



Inter-Committee Coordination Group (ICCG)

27 February 2014

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

The participants were welcomed by the Chair, held by the Commission, by the Deputy Head of C2 Unit. There was one apology from the Chair of SCHER.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as it was presented adding a point on the exchange of data with ECHA (added under point 6).

3. Declaration of interests on matters in the agenda

No declaration of potential conflict of interest was made.

4. Exchange of information on the activities of the Committees

The Chairs of the three Committees presented the ongoing work of their Committee.

The SCCS highlighted the difficulties encountered for risk assessment due to the ban of animal testing by the EU legislation.

The following points were noted:

- The fact that SCCS opinions do not take into account environmental aspects was discussed.
- The exchange of expertise was encouraged between members of the three SCs.
- When dealing with the same topics (e.g. nano both in SCCS and SCENIHR), there is a need for synergy and consistency of outputs between SCs.

5. Possible new joint mandates on risk assessment methodology

The SCs agree to collaborate more among themselves and with existing working groups in order to exchange their expertise as much as possible/needed, in particular with regard to the following points:

- Identification of needs of expertise when receiving a new mandate
- Quick check for the part of competence when a specific risk is identified in an ongoing opinion
- Risk assessment methodology in general

6. Possible involvement of SCs' member in stakeholders' dialogue of validation process in EURL ECVAM-JRC

As the main users of these methods, SCs would like to be consulted more frequently in the discussion/validation of these methods. DG SANCO is already in contact with JRC to explore possibilities for further/closer collaboration in this domain.

7. Coherence and improvement in structure and content of opinions

A proposal to remunerate Chairs of the SCs and Chairs of the WGs was discussed, for their tasks which are considered specific, sensitive and time consuming.

The need to have shorter and better structured opinions, in particular for SCENIHR, was also discussed.

The opinions should focus on new data only and summarise any relevant old opinions but repetition should be avoided.

Keeping or deleting the 'trade names' in the opinions has been raised and discussed. Further clarification on the drafting of the mandate is still needed.

8. Activities concerning Dialogue on Risk assessment (workshop on EMF)

The hearing on the EMF opinion is foreseen in Athens on 27-28 March.

The Commission has also expressed the interest to host the GLORE, an international meeting on Radio Frequency, in November 2014 in Luxembourg.

The SCs requested that the Commission explore the possibility to promote their work through the organisation of "risk assessment days" like in the past, together with stakeholders and Members of the European Parliament.

9. Renewal of current DoIs

The renewal process for the declaration of potential conflicts of interest is almost completed. Some reminders have been sent out.

10. Declarations of interests and handling of conflicts of interests (Guideline)

A specific guideline for SCs, based on existing documents from different scientific bodies, is being drafted and the members will be consulted when it is completed.

The issue of participation in conferences has been raised and when members are requested to represent the SCs, the costs will be covered by the Commission.

11. Renewal of Pool of advisors and use of database of experts

The Pool of advisors will be renewed by the end of the SCs' term (2016). Member(s) who resign from a SC have to notify the Commission, which will appoint a new member, if needed by the relevant SC. This is done via a Commission Decision process.

The database of experts may be used once a specific expertise is required within a Working Group that the pool is not providing. Ad hoc calls for expression of interest are also organised for specific expertise (i.e. the use of meshes in urogynecological surgery).

12. Participation of external experts in working groups & plenary meetings

The Commission has reminded the participants about Art. 7 point 3 of Decision 2008/721/EC and Point 66 of rules of procedure as well as about Art. 7 point 2 of Decision 2008/721/EC and point 72 of the rules of procedure.

New external experts will be selected from the pool/database to reply to specific needs of the Working Groups should a SC not find the specific expertise and availability within its members and other SCs' members first.

13. Rules of procedure and participation criteria

The Commission reminded the group about the participation criteria included in the Rules of procedure, both in quantitative term (70% of meetings attendance) and qualitative (active participation is requested).

14. Internal satisfaction survey on the work of the SCs

The SCs' Secretariat organised a survey to receive feed-back about the functioning of the SC's secretariat one year after the move to Luxembourg. Results for this first year are very satisfactory and encouraging, and the rate of attendance to the meetings ranged from between 78 and 84% for the three SCs.

15. Rapid risk assessment in the context of the cross-border health threats decision. Role of the Scientific Committees.

The Chair presented a new area of involvement of the SCs under the Commission Decision on serious cross-border health threats.

The aim is to set up a specific "permanent" WG with members of SCs that could be consulted by the Commission Unit SANCO C3 Health Threats when requested by the Health Security Committee to provide a rapid risk assessment within 48 h on any biological/chemical threat with cross-border dimension that does not fall under the portfolio of ECDC.

16. Any other business

- A timeline was proposed for the SYN BIO Scientific Opinion to finalise the definition segment of the opinion before the summer of 2014. Contributions are requested from all SCs as it is a joint opinion.
- The group agreed to meet twice a year, by means of one physical and one audio meeting.