and alternatives, it was decided to maintain the use of dental amalgam for the time being. The Secretariat informed about a meeting with stakeholders organised by the Commission, in order to discuss and clarify scientific issues in relation to the two opinions delivered by SCENIHR and SCHER.

### **7.2. di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP)**

The Commission services noted that the SCENIHR opinion on this issue has been very important in helping the Commission to take appropriate measures to ensure

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_threats/com/mic\\_res/ev\\_20080117\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/mic_res/ev_20080117_en.htm)

the safety of patients, such as the labelling requirement for products containing such materials.

### **7.3. Light Sensitivity**

The Commission services thanked SCENIHR for the opinion and the fact that it was completed in the short deadline requested. In addition, a detailed explanation on the current and foreseen regulatory steps that the Commission plans to take regarding the phase-out of incandescent lamps on the European market was presented to SCENIHR. These measures would take the recommendations of SCENIHR into account.

### **7.4. Noise**

The Commission has taken note of the concerns that the opinion raises. In this context the opinion was presented to the Member States and it was decided to organise a conference on 27 January 2009. Its objective is to examine the way forward and to evaluate various policy options together with Member States, industry, consumer organisations, Members of the European Parliament and other stakeholders. A presentation of the opinion by a member of the working group was foreseen.

Finally, the Commission services informed SCENIHR about the wide media coverage of the opinion which has helped to alert both industry and consumers to the issue.

Members expressed their appreciation for the visibility of the opinion through presentation in the media and emphasized the usefulness of press material and laymen version of opinions in that respect.

## **8. NEW REQUESTS**

none

## **9. EMERGING ISSUES**

Members discussed a draft document on emerging issues and a collection of suggested topics for consideration by the Commission and the future non-food Scientific Committees managed by DG SANCO. Members would provide input to both drafts before the next plenary meeting. The document on emerging issues should become a position paper of the SCENIHR whereas the collection of topics would remain an internal working document to be handed over to the Commission and to the new Scientific Committees.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The final plenary meeting scheduled for **19 January 2009** was confirmed.

## **Annex I**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON EMERGING AND NEWLY IDENTIFIED HEALTH RISKS</b> <b>27<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING</b></p>
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*Held on 26 November 2008  
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### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

#### **MEMBERS OF THE SCENIHR:**

Prof. A. AHLBOM, Prof. J. BRIDGES (Chair), Dr. W. DE JONG (Vice chair), Prof. P. HARTEMANN (Vice chair), Dr. T. JUNG, Prof. M.-O. MATTSSON, Dr. J.-M. PAGÈS, Prof. K. RYDZYŃSKI, Dr. M. THOMSEN

#### **EUROPEAN COMMISSION:**

##### **SCENIHR Secretariat (DG SANCO):**

Mr. L. BONTOUX, Ms. K. BROMEN, Ms. N. FOUVEZ, Ms. A. KANELLOPOULOU, Mr. P. MARTIN.

##### **Other Commission staff:**

Ms. V. CHRISTODOULOU-VOSKARIDES (DG SANCO), Ms. A. CORRERA (DG SANCO), Ms. I. DEMADE (DG ENTR), Mr. A. TOTH (DG TREN)