

Summary Minutes of the meeting of 21.11.1997

1. Welcome, apologies, introductory remarks

Dr. H.Reichenbach, Director General of Directorate General XXIV - Consumer policy and Consumer health Protection - opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He congratulated the new members for their election as chairpersons of the 8 scientific Committees.

Apologies were received from Prof. Bridges, chairman of the Scientific Committee Toxicity and Ecotoxicity. Prof. Bridges was represented by, Prof.Helmut Greim, second Vice Chairman of that scientific committee. Prof.R.Kroes could only be present as from 14h00. The complete list of participants is attached as annex 1.

In his introductory remarks Dr.Reichenbach pointed out that the Scientific Committees, through their work and excellency, will have to convince the consumer that political decisions are based on sound scientific advice. This implies that the members of the Scientific Committees will have to help the Commission to communicate with the European Parliament. This task will not be easy and will take time. Dr.Reichenbach further pointed out that the Scientific Committees and the European Commission have a joint responsibility for defending E.U. interests in international fora and organisations. A major aspect is here the SPS agreement which has to be respected by the EU and where scientific advice will be evaluated against international standards. It was thus utmost important that the Committee members lived up to world standards. The methods applied should necessarily be the best available ones so that the quality of the advises themselves could never be questioned.

2. Mutual presentation of members of the Scientific Steering Committee:

Each of the 8 members of the SSC as nominated by the Commission on 29 July 1997 and the 8 Chairpersons of the Scientific Committees which became automatically members of the SSC introduced himself.

3. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was amended (point 5.2 was added) and the list of pending questions was updated. With these changes the members adopted the agenda as given in annex 2.

4. Organisation of the Scientific Steering Committee

4.1 Information on the mandate;

B.Carsin, Director of the Directorate Scientific Opinions on Health Matters of DGXXIV, outlined the mandate of the Scientific Steering Committee. A summary of his presentation is attached as annex 3.

Mr.G.Gouvras (DG V) asked whether the appropriate the Scientific Committees (or the Scientific Steering Committee if the question was of a multidisciplinary nature) would also address questions in the field of human public health. Examples of such questions were: blood safety and blood supply sufficiency; non-ionising radiation under high tension power lines; surveillance and control of communicable human diseases; etc. It was agreed that such requests should be addressed in writing to DGXXIV for possible submission to the SSC or to a Scientific Committee. Whether or not they fell within the mandate of a Committee would be decided upon on a case by case basis. Meanwhile, Prof.Greim, vice chairman of the Scientific Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment and Prof.Jones, chairman of the Scientific Committee on Medicinal Products and Medical Devices stated that such scientific support could be provided in the fields within the competence of their respective Committees.

In the subsequent discussion it was agreed that, more generally, questions, which might not obviously fall under the mandate of any scientific committee shall be briefly discussed in view to either identify the scientific committee(s) which could address it or to set up a special working group if this would not be possible. On the examples provided by

DG V several chairman stated the ability to address the questions raised by their committees.

It was also agreed that the Scientific Steering Committee is not, and should not become, a "supercommittee" or "court of appeal".

4.2. Election of the chairperson and of two vice-chairpersons

The members were informed of the rules for the election of the chairperson and vice-chairpersons of the SSC (see annex 4).

Prof.G.Pascal was elected Chairman with unanimity of the votes. He thanked his fellow SSC members for their confidence and recognised that his task would not be easy. His main attitude as a chairman would be to listen to all members and to take as much advantage as possible of their complementary experiences and of the assets available in the other Scientific Committees and in the various services of the Commission.

After his election Prof.Pascal chaired the meeting.

Subsequently, and following the above outlined procedure, Prof.V.Silano was elected first and Prof.M.Vanbelle second vice chairman.

4.3 First discussion of a draft proposal regarding the internal rules

of procedure of the Scientific Steering Committee (including aspects such as declarations of interest; the handling of confidential material; etc.).

The SSC secretariat presented a first draft outline of the proposed internal rules of procedure of the Scientific Steering Committee and the reimbursement of cost and payment of indemnity procedures. A short, initial exchange of ideas was already held, but a further in-depth discussion will take place during the following SSC meetings. In preparation to this discussion, the SSC Secretariat will send to all members a written version of the draft proposed rules of procedure.

