



27th ENGL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

15-16 September 2014, Ispra, Italy

MEETING REPORT

1. Introductory activities

1.1 Welcome, quorum, apologies, new members

The Chairman informed that representatives from Greece, Croatia, Luxembourg, Malta, and Romania are excused.

1.2 Approval of the agenda

The agenda (Annex 1) was approved without modifications

1.3 Approval of the report SC26 meeting

The report of the last meeting was approved without changes.

1.4 Review of Dynamic Action List (DAL SC26)

The Secretary reviewed the DAL of the previous meeting. The Chairman asked the participants to complete the on-line questionnaire prepared by the Secretariat for mapping ENGL activities; the idea is not to modify the mandate of the ENGL but to enlarge the collaboration among laboratories in other fields different from GMO detection.

1.5 Update from SANCO

Since June 2014 the Commission has received three additional notifications on rice products originating from China. Chinese authorities have raised complains at WTO because rice samples detected as positive in the EU were later found negative by Chinese private laboratories. The Commission has requested clarifications on the sampling and methodology followed for the analysis but did not receive any answer. The producers in China have voluntarily decided to remove rice from the preparation of feed additives. SANCO is trying to convince Chinese authorities to officially monitor the producers' adoption.

2. Progress reports ENGL working groups

2.1 AG SMV (Advisory Group on Selection of Methods for Validation): progress report

A form was made available on the web page of the GMOMETHODS database for submitting new method proposals. A reminder will be sent again to all laboratories asking for contributions. Participants recommended organising a WG meeting to evaluate new proposals; this meeting is now planned for the 3rd of December 2014. SC members expressed appreciation for the matrix tool made available online on the EU-RL GMFF web page.



2.2 WG DIR (Detection Interpretation Reporting): progress report and next steps

Some chapters are still under debate and no consensus was reached for the cut-off/LOD approach. The Chairman proposed to address this issue in a separate document and suggested to set up a small WG with an ad-hoc mandate. He specified that the WG should not establish a precise cut-off value but rather provide good practices for GMO analysis at the limit of detection.

The proposal was accepted but some members felt that more data are needed to be collected at the experimental level to evaluate the different approaches. The WG leader will formulate a new mandate to better frame the topic and reach a consensus on the issue of detection at the limit of detection.

A finalised version of the document should be ready for comments in November and then submitted for approval at the ENGL plenary.

2.3 WG-ST (seed testing): progress report and next steps

The outline of the document was agreed at a first meeting on 21st-22nd of May 2014 and further defined in the following WG meetings of 24th-25th June and 9th-10th of September 2014. The document includes testing plans, testing plans sensitivity and related costs.

The most important parameter for calculating the cost was the grinding step. The consolidated report will be sent for comments in the following week and the final draft will be provided by 31st of October to ENGL for comments. The document should be adopted at the ENGL plenary meeting in December. The SC approved the approach followed by the WG.

3. Scientific / technical issues 1

3.1 Update on CT

The Secretariat announced the plan of organising the first and second shipping of the CT 2014 in September. As a novelty, one "easy" sample (e.g. CRM) is used as baseline together with a food or feed sample.

The issue of the use of a sub-optimal *adh1* method by some laboratories in a recent CT round was discussed. To avoid such problems in the future the EU-RL GMFF will publish on the GMOMETHODS database and on its own web page a warning on the *adh1* method providing sub-optimal performance.

The Secretariat asked the laboratories to share with the network problems in implementing methods already validated or that have been validated long time ago. The results could be published as such without waiting for a confirmation test allowing the network to quickly react to analytical drawbacks.

The Secretariat requested suggestions on the best approach for advertising analytical problems. Participants proposed including a note on the GMOMETHODS database and informing the network directly by e-mail. Alternatively it was suggested registering to the ENGL network for receiving automatic warnings on methods alerts.

3.2 Production of Certified Reference Materials for stacks

It was noted that GMO testing laboratories cannot verify any associated (unexpected) effect when analysing stacked events since relative CRMs are generally not available.



German ENGL members believe that the applicant should be asked to indicate where CRMs for the stack GM events are available. Some ENGL members commented that for control purposes it is sufficient to use CRMs for the single events as calibrant, while for research purposes and development of new detection strategies it is crucial to have additional CRMs for the stacked events. IRMM has released two stacked-event CRMs for research purpose and could further consider the production of other stacked events CRMs provided it is requested by the GM legislation in Europe.

