

# Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

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## **Matters Arising: For information**

### **Agenda item 1**

The following paper details actions from previous meetings

**SACN: MATTERS ARISING ACTION CHECKLIST**

ITEM	TASK	ACTION
SACN/03/13	Members requested the purpose of the appraisal process clarified	See Annex 1
SACN/03/07	Secretariat to check the procedure for informing other advisory bodies of items arising from SACN	Secretariat will liaise with the Secretariats of other bodies to ensure appropriate information is disseminated and acted upon. Ongoing
Tabled paper SACN/03/08	It was agreed that more information would be given to Members on whether nutritional guidelines were considered when funding 'breakfast club' schemes (FSA Scotland)	Ongoing
SACN/03/08	It was agreed that Members would receive more information on Scotland's consideration to fortify alcoholic drinks with thiamine, as this was at odds with EU legislation currently under discussion in Brussels	Ongoing
SACN/03/08	Members noted that it would be helpful to be provided with a commentary on the various "action plans" and targets established by the FSA and devolved Health Departments	FSA departmental report is at <b>agenda item 8</b>
SACN/03/10	Iron working group 20 questions to be forwarded to members Paper on nutritional safety issues on GM to be produced	Actioned  A meeting on this issue involving the Chair of SACN is to be held on 23 October.
No paper	Nature and structure of annual report to be examined by members	No comments received by the Secretariat <b>see agenda item 2.</b>
SACN/03/14	Members requested the latest situation regarding labelling in catering outlets with specific reference to salt	Except for irradiated ingredients, there is no requirement for foods to be labelled which are sold at catering establishments (Regulation 27 of the Food Labelling regulations 1996(amended)).Nor is there a requirement for any information on the ingredients of foods to be provided if asked by the consumer. See Annex 2
SACN/03/16	Members requested trends on the levels of toxins in oily fish	
SACN/03/18	Patterns of food consumption to be on agenda when NDNS data available	Await publication of status data. A summary of trends will be presented at a later date.
SACN/03/18	Members requested the programme of surveys to be carried out by the FSA and whether sweets would be included	See FSA updates
SACN/03/20	Members requested the report on the healthy living campaign from Scottish Executive	Ongoing
SACN/03/20	Members requested clarification on the nutrition Forum being UK wide or England only. Members requested minutes.	UK wide. Web-link to minutes sent to members.
SACN/03/20	Members requested information on the origin of the fresh fruit in the fruit for schools campaign	Ongoing
SACN/03/18, 19,20,21	Members to think about how the FSA/DH could analyse the success of programmes presented.	Suggest members provide feedback on an adhoc basis

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		ACAF member Bruce Cottrill has volunteered to assist SACN on the vitamin A group The Fish Intra Committee subgroup will next meet on 21 November
		Tony Williams has been officially appointed to ACNFP on an ex-officio basis.

## Annex1

**SACN APPRAISAL PROCESS**

Members requested the purpose of the appraisal process.

The Chair and the Secretariat meet once a year to discuss members performance. The purpose of this process is twofold;

- 1) to enable the Chair to provide feedback if necessary to members on performance
- 2) adhering to the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) guidance on appointments to public bodies

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments guidance on appointments to public bodies states that

' As a minimum, a brief resume of an appointee's contribution with an overall assessment of their performance should be available. This should cover the whole period of service, not just the run up to reappointment. If possible and if justified by the status of the post, a more detailed record of performance should be kept which should involve asking the Chair of a body to complete a standard form on their members. Information recorded may include the appointee's contribution to the board's goals; number of extra committees served on; attendance rates; and other activities in support of the body. In addition the Chair should comment on the overall performance and indicate the strength of the recommendation for reappointment.'

## Annex 2

**TRENDS IN TOXINS IN FISH**

Members requested information on trends in toxins in oily fish. There are few conclusions from the following data. Dioxins and PCBs in fish have clearly declined. For mercury, and for fish oils, the trend is less consistent but overall (with the exception of dioxin and PCB in one fish oil product) there is more evidence of a downward trend or maintaining the status quo rather than any increase. Recent detailed surveys on mercury and dioxins/PCBs have as yet not been repeated so there are no comparable results from which to draw conclusions over time.

Table 1: Concentrations of mercury, dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in composite samples of fish as reported in Total Diet Studies (TDSs) between 1982 and 2001.

Date of TDS	Concentration in fish		
	Mercury (mean) (mg/kg fresh weight)	Dioxins (ng WHO-TEQ/kg fat basis)	Dioxin-like PCBs
2001 <sup>a</sup>	-	1.06	3.57
1997 <sup>b,c</sup>	0.043	2.40	4.53
1994 <sup>d</sup>	0.054	-	-
1992 <sup>e</sup>	-	3.14	4.60
1991 <sup>f</sup>	0.045	-	-
1982 <sup>e,g</sup>	0.060	5.83	11.24

- a. Food Standards Agency (2003). Dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in the UK diet: 2001 Total Diet Study samples. Food Surveillance Information Sheet No. 38/03.
- b. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1999). 1997 Total Diet Study: Metals and Other Elements. Food Surveillance Information Sheet No. 191.
- c. Food Standards Agency (2000). Dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls in the UK diet – 1997 Total Diet Study samples. Food Surveillance Information Sheet No. 4/00.
- d. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1997). 1994 Total Diet Study – Aluminium, Arsenic, Cadmium, Chromium, Copper, Lead, Mercury, Nickel, selenium, tin and Zinc. Food Surveillance Information Sheet No. 131.
- e. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. (1997). Dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls and foods and human milk. Food Surveillance Information Sheet No. 105.
- f. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1998). Cadmium, Mercury and other Metals in Food. Food Surveillance Paper No. 53.
- g. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1987). Survey of Mercury in Food: Second Supplementary Report. Food Surveillance Paper No. 7.