In the discussion it was proposed that scientific opinions, once they are ready for adoption by a Scientific Committee, should first be adopted "ad interim" and released to the public (including consumer organisations, scientific and professional organisations, etc.) for possible comments to be formulated within a number of days (for example: 60 days). On the basis of these comments, the opinion could then possibly be refined and eventually be adopted in its final version. Such procedure would largely enhance the transparency of the work of a scientific committee and of the content of an opinion. It was agreed that Prof.Gibney writes a reflection paper on this, which should also list the advantages and drawbacks of such an approach.

Other items mentioned to require further attention and clarification in the internal RoP:

The criteria to be used and procedure to be followed when possibly completing the present memberships of the 8 Scientific Committees;

Clear definition of Working Groups, their role and function;

The procedures to be followed when an advise is requested as a matter of emergency.

4.4 Constitution of the TSE/BSE ad hoc group of the Scientific Steering Committee (including initial membership; chairmanship; date of first meeting; etc.).

On the basis of the Commission Communication on Consumer Health and Food Safety of 30.04.97 and of Commission Decision 97/404/EC setting up the Scientific Steering Committee and creating the frame for the TSE/BSE ad hoc group, the general mandate of the TSE/BSE ad-hoc group was outlined by the Commission.

A first, not exhaustive, list of questions to be addressed by the group was attached to the agenda of the meeting, given in annex 2.

The SSC agreed that the ad-hoc group should be composed of a permanent core team, completed with a roster of experts in specific fields who would be called upon if required. The core team will be composed as follows:

- the chairperson, who should obligatory be a member of the SSC;
- other members of the Scientific Steering;
- one representative of each of the Scientific Committees on Animal Health and Animal Welfare; Veterinary Measures relating to Public Health; Animal Nutrition and Food;
- 6 - 8 external experts.

Prof.M.Gibney was unanimously elected chairperson.

Prof.M.Vanbelle, Prof. P.James and Prof.A.Osterhaus were appointed members of the ad hoc group.

It was agreed that the further composition of the group should be established during the next SSC meeting. Meanwhile the chairpersons of the above 4 Committees should identify the members of "their" scientific committees who should become member of the core team of the TSE/BSE ad-hoc group. The names of Prof. Piva (for SCAN) and Dr.Vanopbenbosch (for the Animal Health and Animal Welfare) were mentioned, but the chairpersons would first formally consult them before they should officially be invited to become member of the TSE/BSE ad hoc group. Prof.Kemper proposed Prof.A.Somogyi as a possible external expert member of the TSE/BSE ad-hoc group. DGXII stated that DGXII - Research Directorate General disposes of a list of more then 100 excellent TSE experts. The list would be made available to the SSC, as an additional help for the identification of the members of the roster of experts.

4.5. Dates of the next meetings and general planning (calendar) of the meetings in 1998

The date for the next meeting was set to 8-9 December 1997; start 14h00, end 16:30.

For what concerns the meetings in 1998, the proposal of the SSC secretariat to always hold two days meetings, normally on Thursday and Friday of the third week in each month, was in principal accepted. A possible meeting calendar for 1998 would be attached to the agenda of the meeting of 8-9 December 1997 and should be adopted at that meeting.

5. Multidisciplinary matters

5.1 Draft list of pending questions, on which the SSC needs to decide how these should be handled and by which Scientific Committee an opinion should be formally adopted. Discussion on how to address these issues and initial planning. (See attachment to the adopted agenda given in annex 2).

Regarding matters related to BSE:

Because of the urgency of the matter, only questions related to BSE were discussed. The following approach was agreed upon:

The highest priority questions, on which - if possible at all - an opinion should be adopted during the next meeting of 8-9 December 1997 are:

The UK proposals for a Date Based Export Scheme and for the Offspring Cull;

Specified risk materials;

Criteria ("compliance matrix") for the evaluation of the TSE status of a country.

The safety of tallow

The safety of meat and bone meal.

The following working groups were set up or rapporteurs nominated:

The UK proposals for a Date Based Export Scheme and for the Offspring Cull.

Rapporteur: Prof.M.Wierup.

Proposed working group members: Dr.E.Vanopdenbosch, Dr.M.Groschup, Prof.P.Willeberg and Prof.M.Savey.

Mandate: To analyse the recent UK proposals and to prepare an opinion on their scientific viability for eventual adoption at the next meeting of the SSC.

Specified risk materials.

The existing working group, established on 16.10.97 and chaired by Prof.James, was confirmed.

Members: Prof. Dieringer, Dormont, Gibney, Somogy, Vicari, Will, Willeberg, Osterhaus, Wierup, Dr.Bradley.

