



Directorate-General for
Health & Consumers

The Role of EU Scientific Committees for Risk Assessment of Nanomaterials

*Scientific hearing on Risk Assessment of Nanotechnologies
Brussels, 10 September 2009*



Introducing the work of EC Scientific Committees on nanotechnologies

- Explaining the mission and nature of the EC Scientific Committees
- Providing information on the sharing of tasks between the SC and other EU bodies
- Explaining the organisation and working procedures applied by the SC
- Presenting the terms of reference of SCENIHR on nanotechnologies

The EC Scientific Committees (SC)

- 3 independent SC established by the Commission: SCCS, SCHER, SCENIHR
- Directly supported by the Commission
- Aim: to provide scientific advice on risk assessment
- Consulted by the Commission at its own initiative
- Obligation to consult in cases foreseen by EU legislation
- EC SC are part of a wider Risk Assessment structure



Nature of the EC Scientific Committees (SC)

- Scientific, consultative bodies (do not take policy decisions)
- Composed of independent scientists (selected following open calls)
- No link with political institutions, economic interests, advocacy groups
- Most members from Academy, research or other scientific bodies or institutions
- No involvement in risk management issues

Fields of Competence

- Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety:
 - ✓ *All types of health and safety risks (chemical, biological, mechanical or other physical risks etc) posed by consumer products and services (cosmetics, toys, textile, furniture, sport equipment etc)*
- Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks
 - ✓ *Health and environmental risks related to pollutants or other factors (biological, physical) in the environment, risks of chemicals*
- Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks
 - ✓ *Emerging risks, complex or multidisciplinary risk issues, interaction of risk factors, synergic and cumulative effects, new technologies,...*

Composition and working practices

- Each Committee has 17 Members
- Supported by a Pool of advisors selected through the same procedure
- Possibility to co-opt up to 5 additional members from the Pool
- Normally ground work takes place in a WG composed of members, advisors and external experts
- Experts must fulfil criteria of competence and independence
- Data base of external experts



Role of SC on Risk Assessment of nanomaterials

- SCENIHR: general and methodological aspects
- SCCS: nanomaterials in specific consumer products (cosmetics, textile, household products etc)
- SCHER: environmental aspects
- In practice: joint WG or WG with participation of appropriate members from other committees.
- Nano in Food/feed: EFSA, nano in medicines: EMEA
- Need for co-ordination and collaboration across EU Risk Assessment Bodies



Risk Assessment Work by EU SC on Nanomaterials so far

■ SCENIR:

- ✓ The appropriateness of existing methodologies to assess the potential risks of associated with engineered and adventitious products of nanotechnologies (2006)
- ✓ The appropriateness of the risk assessment methodology in accordance with the technical guidance documents for new and existing substances for assessing the risks of nanomaterials (2007)
- ✓ The scientific aspects of the existing and proposed definitions relating to products of nanoscience and nanotechnologies (2007)
- ✓ Risk Assessment of Products of nanotechnologies (2009)

■ SCCS:

- ✓ Safety of nanomaterials in cosmetic products (2007)



Composition of SCENIHR WG on Nanomaterials

SCENIHR Members

- Prof. Jim Bridges
- Dr. Wim De Jong (Chairs and Rapporteur)
- Dr Thomas Jung
- Prof. Konrad Rydzynsky

External experts

- Dr Jukka Ahtiainen, Finnish Environmental Institute
- Prof. Ken Donaldson, University of Edinburgh
- Prof. Jorma Jokiniemi, UK Technical Research Centre
- Dr. Wolfgang Kreyling, GSF Research Centre for Environment and Health
- Prof. Francesco Marano, Université Paris Diderot
- Prof. Dik van de Meent, University of Nijmegen

Terms of Reference of SCENIHR consultation on Nanomaterials

To identify and assess new information and **update the opinions of the SCENIHR on potential risks of products of nanotechnologies** with respect to characterisation, eco-toxicology and toxicology as well as exposure assessments. The update should provide recommendations on:

- improvements of existing test methods and/or on the development of new ones**, including in vitro and in vivo methods, to address aspects specific to nano in characterisation and hazard assessment;
 - improvements in exposure assessment** (including, amongst others, also relevant information on sampling, detection tests, instrumentation, modelling) to address aspects specific to nano and provide a list of specific nanomaterials/particles with possible substantial exposure;
 - improvements in risk assessment in general** including specifically information linked to mechanistic information to address aspects specific to nano.
- ii) Recommend further **prioritised needs for short, medium and long-term research**
- iii) Identify, as much as possible scientific evidence permits, **direct or indirect health risks with regard to current and foreseeable applications** of nanomaterials

Process and perspectives

- Last opinion on products of nanotechnology delivered by SCENIHR on 19 January 2009 (no time for a public consultation), at its last meeting of before its renewal
- Commission committed to publish all adopted opinions without delay
- Nanotechnology is a standing issue for SCENIHR work. SCENIHR is requested to permanently monitor development of scientific knowledge. SCCS and SCHER may be involved also
- This hearing may contribute to define directions for further risk assessment work by the EC SC

This paper was produced for a meeting organized by Health & Consumers DG and represents the views of its author on the subject. These views have not been adopted or in any way approved by the Commission and should not be relied upon as a statement of the Commission's or Health & Consumers DG's views. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this paper, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.