



## **BTSF – RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE FOOD CHAIN**

### **COURSE 7 – Environmental risk assessment**

#### **Fact-sheet**

The harmonisation of risk assessment methodologies has been identified as a priority area of the Strategy for Cooperation and Networking between the EU Member States and EFSA, since harmonisation would help in the development of high-quality scientific opinions that are recognised as truly authoritative. 2008 EFSA Working Group Report on "Fostering harmonised risk assessment approaches in Member States" pointed out how countries organised risk assessment differently at the time. Many of the procedures in the countries appeared to be in line, or at least not in conflict, with procedural aspects within EFSA, however highlighting discrepancies in procedural aspects of risk assessment, mostly regarding declarations of interest, public register of risk assessment requests, procedures concerning the selection of experts, the interaction with stakeholders and between risk assessors and risk managers during the risk assessment process.

The present training programme will address issues listed above through the adoption of a practical approach, aimed to increase knowledge of Competent Authorities and scientists from public institutions and national authorities involved in food chain risk assessment in order to increase the level of expertise and harmonisation.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The main goal of the training programme is to disseminate best practices for the implementation of principles and methods of food chain risk assessment, improving knowledge of this complex area of work and ensuring consistent and high implementation standards across the European Union.

Specific objectives are:

- Promoting reduction of discrepancies in procedural aspects of risk assessment;
- Contributing to the harmonisation of risk assessment approaches;
- Contributing to increasing transparency and building trust amongst Member States' authorities in each other's risk assessments;
- Disseminating best practices for risk management and communication;
- Promoting exchange of experience in order to increase the level of expertise and harmonisation of approaches.

#### **TOPICS**

The following topics will be covered during the training sessions, both from a theoretical and practical standpoint.

1. Introduction on environmental risk assessment (ERA) under the various EU legislation. The course will explain the basics of how to conduct ERA. In particular:

- looking at the different aspects of the environment and environmental compartments;
- exercises in problem formulation to better identify the aspects of the environment that need to be protected from harm, according to environmental protection goals as set by EU legislation;
- how to conduct the selection of non-target organisms for risk assessment evaluation studies, and how to gather relevant evidence. It will include the application and use of statistics to the measurable endpoint results with appropriate interpretation of the biological relevance of statistically significant results;

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- environmental exposure assessment. For each of the environmental compartments, scenario models can be selected to generate data and to link environmental exposure assessment to environmental effects;
- life-stage analysis. The developmental stages of wildlife are linked with their temporal and spatial distribution. Life stage analysis becomes most relevant when exposure patterns are known, and one can investigate whether exposure is likely to have a detrimental effect at a specifically sensitive life stage, with subsequent population level effects, using appropriate modelling tools.

## 2. Short introduction to Risk Communication.

Besides, group works, exercises and case studies will be included.

A test of knowledge will be carried out by all participants at the beginning and at the end of each workshop.

### **FACTS AND FIGURES**

During the second phase, 2 five-day training sessions will be organised and implemented, and approximately 20 people will attend each training session.

### **TRAINING LOCATIONS AND CALENDAR**

Training sessions will be implemented according to the following calendar.

| Year | Training sessions | Locations       | Proposed dates       |
|------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 2023 | TS 1              | Valencia, Spain | 13-17 November 2023  |
| 2024 | TS 2              | Riga, Latvia    | 09-13 September 2024 |

### **PARTICIPANT SELECTION CRITERIA**

The training will be addressed to officials from Competent Authorities and scientists from public institutions and national authorities involved in food chain risk assessment (with a focus on environmental risk assessment). They must have worked in functional areas of food chain risk assessment with a minimum of 3 years of professional experience or have had experience of setting up and implementation of food chain risk assessment in a Competent Authority (covering areas of food/ feed safety, animal health or animal welfare).

### **PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND TUTORS' TEAM**

The project will be implemented by the company OPERA srl in consortium with NSF Euro Consultants SA. The project's staff includes Mr. Claudio Bompard (CEO of OPERA) as Project Manager, Mr. Jozsef Kiss as training coordinator, Ms. Kristina Hristova and Ms. Elena Chakarova as Event Managers and a pool of 4 highly qualified tutors from 3 MS: Ms. Daniela Meilmann, Ms. Ulrike Middelhoff, Mr. Salvatore Arpaia, Mr. Patrick Laurence O'Brien.

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