

WORK PROGRAMME of EURL for **MARINE BIOTOXINS**

PERIOD: 2018

Version 1.X
(date 28/11/2017)

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INTRODUCTION

The legal functions and duties of the Community Reference Laboratories for feed and food are described in Article 32(1) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules.

From 29 April 2018, Regulation (EU) 625/2017 Art 94(2):

European Union reference laboratories designated in accordance with Article 93(1) shall be responsible for the following tasks insofar as they are included in the reference laboratories' annual or multiannual work programmes that have been established in conformity with the objectives and priorities of the relevant work programmes adopted by the Commission in accordance with Article 36 of Regulation (EU) No 652/2014.

According to the functions and duties above mentioned the EURLMB presents this Work Programme compiling all the activities required with the aim of accomplishing the responsibility as European Reference Laboratory.

In 2018 work programme 28 Member States and 2 EFTA Member States (Iceland and Norway) are considered eligible for EURL assistance and invited to participate in EURL organised training programmes, comparative testing, etc. Third country laboratories are also invited to participate as appropriate in comparative testing and training activities on a cost recovery basis.

As a result of the reorganization of the tasks covered by the EURL for viral and bacteriological contamination of bivalve molluscs after BREXIT. The EU Commission informed the EURLMB about the assignment of the activities of this EURL related with the classification and monitoring of production areas for bivalve molluscs. According to this new activity, The EURLMB Network will be expanded to include 15 member States with Production areas as well as the 2 EFTA member States (Iceland and Norway) as well as the Three EURLs involved in the activities related to microbiological contamination of BM (E. coli, Salmonella, Virus). The EURL for monitoring bacteriological and viral contamination of bivalve molluscs will be also included in this 2018 transitional period.

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TO ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF HIGH QUALITY METHODS AND TO ENSURE HIGH QUALITY PERFORMANCE BY NRLs.

Please, provided activities related to Regulation (EU) 2017/625:
(Number of Sub-activity boxes can be adjusted by EURL)

- *Art. 94.2.a Providing national reference laboratories with details and guidance on the methods of laboratory analysis, testing or diagnosis, including reference methods.*
- *Art. 94.2.b Providing reference materials to national reference laboratories*
- *Art. 94.2.c Coordinating the application by the national reference laboratories and, if necessary, by other official laboratories of the methods referred to in point (a), in particular, by organising regular inter-laboratory comparative testing or proficiency tests and by ensuring appropriate follow-up of such comparative testing or proficiency tests in accordance, where available, with internationally accepted protocols, and informing the Commission and the Member States of the results and follow-up to the inter-laboratory comparative testing or proficiency tests.*
- *Art. 94.2.l Where relevant for their area of competence, cooperate among themselves and with the Commission, as appropriate, to develop methods of analysis, testing or diagnosis of high standards.*

Sub-activity 1.1: *Supply information to EU NRLs on analytical methods for marine biotoxins*

Objectives: *To contribute to the improvements in the performance of the EU harmonised methods*

Description:

Issues related with marine toxins legislation, methodologies, standard operating procedures, validation reports, seminars, meetings, minutes, conclusions and recommendations, as well as the activities of the EURLMB will continue to be published and updated at the EURLMB Website. All the private information of the Network will be published in a restricted area of the EURLMB Website to which only NRLs can access using a specific code. Additional information might be also supplied by email or any other possible source when requested.

Expected Output: *improved performance and standardisation across laboratories*

Duration: January- December 2018 (ongoing) EURLMB website is available at:

<http://www.aesan.mssi.gob.es/en/CRLMB/web/home.shtml>

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Sub-activity 1.2: *Provide reference materials to EU NRLs*

Objectives:

To help laboratories to implement methodologies and validate them to reach or maintain accreditation

Description:

The joint efforts of the former IRMM (JRC, EU Commission) and the NRC, CNRC (Canada) in the development of reference materials for marine biotoxins and in particular for Lipophilic toxins, made possible the development of a new Certified Reference material (FDMT) for Lipophilic toxins together with Amnesic shellfish toxins. The IRMM provided these materials to the EURLMB, these materials were distributed among the EU NRLs to help them with method development and implementations. The EURLMB encourages the use of these materials among the NRLs.

Other reference materials, in particular contaminated samples of different bivalves with different biotoxins profiles and with assigned value are also distributed among NRLs when requested. The homogeneity and stability of these materials is guaranteed.

