



3RD PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

(SCHER)

Venue: Hitec Building - Room 00/091

Address: E. Ruppert Street 11, L-2453 Luxembourg

19 September 2013, starting at 14:00

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Donata Meroni (deputy head of Unit) briefly welcomed the participants.

All members are present with one apology (see Annex I)

2. Adoption of the agenda

The Chair proposed to discuss in the AOB session a tentative calendar for the plenary meetings in 2014. The agenda was adopted with the inclusion of the additional point suggested by the Chair.

3. Declaration of interests on matters on the agenda

The Chair asked the committee members to inform of any conflict of interest to be acted in the minutes of the plenary. No declarations of conflict of interest on any of the agenda items were made by participants. Members were also reminded that this declaration has to be made orally at each plenary meeting as well as at the start of each working group meetings.

4. Introduction by the Head of Health Information Unit

The Chair gave the floor to the Deputy Head of Unit, who briefed participants on the initiative of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on environmental risk assessment (ERA).

EFSA has requested the participation of experts of the non-food scientific committees in new EFSA working group(s) created with the scope to better harmonise the approach to some elements of environmental risk assessment (ERA). Other European agencies and bodies have been involved as well. Jan Linders will represent the SCHER committee in the relevant EFSA working group.

Participants were also briefed on the WHO/IPCS Workshop on Uncertainty in Hazard Assessment, 19-20 November 2013 in the NL, where Jan Linders will participate.

Unit C3 gave some background information on the new legislation regarding serious cross border threats to health. He explained that the new Decision will enter into force by the end of November. He also stressed the need to expand current application on existing alerting systems including also chemical and environmental threats to health. Under this decision the Scientific Committees could be requested to produce rapid risk assessment in areas totally or partially outside the mandates of EU Agencies.

A discussion took place on how the SCHER could contribute in the framework of the current procedures, to prepare a rapid risk assessment in case of environmental and chemical threats to health.

It was concluded that whilst the Committee has the remit to fulfil this task it is important to further discuss how the committee could be involved in case of a chemical and/or environmental health threats and the implementation procedures to be followed. The Committee mandated a small working group to prepare a proposal for discussion in the next plenary meeting.

5. On-going work

Update

- Opinion on the potential risks to human health and the environment from the use of Calcium cyanamide as fertiliser
- o The Chair of the WG briefed participants on the state of play. A meeting of the WG took place the day before. The next meeting of the WG will take place 19 December 2013 back to back to the plenary.
- Opinion of the SCHER reviewing the tolerable daily intake for chromium VI in toys
- o This is a new mandate the first meeting will take place the day after the plenary. Renate Kraetke is the Chair of this WG.

6. Joint Opinions/Participation of members in activities of other scientific bodies

- Synthetic Biology - update on on-going work

The Chair explained that this is a joint mandate for all three Scientific Committees but it will be coordinated by SCENIHR.

The first audio meeting was organised on 10 July 2013 so as to select additional external experts. 8 external experts were selected and appointed and 2 are on the reserve list.

The SCHER will participate with two members.

7. New Mandates

No new mandates were received since the last plenary

8. Feedback by Commission Services on follow-up to opinions

- Opinion on the environmental risks and indirect health effects of mercury from dental amalgam

The preliminary SCHER opinion on dental amalgam was approved in the last plenary meeting. The plan was to publish this opinion for public consultation.

It was explained that the publication was delayed in order to take into account some additional comments received from the Commission Units concerned.

- Participants were informed that this opinion was ready for publication and a public hearing was also organised on 6 November.

9. Any other business

The timetable for the plenary meetings for next year was discussed. Below the provisional dates for SCHER Plenaries in 2014. It was stressed that SCHER will try to organise two day meetings in order to have also working group meetings back to back to the plenaries.

- 27-28 02 2014
- 24-25 04 2014
- 26-27 06 2014
- 25-26 09 2014
- 27-28 11 2014

The chair reminded the participants that the next plenary of the SCHER will take place 20 December 2013.

Annex I:

List of Participants

Members of the SCHER

Claire Beausoleil, María José Carroquino, Pim de Voogt, Jadwiga Gzyl, Colin Janssen (Chair), Renate Krätke (vice-Chair), Jan Linders (vice-Chair) Greet Schoeters, Raquel Duarte-Davidson, Teresa Fernandes

Apologies

Alena Bartonova

SCHER Secretariat (DG SANCO)

Donata Meroni, Giulio Gallo