



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Health and Consumers Directorate-General

Director General

7/3/11

Brussels,
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Dear Ms Geslain-Lanéelle, *Catherine*

Subject: EFSA and Commission Scientific Committees opinion on the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC)

This is to inform you of the obligation for EU scientific bodies and Panels to exercise vigilance with respect to potential sources of divergence between scientific opinions and where necessary to co-operate with a view to either resolve the divergence or to clarify the contentious issues. With this in mind we have asked the European Commission Scientific Committees to suspend adoption of their opinion on TTC until the EFSA Scientific Committee Working Group opinion on the same subject has reached sufficient maturity.

This will allow two groups to develop their views on the basis of identical sets of scientific data which is becoming available through the external contract work of EFSA, liaise as appropriate, and either resolve any divergent views or justify any persisting divergences. I would therefore kindly ask that you request the EFSA Scientific Committee not to adopt its draft opinion for consultation before the necessary collaboration of the two groups has taken place.

As you may be aware, the Commission Scientific Committees have dealt with the subject of TTC since early 2008 on the request of the Commission for advice on the possible use of the TTC approach in non food chemicals and in particular cosmetics. The work of the group has taken considerable time due to the changeover/renewal of the terms of the Scientific Committees, has undergone several revisions, and unavoidably the timing of its finishing work has overlapped with the EFSA work on TTC.

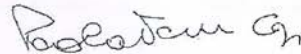
As the EFSA work is evolving and as new elements are coming to surface through the work done by external contracts on the relevant data bases underpinning the concept of TTC, our

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decision to ask the three Scientific Committees to hold adoption of the opinion is in order to allow for a most productive dialogue and collaboration at the end of the exercise when both bodies will 'speak from the same set of notes'. Otherwise, there is a real risk that the two groups will reach divergent points of view not because they have analysed differently the same sets of data and are able to justify their views in a scientifically credible manner but because they had evaluated different sets of data.

I trust that this decision and proposal for the work of the two groups to be coordinated will find you in agreement. In our view, it is a tangible example of collaboration between the EU Scientific Bodies and Agencies to avoid divergent views in as much as possible while maintaining and protecting their independent ways of working.

Yours sincerely,



Paola Testori Coggi

c.c.: Mr. D. Liem, EFSA
Mr M. Valletta, Mr S. Giraud, Ms I. De la Mata, Ms D. Spanou, Mr M. Seychell,
Mr L. Miko, Mr R. Vanhoorde, Mr A. Rys, Ms I. Jacquemyn, Mr B. Delogu,
Mr P. Martin, Mr T. Daskaleros, Mr V. Garkov(SANCO)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Parma, 14/04/2011
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Mrs. Paola Testori Coggi
Director-General
European Commission
Health and Consumer Directorate-
General
B-1049 Brussels

Re: EFSA and Commission Scientific Committees opinion on the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC)

Dear Mrs Testori Coggi,

Thank you for your letter of 17 March 2011 with regards to the above. We are in agreement with the strategy you have proposed in order to allow for the most productive dialogue and collaboration between EFSA and the Commission Scientific Committees.

The Chair of the EFSA working group on TTC has, twice, been invited to meetings organised by the non-food Committees to present the work in progress and the coordinator of the EU committees has been constantly informed on the progress of the EFSA Working Group in drafting the opinion and sometimes present during the meeting to present the progress of the opinion of the Commission Scientific Committees. During 2010, after the analysis made on the databases underpinning the TTC concept, the EFSA working group moved in a direction that slightly differed from the one taken by the non-food Committees. This is also due to the results of an outsourced project that has been finalised in March.

In order to clarify the diverging views and to reach a common agreement with the Commission Scientific Committees, we have scheduled a joint meeting, to be held in Brussels on 8 June 2011. During this meeting, I trust that the two bodies will reach a common understanding on the possible use of the TTC approach in food and feed area as well as in non-food consumer products, in particular cosmetics. Assuming there is a positive outcome from this meeting, we would hope to present the EFSA draft opinion to the Scientific Committee for endorsement for public consultation at the 49th plenary on 21-22 June.

In case the June meeting will not bring EFSA and the Commission Scientific Committees to share the same view, a report will be produced in compliance with the article 30 of EFSA's founding Regulation. The report would explain and justify the differences in the opinions of the two EU bodies and would be published together with the opinions.

I will communicate any further information on this matter as soon as it is made available.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle

Copy: Mr D. Liem, Ms D. Maurici (EFSA)
Mr V. Silano (chair of the EFSA Scientific Committee), Mrs S. Barlow (chair of the Scientific Committee WG on TTC)
Mr M. Valletta, Mr S. Giraud, Ms I. De la Mata, Ms D. Spanou,
Mr M. Seychell, Mr L. Miko, Mr R. Vanhoorde, Mr A. Rys, Ms I. Jacquemyn,
Mr B. Delogu, Mr P. Martin, Mr T. Daskaleros, Mr V. Garkov (SANCO)