The Secretariat added that the EU-RL GMFF laboratory is already verifying the methods on the single events and comparing their performance on DNA samples extracted from the stack events.

The EU-RL GMFF also receives control samples derived from the stacks, which could be distributed to ENGL members if requested.

4. Scientific / technical issues (2)

4.1 Harmonisation of reference gene assays

It was proposed that the EU-RL GMFF could co-validate, as an example, the *hmg* method with the assay submitted by the applicant in the forthcoming GM maize collaborative trials. SC members proposed compiling a selected list of reference methods.

The Secretariat remarked that the taxon-specific methods are recommended but not mandatory and that the EU-RL GMFF constantly attempts convincing the applicants in harmonizing the use of the reference gene methods.

The ENGL could however decide for a proper list of golden reference gene standards whose methods could be validated in-house by the EU-RL GMFF. SC members invited suggestions from the AG SMV advisory board.

The Secretariat will launch a survey to identify the methods used by ENGL for control purposes or for which the laboratories are accredited.

4.2 Vitamin B2 produced by GMMs

The German SC member briefed the SC on a rapid alert notification regarding a riboflavin feed additive sample material containing living GM *Bacillus subtilis*.

Analyses were performed to confirm the presence of the microorganisms in the samples. PCR tests targeting the ribosomal DNA of the microorganism (16S ribosomal) followed by sequencing confirmed the presence of *B. subtilis*. Real-time PCR tests for presence of a pUC recombinant plasmid (83 bp long amplicon) were performed with the raw material and from colonies, but a straightforward way to detect the living GM *B. subtilis* producing vitamin B2 is through culturing (yellow colour).

Use of GM bacteria for production of vitamin B2 may be authorised for contained use but once on the market they fall under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and if not approved are un-authorised GMOs, falling then under the ENGL mandate. It was agreed forming an ad-hoc discussion group on GMM detection. The detection method targeting the bacterial ribosomal DNA and the pUC19 real-time PCR method will be made available for distribution to laboratories.



5. New activities

5.1 Follow-up and action plan on new network activities

As a follow-up to the break-up discussion at the last ENGL plenary it was suggested organising a discussion day on digital PCR inviting all laboratories experience with digital PCR; this meeting will take place on 26th November in Ispra.

New activities on species identification and allergen antigens detection were discussed. The question raised was not to broaden the mandate of the ENGL but to facilitate discussion among ENGL members, so that possible new networks could be started.

5.2 Survey Survey on methods used by NRLs

SANCO suggested performing an enquiry on the methods used by NRL laboratories. The Secretariat proposed to extend the survey to all ENGL laboratories to provide a kind of a web-based inventory.

A questionnaire on methods used by laboratories will be prepared by the EU-RL GMFF by the 10th of January 2015.

6. ENGL topics

6.1 Definition of operating procedures for the ENGL

The SC members agreed on the idea of drafting ENGL operating procedures. Volunteers were requested and it was proposed to organise a meeting after the ENGL plenary in December 2014.

6.2 Preparation of the 22nd ENGL plenary meeting and of the NRLs workshop Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 (1-2 December 2014)

It was suggested to include a presentation on the revision of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

An update on requirements of the EC work programme for food and feed controls was also proposed.

For the ENGL plenary participants suggested inviting Emilio Rodriguez (JRC-IPTS) for an overview of the new GMOs expected in the regulatory pipeline.

Members recommended a scientific presentation on synthetic biology.

Finally participants suggested providing an update on the Decathlon project including species identification.

For the break-up groups the following topics were proposed:

- 1) analytical challenges of New Breeding Techniques
- 2) alternative detection technologies (e.g. NGS, isothermal amplification)
- 3) detection of GMM

The Secretariat informed that input for the agenda of the ENGL plenary could be provided up to the end of September.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
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7. AOB

None

9. DAL SC27 and end of meeting

The Secretariat summarised the point of discussion and relative decisions. The DAL SC27 (Annex 2) was presented. The Chairman thanked the participants and closed the meeting.