Expected Output: *Improved analytical performance and increased harmonization across laboratories*

Duration: January-December 2018 (ongoing)

Sub-activity 1.3: *Proficiency Testing studies on PSP, ASP and LPTs*

Objectives:

Proficiency Testing organised by the EURLMB for the NRLs are aimed at evaluating the ability of the NRLs to apply the recognised testing methods for marine biotoxins, for the purpose of Regulations (EC) Nos. 853/2004 and 854/2004. The equivalence of the methods applied for the different toxin groups included in the EU Regulation is also evaluated.

Description:

The EURLMB organise trials for each of the regulated marine biotoxins group (PSP, ASP and LPTs) and the methodologies included in these PTs will be the ones officially included in the EU Legislation.

The schedule for the Proficiency Testing (registration form, samples dispatch, results submission and PT report) will be agreed by the EU-NRLs network and published at the "EU EURLMB/NRLs timetable of activities for 2018" which will be circulated to the network in the first quarter of 2018.

NRLs will receive all the documentation required to participate on the PT trials. Laboratories will follow the EURLMB Instructions and recommendations for the Tests and will confirm the reception of all the documentation. Results of the Proficiency Tests will be submitted to the EURLMB on the Reporting Files taking into account the established deadline.

The results on EURLMB--Proficiency Testing will be presented by the EURLMB during the Annual Workshop of the European NRL network of marine biotoxins, which will be scheduled in October 2018, and discussed by the group of participants.

A final and detailed report including all the information about participants, aim of the study, schedule and instructions, materials preparation, methods used, evaluation of the results, etc. will be elaborated and edited by the EURLMB for each PT, and after circulation to the participants in the study, for comments and revision, this report will be published at the EURLMB website on the restricted area for NRLs. Follow-up actions will be taken with the aim of analysing the reasons for Laboratories underperformance when required.

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A follow-up report on the management, in cases of underperformance in the Proficiency Testing by NRLs, will be submitted to DG SANCO together with the EURLMB Annual Technical report

-Intercomparison study for the analysis of TTX by HILIC-LC-MS/MS

The emergence of TTX in some EU coastal areas, prompted the need of evaluating the incidence of TTX in the EU, following the recommendations included in the EFSA Opinion (March 2017). The EURLMB will organize and coordinate an intercomparison of the HILIC-LC-MS/MS method that has been internally validated at the EURLMB and transferred to the NRLs. The unavailability of naturally contaminated materials makes necessary to spike uncontaminated bivalves matrices with the TTX standards commercially available. These materials will be distributed among the NRLs interested in participating in this study. Reports on the study will be discussed among the WG of technical experts from NRLs and available at the EURLMB website. Individual follow up will be also considered to help NRLs to implement the methodology. The results will be also presented to the EU Commission in the Annual Technical report.

Expected Output:

Comparative testing reports published on the EURLMB Website. Intercomparison study report published on the EURLMB website

Duration: *March-September 2018 (May-November 2018 for TTX intercomparison)*

Sub-activity 1.4: Development of analytical methods for marine biotoxins control

Objectives: *To develop new or implemented methods for the control of existing and emergent toxins in the EU*

Description:

The research activities focused on method development and considered of relevance in the control of marine biotoxins are summarised below. These activities are supported by the research team of the Analytical Chemistry and Food Department of the University of Vigo, lead by the EURLMB Director and directly involved in the work carried out by the EURLMB under the Contract signed between the AECOSAN and the University of Vigo.

The EURLMB prioritizes research activities in accord with the current challenges and needs in the control of marine biotoxins, which are also discussed and identified among the NRLs. The EURLMB collaborates with NRLs on method development and implementation and this collaboration is also extended to experts worldwide through collaborative research projects in which the University of Vigo and the EURLMB are involved.

According to this the R&D activities of the EURLMB during 2018 will be focus on:

- Continuation with activities focused on the development and optimization of alternative sample pretreatment protocols for the analysis of different groups of marine biotoxins in complex matrices in particular for the analysis of marine biotoxins in processed bivalve mussels with the aim of providing an efficient harmonised approach to analyse the biotoxins present in these matrices.
- Ongoing activities focused on the implementation and validation of HILIC-LC-MS/MS for the analysis of Tetrodotoxins.
- Continuation with ongoing activities related with the implementation of methodologies based on LC tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) for the determination of emerging toxins in the EU with special emphasis on Ciguatoxins as a result of the involvement in the EUROCIQUA project (EFSA) in which the EURLMB collaborates with the UVigo on the activities of the SG4 focused on the characterization of CTX risk in the EU as well as in the development of standards and reference materials.
- Implementations and participation of ring trials for the validation of an alternative method for PSP toxins based on HILIC-LC-MS/MS.

