

Emerging Issues and Challenges

Breakout Session 3

Key Questions:



1. **“New, emerging, re-emerging risk/risk areas which may pose specific challenges to risk assessors “**
2. **“Methodological challenges”**
3. **“Uncertainty, providing info in a manner which enables effective decision making”**

Q1: How to define “emerging risk”?

- **A definition is needed to ensure common understanding and to aid inter-jurisdiction cooperation**
- **Would recommend working on definition:**
- **Sub-definition considerations....e.g. urgent v. long term**
- ***Proposed start:***
- ***“An emerging risk is understood as a risk resulting from a newly identified hazard to which an exposure may occur or from a new or increased exposure and/or susceptibility to a known hazard”***

Q1: How to approach urgent emerging issues vs. long-term (mega) trends



- **Time frames need to be assessed during the risk characterisation/risk forecasting activity**
- **Data collection: consideration of type and detail**

Q1: How to identify emerging/re-emerging risks in different sectors



- **Concept of indicators leading to signals**
- **Identification of change in hazard and exposure**
- **Concept of reporting and communication**

Q1. Fora to discuss



- Existing fora:
 - OIE
 - WHO
- Need for a new forum (for a):
- Requirement for a laden free colloquium/Conf to share experience and risk identification and characterisation (i.e. forecasting) approach and results

Q2: Key Points for “methodologies”



1. Urgent risk assessment should be explored more widely and issue for next conference
2. Risk identification (early warning: for chemical and environmental risks; projections: biohazards) needs further development and learning for other sectors.
3. Transparency about the values and processes used in grading of risks are essential.
4. General common approaches for food transmission might be possible for events with short time to outcome. For other areas separated approaches are needed.
5. Network are needed for: Sharing risk assessment and identification methodolgies, epidemiological principles for assessing the risk, how we approach the different typs of evidense

Q 2: Fora for discussion



- **Existing fora:**
 - **Meetings of Chairs of Commission's and Agencies' Scientific Committees/Panels**
 - **Transatlantic Risk Assessment Dialogue – Global?**
 - **International Food Chemical Safety Liaison Group**
- **Need for a new forum (fora)?:**
 - Conference 2010**
 - Common research programmes for the output**

Q3: How the emerging methodologies impact the risk assessment?



- ***Through use of ‘smarter’ approaches allows for***
 - *better prioritization (and later as an integral part of the RA once we know how to interpret these results).*
 - *could help deal with the area of chemical mixtures and new hypotheses on mechanisms of action*
- ***Areas for collaboration in the high throughput:***
 - *what hazards need to be studied*
 - *what targets need to be studied,*
 - *the interpretation of the results: at the moment not clear what the results mean*
 - *proper communication on evolving science*

Q3: New strategies can be designed for data-poor situations?



- This depends on the context: is it an urgent, big problem e.g. melamine versus nanotechnology

- For urgent issues:
 - Sharing best practices for rapid response among authorities but also involve stakeholders when there is a specific issue
 - Learning from experience in other domains with well-established procedures e.g. transportation: learning to collaborate in peace time with all involved

- However, what about tools for looking ahead to the unknown unknowns?

Q3: Interaction between RA and RM



- We need rethink the interface: need a **more dynamic** interactive cooperation between RA and RM

- **Clear communication:**
 - all along rather than only at the beginning and the end
 - role for risk assessors

Q3: Discussion Fora



Need for a new forum (for a):

- Alternative methods for understanding hazards being developed:
- EPA on pesticides – interpretation is the next challenge and impact on hazard assessment, start the discussion early enough
- Toxicogenomics, toxicodynamics, toxicokinetics

Conclusions and Recommendations



- Internationally agreed definition needed on “emerging risks”
- Need to develop and enhance “community practice”/fora to learn from different sectors (e.g. best practices in com. diseases/transport)
- Needed a meeting/workshop/working group on Rapid/urgent risk assessment and identification to develop a session in next conference 2010.
- Incorporation and sharing of new methodologies for risk identification and forecasting
- Need to enhance risk communication between jurisdictions and stakeholders. Recommend session in 2010 conference.

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