Mandate: To establish if the SRM list included in the SRM decision of July 1997 is still valid and, if changes are needed, to justify these changes by new scientific information or changed interpretation of old information, and to outline the implications of these changes. The question of an age threshold and other parameters determining these implications should also be addressed.

Criteria ("compliance matrix") for the evaluation of the TSE status of a country.

Rapporteur: Prof.F.Kemper.

Mandate: On the basis of the work already carried out by the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare and the Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures relating to Public Health, who analysed the applications of New Zealand, Australia and USA, the rapporteur will prepare a draft harmonised list of criteria against which applications may be evaluated and on the basis of which countries may possibly be requested to provide additional information.

For what concerns the evaluation of each application submitted by a Member State or a Third country to be declared free of any TSE or of scrapie and/or of BSE, it was agreed that the BSE/TSE ad hoc group would at least evaluate the presently submitted applications from Denmark, Sweden and Finland. This will allow to further refine the list of criteria. It was left open whether future applications should be evaluated by (a working group of) the TSE/BSE ad hoc group, or by the Commission Services on the basis of the final version of the compliance matrix.

The safety of tallow and of meat and bone meal.

The existing working group, established on 16.10.97 and chaired by Prof.Vanbelle was confirmed. Members: Prof.G.Piva, Prof.D.Dormont, Dr.D.Taylor and Prof.M.Wierup. It was agreed that also Prof.M.Pocchiari would be invited to participate in the activities of this working group.

Mandate: To finalise its work and to prepare draft opinions for eventual adoption by the SSC on its next meeting.

The planning of the work related to the other pending questions related to TSE/BSE (see the list attached to annex 2), was referred to the BSE/TSE ad hoc group. Regarding the safety of gelatine, it was pointed out that also the utilisation of gelatine in food products should be addressed.

The discussion on the other multidisciplinary questions not related to BSE was referred to the next meeting of the SSC

5.2. Requests for scientific advice on one genetically modified winter rape seed variety and on three genetically modified maize varieties.

The genetically modified plant varieties are:

Maize Mon 810 with *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) gene, notified by Monsanto Europe. This application covers both import into and sowing in the Community. As consignments are in transit this application is very urgent.

Maize Novartis - Bt. This maize appears to have a different biotechnological construction to that of the previously authorised maize of Ciba-Geigy. The notification concerns the importation and industrial processing for human, animal and industrial uses. The application does not seek authorisation for sowing in the Community.

Maize AgrEvo France - Bt and herbicide resistant (glufosinate ammonium). This maize seems to be a different construction to the other modified maize. The application concerns import and cultivation.

Colza AgrEvo UK - Bt and herbicide resistant to glufosinate ammonium. This actual requested application concern only importation of seed for processing although the original application was also for sowing in the Community.

Scientific advice is requested on the potential risk of these plant varieties for food safety or consumer health in its widest sense. As this touches the mandates of several scientific committees the question is of a clear multidisciplinary nature, and its treatment therefore had to be discussed by the SSC.

The Scientific Steering Committee decided that the Scientific Committee for Plants would act as leading Committee for this specific issue and asked that scientific committee to complement its working group with experts from the Scientific Committees on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment; Animal Nutrition and on Food. The SC-Plants should receive the report of this working group and eventually adopt the opinion on the four plants.

As it is expected that many similar requests for scientific advice related to GMOs will be received, the SC-Plant was requested to gain, from the analysis of these first 4 dossiers, the experience for establishing standardised analysis criteria, evaluation methods and risk assessment approaches, to be applied to future dossiers.

A preliminary, more general, discussion was also held on how the SSC would address in the future the multidisciplinary questions related to genetically modified organisms. Although further discussion is needed, it was clear that the questions principally related to the novel food directive would have to be addressed by multidisciplinary teams under the leadership of the Scientific Committee on Foods and that questions principally related to the plant related aspects, such as the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified plants (Council Directive 90/220/EEC of 23 April 1990) would be addressed under the leadership of the Scientific Committee on Plants.

6. Reports by the chairpersons of the 8 Scientific Committees.

All eight chairmen of the scientific committees gave a short update on the activities of their committees, which all had dealt during their first meeting mainly with procedural matters such as election of chairpersons and vice-chairpersons.

The complete minutes of these meetings will be made available to all SSC members. Urgent questions already tackled included:

SC-Food: Lindane in Baby food: is the opinion issued in 1994 still valid ?

SC-Animal Nutrition: Three Safeguard Clauses are pending and WG have been established.