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- Ongoing activities on the setting up, implementation and application of alternative assays (biochemical, biological, etc.) of particular interest for the analysis of emerging toxins (Tetrodotoxins and Ciguatoxins)

Expected Output: *Alternative methods for marine biotoxins control*

Duration: *January-December 2018 (ongoing)*

TO PROVIDE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO NRLs

Please, provided activities related to Regulation (EU) 2017/625:
(Number of Sub-activity boxes can be adjusted by EUURL)

- *Art. 94.2.d Coordinating practical arrangements necessary to apply new methods of laboratory analysis, testing or diagnosis, and informing national reference laboratories of advances in this field.*
-
- *Art. 94.2.e Conducting training courses for staff from national reference laboratories and, if needed, from other official laboratories, as well as of experts from third countries.*
-
- *Art. 94.2.g Providing information on relevant national, Union and international research activities to national reference laboratories.*

Sub-activity 2.1 *Assist NRLs on the implementation, validation, accreditation of EU Reference methods for the analysis of marine biotoxins*

Objectives: *To contribute to the laboratories performance on EU Reference methods for marine biotoxins control*

Description:

Support on issues related with analytical methods (Standard Operation Procedures, etc.) for marine biotoxins and their application will be facilitated. This support could be provided electronically, although visits of staff from NRLs to the EURLMB and viceversa when necessary could be also contemplated. EURLMB will also assist NRLs on the implementation and validation of alternative analytical methods of interest, by providing them with technical information, standards and contaminated materials if available, etc., at their request.

Moreover, protocols for the analysis of the different groups of marine biotoxins regulated in the EU will be published in the EURLMB website, although any specific information or support related with the application of these protocols will be also directly provided to the NRLs when necessary.

Expected Output: *Improvements in performance and evidence to support robust method performance criteria*

Duration: January-December 2018 (ongoing)

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Sub-activity 2.2: *Coordination of Working groups of experts among EU NRLs*

Objective: To coordinate efforts to resolve specific issues related with analytical methods for marine biotoxins (emerging) as well as to collaborate in the elaboration and revision of Community Guides for phytoplankton control and for microbiological monitoring of BM harvesting areas.

Description:

Three WG of experts will be selected among the EURLMB NRLs Network: Instrumental methods for marine biotoxins, Phytoplankton and Microbiological contamination. These WG will work under the EURLMB coordination. The WGs will work mostly electronically, although physical meetings could be also organised when necessary. The participation of external experts will be requested when appropriate.

- Working group on instrumental methods for marine biotoxins

As a result of the transition from animal assays for the control of marine biotoxins to chemical methods, in particular chromatographic methods. Only one technical working group of experts in instrumental analysis among the NRLs will be operating to deal with technical issues related to the application of these methods for the control of existing and emerging marine biotoxins. The WG will be coordinated by the EURLMB and will be working electronically or meeting physically at least twice a year. A technical WG will meet in the spring to discuss issues related with the TTX control by HILIC-LC-MS/MS. Participation of external experts will be also considered

- Working Group on Phytoplankton control:

The Working Group (WG) on Phytoplankton control has initiated its activities in 2015 and after a first meeting in Brussels, an electronic Working Group has been created to work on the definition of particular issues. During 2017, this working group has written and reviewed five of the six core sections of a joint technical Guide to Monitoring of Toxin-producing Phytoplankton in Production Areas for Bivalve Molluscs. This guide will be updated in accordance with the requirements of the new official control regulation, and completed for final publication.

The EURLMB will convene and coordinate the activity of reduced advisory groups of experts for final review and progress of specific aspects of phytoplankton control included in the guideline. These include, but are not limited to, a) sampling (water column, frequency, location), b) samples fixation, preservation, labelling and storage, c) species identification, counting protocols and calculations, d) data handling, and interpretation, f) thresholds and triggers. Although much of the activity of these groups will be electronic, in-person meetings may be convened if necessary to improve communication. At least one in-person WG is scheduled for 2018 to discuss the conclusions and coordinate the edition of the final guide.

-Working Group on the Microbiological Monitoring of bivalve molluscs harvesting areas

This activity will be initiated in January 2019 after BREXIT. During the transitional period of 2018 the EURLMB will take over this activity creating a WG of experts among the MS with production areas of bivalve molluscs. This WG will be the continuation of the former one created by the EURL for monitoring bacteriological and viral contamination of bivalve molluscs. The Group will be coordinated by the EURLMB and an external expert will support the activities of this group during this transitional period. The EURLMB will include the microbiological expertise in the staff to supervise this activity.

