



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Public Health and Risk Assessment  
**Risk assessment**

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON EMERGING AND NEWLY IDENTIFIED HEALTH RISKS (SCENIHR)

### 13<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING

*Held on 11 April 2011  
in Brussels*

#### **Minutes**

#### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chairman, Prof. J. Bridges, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants and, in particular, Prof. A. Hensten, member of the Pool of Scientific Advisors.

According to Article 3 of Commission Decision 2008/721/EC of 5 September 2008 setting up an advisory structure of Scientific Committees and experts in the field of consumer safety, public health and the environment, the SCENIHR may associate, at its own initiative, up to 5 scientific advisors from the Pool to contribute to the Committee work on specific issues or disciplines.

Prof. A. Hensten (University of Tromsø, Norway) was appointed by the SCENIHR as a scientific advisor on issues related to methodologies.

Participants briefly introduced themselves.

Apologies were received from Prof. K. Dawson, Prof. A. Proykova and Prof. K. Schulze-Osthoff.

#### **2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA**

The draft agenda was slightly modified, including a few changes in the order of points under discussion. To provide an update on the ongoing discussions on the joint opinion on the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC), item 7.4 was added to the agenda. Additional items were discussed under item 11 of the agenda.

#### **3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

Prof. A. Hensten presented the activities and interests that he had also outlined in his Declaration of Interest Form.

Taking into account the nature of the declaration made, the Committee decided that it did not constitute a conflict of interest.

The Chair of the joint working group (WG) on New Challenges to Risk Assessment informed the Committee that several of the external experts, invited to the WG on an ad-hoc basis and for an exchange on particular questions had declared an interest in view of their affiliations.

Taking into account the declarations provided, the Committee decided that five of the experts could be asked to continue supporting the WG on an ad-hoc basis as considered necessary, e.g. by providing information on specific issues and comments on the draft opinion. For the other expert, a further involvement

beyond the presentation of information was not foreseen, due to his employment by industry in a related subject area.

In addition, one member of that WG had provided an update of his declaration of interest. Taking into account the nature of the declaration made, the Committee decided that it did not constitute a conflict of interest.

The Chair of the SCENIHR WG on Artificial Light informed the Committee that one of the external experts invited to the WG on an ad-hoc basis and for presenting data had declared an interest in view of his affiliations. However, a further involvement beyond the presentation of data was not foreseen.

The Secretariat reminded members to update their annual declaration of interests.

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

The draft minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting were adopted without modifications. The minutes are available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific\\_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr\\_mi\\_040.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_mi_040.pdf)

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

None

#### **6. ONGOING WORK**

##### **6.1. Methodology / Weight of Evidence Approach (for discussion)**

Members discussed the latest version of the draft position statement and comments received from members that would require an additional revision of the document. Following this revision, feedback on the document would be sought from the Scientific Committee for Consumer Safety (SCCS) and the Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER). Members recommended to use the paper as an internal working document and to test it in practice before its finalization and publication.

The document and the approach of SCENIHR had been presented at the International Conference on Risk Assessment<sup>1</sup> and was well received. It was foreseen to further discuss the paper with the partners in the International Dialogue on Risk Assessment.

##### **6.2. Artificial Light (for approval for public consultation)**

The Chairperson of the WG informed members about the additional tasks carried out since the last plenary meeting and presented the draft opinion to the Committee. Members provided feedback on the draft opinion. It was agreed to further revise certain sections and to improve the overall coherence and presentation of the text before sending the document for approval by written procedure to SCENIHR-members. A hearing with stakeholders during the consultation process is foreseen.

#### **7. JOINT OPINIONS / PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS IN ACTIVITIES OF OTHER SCIENTIFIC BODIES**

##### **7.1. New Challenges for Risk Assessment (SCENIHR, SCHER, SCCS)**

The Chairperson of the cross-committee WG informed members about the ongoing work and about the last WG-meeting where a targeted exchange in form of a small workshop on Ecological Risk Assessment was held. In addition,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/health/risk\\_assessment/events/ev\\_20110126\\_en.htm#fullwidth](http://ec.europa.eu/health/risk_assessment/events/ev_20110126_en.htm#fullwidth)

one expert presented specific information to the WG. The draft opinion would be discussed at the next plenary meeting. Members discussed additional expertise needed for the assessment and were asked to provide feedback to the Secretariat.

#### **7.2. Improvements in Risk Assessment Approaches (SCHER, SCCS, SCENIHR)**

Members participating in the cross-committee WG informed the Committee about the ongoing work. It is foreseen to organize a workshop in relation to this assessment. The opinion will be discussed at the next plenary meeting.

#### **7.3. Toxicity and Assessment of Mixtures of Chemicals (SCHER, SCCS, SCENIHR)**

Members participating in the cross-committee WG informed the Committee about the ongoing work and an upcoming WG-meeting. It is foreseen to schedule the opinion for approval for public consultation at the next plenary meeting of each of the three non-food Scientific Committees.