Report drafted by Laura Bonfini (Scientific Officer), reviewed by Marco Mazzara (ENGL Scientific Secretary) and approved by Joachim Kreysa (ENGL President)

List of Annexes:

- 1) Agenda
- 2) DAL (Dynamic Action List) SC 27



Annex 1: agenda

27th ENGL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

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Final Draft Agenda

AP	Time	Topic	Documents in ENGLnet
	12:30	<i>Buffer lunch</i>	
		Day 1	
1.1	14:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Welcome, quorum, apologies 	Agenda Report SC26 DAL SC26
1.2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approval of the agenda 	
1.3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approval of the report of the SC26 meeting 	
1.4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of Dynamic Action List (DAL SC26) 	
1.5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update from SANCO 	
	15:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
2	15:30	<i>Progress reports ENGL working groups</i>	Draft document
2.1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AG SMV (Advisory Group on Selection of Methods for Validation): progress report 	
2.2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WG DIR (Detection Interpretation Reporting): progress report and next steps 	
2.3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WG-ST (seed testing): progress report and next steps 	
	17:30	<i>End of day 1</i>	
	19:30	<i>Social dinner at Hotel Belvedere, Ranco</i>	
		Day 2	
3	09:30	<i>Scientific / technical issues</i>	
3.1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on CT 	
3.2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Production of Certified Reference Materials for stacks 	
	10:45	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
4	11:15	<i>Scientific / technical issues</i>	
4.1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harmonisation of reference gene assays 	
4.2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vitamin B2 produced with GMMs 	
	12:30	<i>Buffer lunch</i>	
5	14:00	<i>New activities</i>	Reports of the breakup groups
5.1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow-up and action plan on new network activities 	
5.2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey on methods used by NRLs 	
	15:15	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
6	15:45	<i>ENGL topics</i>	Draft agenda 22 th ENGL Plenary
6.1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Definition of operating procedures for the ENGL 	
6.2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparation of the 22th ENGL plenary meeting and of the NRLs workshop Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 (1-2 December 2014) 	
7	16:30	<i>AOB (date SC28)</i>	
8	16:45	<i>DAL SC27 and End of Meeting (17:00)</i>	DAL SC27



Annex 2: DAL (Dynamic Action List) SC 27

27th ENGL STEERING COMMITTEE ACTION LIST				
ACTIONS	Resp.	Timelines	Status	Comments
ENGL GENERAL				
Circulate report of 27th ENGL SC	SEC	30/9/2014	Open	
Organise 23rd ENGL Plenary in Ispra	SEC	Dec-14	Open	week 4-5 June 2015 or week after
Organise 28th ENGL SC	SEC	Oct-14	Open	week 16-20/03/2015
WORKING GROUPS				
WG Detection Interpretation Reporting (DIR)				
Prepare the final draft for ENGL comments	WG	31/10/2014	Open	
Final draft for approval by the ENGL plenary december	WG	15/11/2014	Open	
Advisory Group on "selection of methods for validation"				
Include activity on reference gene methods	WG	30/09/2014	Open	
Organise a meeting of the group	WG	30/9/2014	Open	next to the plenary in December 3? Doodle
WG on seed testing (ST)				
Provide draft to SC for comments	SEC	Sep-14	Open	2 weeks deadline
Provide final draft to ENGL for comments	SEC	31/10/2014	Open	for approval at the 22th Plenary
VARIOUS				
Setup a group on ENGL procedures	SEC	30/09/2014	Open	Gimara, Lotte, Esther. Half day after the plenary 3 december ?
Prepare questionnaire on methods used by NRLs 882	SEC	01/01/2015	Open	
Organise meeting dPCR, invite all ENGL members having a dPCR	SEC	30/11/2014	Open	try before ENGL plenary December 2014, i.e. november
Open access to SC subpage to all ENGL members?	SEC		Open	case by case basis; SEC to address and report back next SC
Establish WG on DELOD	SEC	31/10/2014	Open	laria takes the lead and reflect on a mandate
Establish ad-hoc e-discussion group on GMM detection	SEC	Oct-14	Open	Only SC members to frame the topic; names taken by JK
Circulate email to the GMM group to define mandate	SEC	30/9/2014	Open	
Gather information on issues with CRMs	SEC	31/10/2014	Open	go back to emails
Ask for control samples for wheat MON71800	EURL	30/9/2014	Open	The EURL will distribute a PCS
Publish the GM wheat event-specific method	EURL	31/10/2014	Open	If NRLs need the draft report, ok.