Expected Output: *Implementation of analytical methods and implementation of the EU Regulation*

Duration: January- December 2018

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Sub-activity 2.3: Training activities

Objectives: *To support the setting up of EU reference methods for the control of marine biotoxins in the EU NRLs.*

Description:

Trainings on methodological advances on Marine Toxins will be organised according to the NRLs needs. Special emphasis will be given to trainings related with analytical methods for detection of emerging toxins.

Training activities will be supported by experts from the research team of the Analytical Chemistry and Food Department at the University of Vigo under the Contract signed between the AECOSAN and University of Vigo. The participation of external experts might be also contemplated depending on the training activity and the specific issues involved in these trainings

Expected Output: *Improvements in performance and method harmonization*

Duration: *January-December 2018*

Sub-activity 2.4 Organization of the XXI Annual WORKSHOP of the EURLMB/NRL Network

Objectives: *To coordinate the activities of the EURLMB/NRL Network*

Description:

The EURLMB will organise, host and coordinate the Annual EURL Workshop of NRLs for marine biotoxins. The participation and involvement of NRLs will be emphasised by requesting the contribution of NRLs, presenting a summary of the activities carried out during 2018. The activities on the phytoplankton control will be also presented and discussed in this workshop. The new activities on the microbiological monitoring of BM harvesting areas will be presented and the initial steps will be also presented and discussed.

The EURLMB will edit the minutes and conclusions of the meeting which will be distributed to the participants and published at the EURLMB Website. All the presentations and information of interest provided in the meeting will be also posted at the EURLMB Website.

The participation of external invited experts in this workshop will be also emphasized in order to have independent views and advice also contributing to a global distribution of the advances and progress in the control of marine biotoxins.

-Adaptation to the new activity of microbiological monitoring of production areas

The EURLMB will invite experts from EU NRLs involved in the microbiological monitoring of production areas, as well as Representatives from EURLs (E. coli, Salmonella and viruses) and one representative from the EURL for monitoring bacteriological and viral contamination of bivalve molluscs, to participate in this Workshop to share the activities and as a start point for building an extended multidisciplinary network with the expertise in the field of the monitoring of production areas of bivalve molluscs.

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Expected Output: *Harmonization of official control of marine biotoxins, phytoplankton and microbiological monitoring across network of NRLs*

Duration: 2-3 days

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TO PROVIDE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Please, provided activities related to Regulation (EU) 2017/625:
(Number of Sub-activity boxes can be adjusted by EURL)

- *Art. 94.2.f Providing scientific and technical assistance to the Commission within the scope of their mission.*
- *Art. 94.2.h Collaborating within the scope of their mission with laboratories in third countries and with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).*
- *Art. 94.2.i Assisting actively in the diagnosis of outbreaks in Member States of foodborne, zoonotic or animal diseases, or of pests of plants, by carrying out confirmatory diagnosis, characterisation and taxonomic or epizootic studies on pathogen isolates or pest specimens.*

Sub-activity 3.1: *Provide scientific assistance to DG-SANTE*

Objectives: *To provide the expert scientific support and technical advice to the EU Commission when necessary*

Description:

The EURLMB will assist DG-SANTE and Directorate on Health and Food Audits and Analysis if it is required on issues related with the control of marine biotoxins in molluscs and also on the phytoplankton control. During the 2018 as a transitional period the EURLMB will initiate the activities of the WG on microbiological monitoring of BM to take over the responsibility of providing future scientific assistance to DG SANTE and FVO on this particular issue.

Any other scientific assistance of interest for DGSANTE will be also provided when requested.

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- Provide technical assistance in cases where the results of analysis are contested between Member States and/or Member States and Third Countries (when requested)
 - Technical assistance for CODEX Alimentarius, (participation in Working Groups, meetings, etc. as a part of the EU Delegation) will be provided. Any other technical support requested by DGSANTE will be also facilitated.
 - Assistance to DGSANTE FVO with issues related with the control of marine biotoxins and phytoplankton as well as with audits of MS and third countries as requested and as other EURL priorities allow (mission costs funded by DGSANTE FVO)
 - Provide scientific advice to EFSA in any issue related with analytical methods for control of marine biotoxins, in particular with toxins emerging in the EU
 - The EURLMB will participate on an ongoing activity of DG-SANTE through a Working Group on bivalve molluscs in which specific issues of interest related to their control (Marine biotoxins, phytoplankton, also transitioning to microbiological monitoring) are discussed.
- The issues affecting marine biotoxins might require the debate through a specific Working group of experts among the EU NRLs. Examples of this are the issue of potential PTX de-regulation, TTX control , Uncertainty, etc. These Working Group meetings will be therefore scheduled during 2018 according to the needs.