#### **7.4. Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) Approach for Safety Assessment of Chemical Substances (SCCS, SCHER, SCENIHR)**

In line with Article 14 of Commission Decision 2008/721/EC concerning diverging opinions and their eventual resolution, DG SANCO had asked the three non-food Scientific Committees to put on hold the final adoption of this opinion until sufficient progress is made in the analogous work carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). This request was considered necessary to allow the two groups to finalise their opinions on the basis of the same set of data, and to collaborate as considered appropriate to either resolve or document and justify any persisting divergent views.

#### **7.5. Other**

##### **Exposure assessment (SCHER)**

A member participating in the WG organized by the SCHER informed the Committee about the status of the work.

##### **Expression of uncertainties (SCHER)**

A member participating in the WG organized by the SCHER informed the Committee about the status of the work.

##### **Nanomaterials in Cosmetics (SCCS)**

Members participating in the WG organized by the SCCS informed the Committee about the ongoing work and the discussion with an industry consortium at the last WG-meeting.

##### **Guidance on Risk Assessment - applications of nanoscience and nanotechnologies to food, feed, and pesticides (EFSA)**

A member participating in the WG organized by EFSA informed members about the ongoing work. A public consultation on the draft document closed on 25 February.

##### **TTC (EFSA)**

A member participating in the WG organized by EFSA informed members about the ongoing work and an upcoming WG-meeting.

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

None

## **9. NEW REQUESTS**

There are currently no new requests for the SCENIHR. However, several issues are currently under discussion at Commission services and the Secretariat will keep members informed of new developments. Members will continue to update the list of emerging issues that is used as a basis for discussion with other Commission services (see item 10).

## **10. EMERGING ISSUES**

Members briefly discussed the working paper in relation to this topic and agreed on particular updates to be done following the meeting.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **International Scientific Conference on electromagnetic fields and health, Brussels, 16-17 November**

The Secretariat informed members about an international scientific conference on electromagnetic fields and health that DG SANCO plans to organize under the auspices of the SCENIHR. A steering group including SCENIHR-members will be formed to set up a programme for this meeting.

### **Restructuring of DG SANCO**

The Secretariat informed members about the upcoming restructuring within DG SANCO that takes effect on 16 May. The Risk Assessment Unit hosting the Secretariat of the three non-food Scientific Committees (currently Unit C7 in the Directorate "Public Health") will then become Unit D5 in the Directorate "Health Systems and Products". On the same date, Dr. Willem Penning will become the new Head of the Risk Assessment Unit. He will be introduced at the next plenary meeting.

### **New website for the three non-food Scientific Committees**

The Secretariat informed members about the progress on the new website for the three committees.

To better fulfil its obligations to provide European citizens - from the expert scientist and policy maker to the interested citizen - with a full and transparent view of the work of its Scientific Committees, Commission services are in the process of creating a dedicated website for the Scientific Committees at the following address: [www.ec-scientific-committees.eu](http://www.ec-scientific-committees.eu). The site should be functional by the middle of June 2011. Ease of access and search of information, improved layout and structure are some of the features which shall allow both the expert and the uninformed reader to access and retrieve information on the work of the Scientific Committees.

### **Other**

The Secretariat thanked SCENIHR members for their support in the recent 4th annual Nanotechnology Safety for Success Dialogue Workshop (Brussels, 29-30 March 2011)<sup>2</sup>.

The Secretariat confirmed that the next plenary meeting would be held on **15 June**.

**Annex I:** List of Participants.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/health/nanotechnology/events/ev\\_20110329\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/nanotechnology/events/ev_20110329_en.htm)

## Annex I

### SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON EMERGING AND NEWLY IDENTIFIED HEALTH RISKS (SCENIHR)

#### 13<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING

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#### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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

Prof. A. AUVINEN, Prof. J. BRIDGES (Chair), Dr. W. DE JONG (Vice chair), Prof. P. HARTEMANN (Vice chair), Prof. P. HOET, Dr. T. JUNG, Prof. M.-O. MATTSSON, Dr. H. NORPPA, Dr. J.-M. PAGÈS, Prof. E. RODRÍGUEZ-FARRÉ, Dr. J. SCHÜZ, Dr. M. THOMSEN, Dr. T. VERMEIRE

##### **ASSOCIATED SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR TO THE SCENIHR:**

Prof. A. HENSTEN

##### **EUROPEAN COMMISSION:**

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

Ms. K. BROMEN, Mr. P. MARTIN, Ms. O. ZIANE

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

Ms. G. LEO (INFOS), Mr. N. MICHAELIDIS (ENTR), Mr. A. TOTH (ENER), Mr. J. VOGELGESANG (SANCO),