SC-Animal Health and Animal Welfare: For 17 pending questions on animal health issues and one on animal welfare, the scientific committee established working groups.

SC-Veterinary Public Health: Inventory of pending questions was made and work started for the most urgent once.

SC-Plants: The list of pending questions was discussed and priorities identified. Reacting to a request of the Commission a working group on GMOs was constituted for treating four genetically modified plant organisms pending permission to enter the European market. The chairman further underlined that with only 15 members the committee is not fully covering all areas of competence and has hence to work frequently with external ad-hoc experts.

SC-Cosmetic and Non-Food Consumer Products: 5 working parties are established and all members already informed. The first (UV-filters) will meet on 16 December 1997.

SC-Medicinal Products and Medical Devices: Only administrative business and discussion of the mandate. As a new committee the SCMPD has no pending questions from previous periods.

SC-Tox, Ecotox and Environment: The list of pending questions was discussed during its first meeting and as particular problem the borderline to the SCC-NFP and the SC-Plants was identified.

7. Reports by Commission services on matters related to consumer health.

Due to time constraints this point was reported to the next meeting of the SSC.

8. Any other business.

No other business were put on the agenda.

The meeting was closed at 18h00.

Annex 1: List of participants in the Scientific Steering Committee meeting of 21.11.97:

Members of the MDSC/SSC:

Dr. Georges Bories, president, Scientific Committee on Animal Nutrition

Prof. Helmut Greim, vice chairman, Scientific Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment, representing Prof. Dr. James W. Bridges, Chairman

Prof. Dr. F. Garrido-Abellán, Chairman, Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare

Prof. Michael J. Gibney

Prof. Philip James

Prof. Dr. Keith H. Jones, Chairman, Scientific Committee on Medicinal Products and Medical Devices

Prof. Dr. med. Fritz H. Kemper, Chairman, Scientific Committee on Cosmetic Products and Non-Food Products intended for Consumers

Prof. Dr. Werner Klein

Dr. Ib Knudsen, Chairman, Scientific Committee on Food

Prof. Dr. Robert Kroes (only after 14:00)

Prof. Dr. Albert Osterhaus, Chairman, Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures relating to Public Health

Prof. Gérard Pascal

Prof. Vittorio Silano

Prof.Dr. Antonio M.S. Silva-Fernandes, Chairman, Scientific Committee on Plants

Prof. Dr.Ir.Marcel Vanbelle

Prof. Martin Wierup

Apologies were received from: Prof.Bridgens, chairman of the Scientific Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment.

Experts:

Prof.A.Somogyi

Participants from the Commission:

P.Deboyser, O.Rohte, J.A.Nunes (DG III)

G.Gouvras, L.Chambaud (DG V)

P.Colombo (DG VI)

J.Kioussi (DG XI)

B.Hansen, X.Goenaga, M.L.Vidal(DG XII)

H.Reichenbach, B.Carsin, P.Brunko, J.Costa-David, C.Deckart, M.de Sola, M.A.Granero Rosell, J.Kreysa, G.Morrison, W.Penning, J.Moynagh, J.J.Rateau, A.Sanabria, S. van de Louw, A.Van Elst, R.Vanhoorde, P.Vossen, M.Walsch, P.Wagstaffe: (DG XXIV)

Annex 2:

Agenda of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) meeting of 21 November 1997 - Final

1. Welcome, apologies, introductory remarks
2. Mutual presentation of members of the Scientific Steering Committee:
3. Approval of the agenda
4. Organisation of the Scientific Steering Committee
 - 4.1 Information on the mandate;
 - 4.2 Election of the chairperson and the two vice-chairpersons;
 - 4.3 First discussion of a draft proposal regarding the internal rules of procedure of the Scientific Steering Committee (including aspects such as declarations of interest; the handling of confidential material; etc.).
 - 4.4 Constitution of the TSE/BSE ad hoc group of the Scientific Steering Committee (including initial membership; chairmanship; date of first meeting; etc.).
 - 4.5 Dates of the next meetings and general planning (calendar) of the meetings in 1998;

5. Multidisciplinary matters.

5.1 Draft list of pending questions, on which the SSC needs to decide how these should be handled and by which Scientific Committee an opinion should be formally adopted. Discussion on how to address these issues and initial planning. (See attachment).

5.2. Requests for scientific advice on three genetically modified maize varieties and on one genetically modified winter rape seed variety.