Concentrations of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in surveys of marine fish carried out in other countries

Data on time trends from fish are difficult to ascertain as the concentrations of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs will depend on the species and age of fish and from what sea the fish have been caught. In addition, the methodology for dioxin-like PCBs did not become available until the 1990s, and until recently not many countries analysed dioxin-like PCBs because of the expense.

In monitoring for  $\Sigma$ DDT and  $\Sigma$ PCB (analysed as a commercial formulation) in herring from the Baltic Sea (which is known to be contaminated) during the period 1972-1995, there were decreases in concentrations of  $\Sigma$ DDT **and**  $\Sigma$ PCB of 6.2-15% and 3.6-13% respectively, depending on the location.<sup>h</sup>

- h. Bignert, A. *et al.* (1998). Temporal trends of organochlorines in Northern Europe, 1967-1995. Relation to global fractionation, leakage from sediments and international measures. *Environmental Pollution*. **99**, 177-198.

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Dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in fish oil dietary supplements and licensed medicines

Surveys for dioxins and PCBs in fish oil dietary supplements were carried out in 1994, 1996 and 2000-01. In Table 2 the concentrations of dioxins and PCBs in those products that were sampled in both 2000-01 and in 1994 and/or 1996 are presented. Table 3 contains a summary of the concentrations of dioxins and PCBs found in all the products in each year. The 'other fish oil products' include those which contain halibut liver oil (1994 and 1996 only), salmon oil or unspecified fish oils.

Table 2: Concentrations of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in individual fish oil dietary supplements during 1994-2001<sup>l,j</sup>

Product	Formulation	Combined concentrations of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs (ng TEQ/kg oil)					
		1994		1996		2000-01	
		Dioxins	PCBs	Dioxins	PCBs	Dioxins	PCBs
CLO2	Oil	10.48	22.34	N/A	N/A	8.40	24.56
CLO4	Capsules	N/A	ID	3.60	14.21	2.24	2.97
CLO5	Oil	11.69	21.88	7.62	23.92	0.38	2.86
CLO6	Oil	4.52	10.12	N/A	N/A	0.57	3.28
CLO10	Capsules	N/A	N/A	3.66	14.80	7.87	24.90
FO2	Capsules	7.24	10.10	1.35	6.07	0.23	3.01
FO8	Oil	N/A	N/A	1.55	ID	0.77	2.13

**Notes:** N/A Not analysed  
ID Incomplete data set (see footnote to Table 3).

- i. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. (1997). Dioxins and Polychlorinated Biphenyls in Fish Oil Dietary supplements and Licensed Medicines. Food Surveillance Information Sheet No. 106.
- j. Food Standards Agency (2002). Survey of Dioxins and Dioxin-like PCBs in Fish Oil Supplements. Food Surveillance Information Sheet No. 26/02.

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Table 3. Summary of concentrations (ng WHO-TEQ/kg oil) of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs in fish oil dietary supplements and medicinal products

## a) Cod liver oil products

Chemical	Concentrations (ng WHO-TEQ/kg oil)											
	Bottled formulations (& syrup formulation in 2000/01)						Capsule formulations*					
	1994 n=4		1996 n=8		2000/01 n=6		1994 n=3		1996 n=5		2000/01 n=12	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Dioxins	6.8	0.5-12	8.0	6.7-10	3.3	0.3-8.4	-	-	3.9	1.6-6.7	3.71	0.3-7.9
Non-ortho-PCBs	13.6	4.8-20	20	17-22	11.7	0.2-31	[44]	-	16	11-26	8.7	0.6-20
Ortho-PCBs	1.7	0.5-2.9	7.8	6.6-8.5	4.3	0.3-10	[2.4]	[2.3-2.5]	6.7	3.5-11	3.23	1.0-7.4
<b>Total TEQ</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7.3-34</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32-39</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0.8-46</b>	<b>[16]</b>	<b>[2.3-44]</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18-41</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1.9-34</b>

## b) Other fish oil products

Chemical	Concentrations (ng WHO-TEQ/kg oil)											
	Bottled formulations						Capsule formulations*					
	1994 n=0		1996 n=3		2000/01 n=1		1994 n=5		1996 n=6		2000/01 n=5	
	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
Dioxins	-	-	2.3	0.6-4.8	0.8	-	14.4	1.3-44	2.3	0.3-6.9	1.9	0.2-6.3
Non-ortho-PCBs	-	-	5.1	1.0-10	1.7	-	5.0	0.1-14	2.3	0.09-4.8	4.5	0.8-14
Ortho-PCBs	-	-	2.2	0.3-3.4	0.4	-	[0.4]	[0.1-1.0]	0.8	0.09-1.3	1.3	0.3-4.6
<b>Total TEQ</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2.9-18</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>[17]</b>	<b>[0.3-61]</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>0.5-16</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>2.0-25</b>

Notes: Combined concentrations of dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs may not equal the sum of the separate concentrations due to rounding.

n= Number of samples analysed. For cod liver oils, in 1996, there were 6 samples of one branded product, and, in 2000-01, 4 samples of each of three branded products; the mean concentrations in these products are used here. Other single samples of each product were sampled in each year.

\* Only four of the eleven 1994 capsules samples were analysed for all three groups of chemicals due to insufficient sample size. Values shown in brackets. [ ] indicate those derived from incomplete data sets.