6. Reports by the chairpersons of the 8 Scientific Committees.

7. Reports by Commission services on matters related to consumer health.

8. Any other business.

Attachment to the SSC Agenda of 21.11.97

Non exhaustive list of pending questions on which the SSC needs to decide how these should be handled and by which Scientific Committee an opinion should be formally adopted.

1. Matters of a multidisciplinary nature but not related to BSE

Possible human and animal risks related to the authorised commercialisation of recombinant Bovine Somatotropine in the E.U.;

Possible links between Johne's disease and Crohn's disease.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs): requests for scientific advice on three genetically modified maize varieties and on one modified winter rape seed variety.

2. Matters related to Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies

Questions of highest priority:

The UK Date Based Export Scheme;

The Offspring Cull proposal;

The UK proposal for an amendment to the BSE eradication and control plan to address the issue of maternal transmission;

Possible transmission of nv-CJD via infected human blood;

(With regard to specified risk materials:) propose a scientifically exact and pertinent definition of "high risk", "low risk" and "Specified Risk Material";

Specified risk materials (SRMs): definition and listing;

Safety of meat and bone meal;

Safety of tallow;

Safety of gelatine, in particular as ingredient of pharmaceutical products and for all industrial uses;

List of criteria ("compliance matrix") needed for the evaluation of the TSE status of a country.

Request from Finland, to receive the status of scrapie- and BSE-free country;

Request from Denmark, to receive the status of BSE-free country;

Request from Sweden, to receive the status of BSE-free country;

Claim from Canada to be BSE free;

Environmental aspects and risks related to the disposal of possible BSE infected material:

Disposal of BSE infected material: the plan proposed by UTG and submitted via the E.P.;

Other pending questions:

Safety of peptides and amino acids;

Safety of bi-calcium phosphate;

Safety of organic fertilisers derived from animal material;

Environmental aspects and risks related to the disposal of possible BSE infected material:

Evaluation of a set of studies carried out to assess the risks from various aspects of the disposal of material arising from the BSE situation:

Efficacy and safety in terms of the elimination of the BSE agent, of incineration and power stations using BSE infected cattle waste as combustible.

Efficacy and safety in terms of the elimination of the BSE agent, of various methods for the burial of BSE infected cattle waste.

Further discussions on the possible routes of infection to explain maternal transmission of BSE and risk assessment for these routes; options to mitigate the risk from these routes;

Possible initiation of a risk assessment and transmission studies for animal-derived rennet;

Scrapie infectivity of peripheral nerves of sheep: risk of transmission to man and animal of TSE agents through the use of red meat from sheep and goats, if the tissue and organ location preference of a TSE infective agent is species- rather than agent specific.

The issue of feeding meat and bone meal to fur animals.

Possible risks associated with the use of (pneumatic) stunners during the slaughtering process of cattle.

Annex 3:

Mandate of the Scientific Steering Committee, presentation by Bertrand Carsin, DG XXIV-B at the first meeting of the SSC, 21 November 1997

(Original: French - a translation is planned)

Pour aider la Commission dans l'élaboration d'une politique de protection de la santé des consommateurs, le CSD a un rôle majeur à jouer, un rôle qui n'était pas prévu auparavant, c'est à dire avant la décision l'instituant le 10 juin 1997, un rôle que la Commission avait défini dans sa communication du 30 avril 1997.

Quel est ce rôle?

- 1) Coordonner les travaux des Comités Scientifiques institués ;
- 2) Emettre des avis scientifiques ;
- 3) Assister la Commission par une activité de veille, d'alerte.

Coordination

1. Evaluer,

suivre,

harmoniser, si nécessaire, les méthodes de travail des comités scientifiques.

Premier exercice en la matière : le CSD sera saisi des règles proposées de fonctionnement des différents comités.

2. Identifier les comités impliqués lorsqu'une question exige la consultation de plusieurs d'entre eux (en d'autres termes organiser le travail des comités lorsqu'une question est de nature pluridisciplinaire).

Examiner les avis émis (lorsque plusieurs avis sont émis).

(si nécessaire) Assurer une vue d'ensemble (c.à.d. si ces avis présentent des divergences sensibles, veiller à ce qu'une synthèse cohérente soit assurée).

Un exercice en la matière est soumis au CSD avec la question des GMO.

3. Evaluer, à la demande de la Commission, la nécessité d'un avis scientifique au plan communautaire et par quel comité il doit être fourni,

lorsque des mesures communautaires sont fondées sur l'évaluation réalisée par des scientifiques appartenant à des organisations des E.M.

Exemple : système d'autorisation des pesticides fondé sur des évaluations nationales : une peer-review au plan communautaire sera mise en place sous l'autorité du CSD.

Emission d'avis

1. Emission d'avis scientifiques, à la demande de la Commission, seulement sur les questions qui ne tombent pas dans le mandat de l'un ou l'autre comité scientifique.

2. Emission d'avis scientifiques sur les aspects multidisciplinaires des EST et notamment ESB.

Il crée à cette fin un groupe ad hoc présidé par un des siens.

Assistance, alerte, veille

Il s'agit largement du domaine de l'initiative propre du Comité.

1. Identification des domaines où une consultation obligatoire des comités devrait être prévue. Exemple : est-ce que les GMO méritent une telle consultation ?

2. Alerte de la Commission sur toute question émergente en matière de santé des consommateurs.

3. Veille à la révision des procédures d'évaluation des risques existantes et proposition, éventuellement, de mise au point de nouvelles procédures d'évaluation des risques dans des domaines tels que les maladies d'origine

alimentaire, la transmissibilité des maladies animales à l'homme...

Certains aspects de ce mandat doivent être soulignés.

1. Le CSD sera la principale source d'avis scientifiques dans le domaine TSE/BSE.

En effet, ce domaine est très largement multidisciplinaire, au sens où la plupart des questions soulevées en la matière relèvent de l'expertise appartenant à plusieurs comités scientifiques.

Le sous-groupe BSE/TSE sera une structure permanente du CSD et comme la liste des questions à traiter l'atteste, une structure très active.

Ce sous-groupe n'adoptera pas d'avis, cette fonction appartenant au seul CSD. Ce sous-groupe préparera ces avis.

Il est dès lors d'une grande importance que la composition par les soins du CSD de ce sous-groupe se fasse avec les membres et les experts les plus appropriés.

2. Le CSD, c'est une fonction importante, n'a pas seulement le droit d'informer, d'alerter la Commission sur les sujets importants, nouveaux, qui sont d'intérêt pour la santé des consommateurs, mais il devrait aussi fonctionner comme une sorte à la fois de gardien et de garant de méthodes scientifiques les plus solides en matière d'évaluation des risques.

Pour ce faire il devrait être en contact avec la littérature scientifique et les actualités touchant à la protection de la santé des consommateurs et à la sûreté alimentaire ; il devrait connaître les implications pour les décideurs politiques des résultats des dernières recherches.

3. Le CSD a une fonction qui relève clairement de l'évaluation des risques.

Il n'est pas dans son rôle en fournissant des avis en matière de gestion des risques.

Toutefois les choses ne sont pas toujours aussi tranchées.

Si l'expertise scientifique constitue une démarche autonome, indépendante (tout l'exercice qui nous amène à cette première réunion aujourd'hui répond à ce souci essentiel) elle n'en est pas moins une démarche qui ne peut être coupée de la réalité politique, sociale, juridique.

En d'autres termes, l'expertise scientifique n'est pas un exercice purement intellectuel qui fait fi des enjeux en cause, une démarche qui ignore la portée de l'avis émis.

Il ne s'agit pas, ceci étant dit, de confondre, de fusionner deux démarches, je le répète, autonomes et différentes.

Mais autonomie de l'une par rapport à l'autre ne veut pas dire ignorance de l'une par l'autre. Il ne s'agit pas d'opposer mais de concilier, certains même diront de réconcilier, le scientifique et le politique. Il s'agit de les rendre compatibles c'est à dire, tout en sauvegardant leurs caractéristiques propres, leur spécificité, de renforcer leur interdépendance.

Sans vouloir utiliser de grands mots, c'est en quelque sorte le défi qui nous est lancé.

L'entreprise n'est pas facile et une responsabilité importante et particulière pèse sur le CSD à cet égard. Son travail, nouveau, sera largement analysé, disséqué, critiqué.

Annex 4:

Rules for the election of the chairperson and vice-chairpersons of the SSC:

a simple majority of the total number of members is required, regardless whether they are all present. Thus 9 votes or more are needed to be elected;

If there is more than one candidate and after the first round of voting nobody has the necessary number of votes, the candidates with the most votes would be subject to a second round of voting until one reaches the necessary majority. In case of deadlock the procedure may re-start (new nomination);

SSC members could propose themselves or a colleague as chairperson or vice-chairperson;

Each proposed candidate has to be asked explicitly whether he or she would be willing to accept the position as chairperson or vice-chairperson of the SSC.

The Uruguay Round GATT Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

Once adopted, these rules of procedure will be made publicly available.