Expected Output: *Supporting EU regulation*

Duration: *January-December 2018*

Sub-activity 3.2: *Scientific and technical support and cooperation to other Organizations*

Objective : *To provide scientific support and to cooperate with organizations involved in seafood safety In particular bivalve molluscs safety*

Description:

- Participation in relevant EU and International scientific committees (AOAC, EFSA, ICMSS, FAO/WHO)
 - Participation in forums of discussion and scientific events (conferences, seminars, meetings, etc.) related with the advances on the field of Phytoplankton, Marine Biotoxins and their Analysis.
 - The EURLMB will participate in meetings of special interest for the marine toxin field (AOAC Canada 2018, HAB France 2018, Gordon Conferences USA 2018 , Shellfish Safety meeting USA 2018, IUTOX Belgrad 2018).
 - Participation in the CODEX-CCMAS /Working group on criteria for biological methods
 - Participation in the Working group 5 (“Biotoxins”) of CEN/TC 275 Technical Committee “Food Analysis–Horizontal methods” (European Committee for Standardization), Berlin, Germany 2018.
- The participation on these meetings or any other scientific forum during 2018 will be decided depending of the relevance of the issues and their interest for the advances in the control of marine biotoxins. Priority will be given to meetings dealing with important issues on the analytical aspects of marine biotoxins including emerging toxins, which are becoming an important concern in certain areas of the EU.

Expected Output: *Improved analytical performance and harmonization across laboratories involved in EU trades*

Duration: *January- December 2018 (ongoing)*

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Sub-activity 3.3: *Collaboration with third countries within the scope of their mission*

Objectives: *To provide support on analytical methods and other issues related with official control of marine biotoxins in bivalve molluscs under the scope of the EU Legislation*

Description:

- Supply information on analytical methods for marine biotoxins (SOP, performance criteria, validation reports, etc) issues related with marine toxins legislation, information about seminars, missions, etc. Updated information will be posted at the EURLMB Website. Information could be also directly provided by email.
- Technical assistance to third countries on the development, implementation and validation of EU Reference methods for the control of marine biotoxins. Reference materials consisting on contaminated samples from different matrices with different toxic profiles and assigned values for the toxins involved could also be facilitated upon request for own testing on methods performance and internal validation and accreditation.
- Participation in Proficiency Testing could be also contemplated upon request and according to availability. Priority should be given to third Countries with limited resources and involved in commercial trades with the EU. Laboratories from third countries will be responsible for shipping expenses or any other additional fees.

Expected Output: *Improved analytical performance and harmonization across laboratories involved in EU trades*

Duration: *January- December 2018 (ongoing)*

Sub-activity 3.4 *Training activities for third countries*

Objectives: *To contribute to the setting up and implementation of EU reference methods for control of marine biotoxins in laboratories from third countries*

Description:

Participants from Third Countries or from other non EU-NRLs laboratories interested in these trainings could be admitted, upon request and according to availability. These participants will be responsible for their own expenses.

Training activities will be supported by the research team of the Analytical Chemistry and Food Department at the University of Vigo under the Contract signed between the AECOSAN and University of Vigo.

The participation of external experts might be also contemplated depending on the training activity and the specific issues involved in such training.

Expected Output: *improvements in performance and harmonisation across laboratories*

Duration: *January - December 2018 (ongoing)*

REAGENTS AND REFERENCE COLLECTIONS

Please, provided activities related to Regulation (EU) 2017/625:
(Number of Sub-activity boxes can be adjusted by EUURL)

- *Art. 94.2.j* **Coordinating or performing tests for the verification of the quality of reagents and lots of reagents used for the diagnosis of foodborne, zoonotic or animal diseases and pests of plants.**

- *Art. 94.2.k* **Where relevant for their area of competence, establishing and maintaining:**
 - i. **reference collections of pests of plants and/or reference strains of pathogenic agents;**
 - ii. **reference collections of materials intended to come into contact with food used to calibrate analytical equipment and provide samples thereof to national reference laboratories;**
 - iii. **up-to-date lists of available reference substances and reagents and of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents.**

Sub-activity 4.1: *Verification of toxin content in contaminated samples to be used as Laboratory reference materials*

Objectives: *To obtain laboratory reference materials to be used for setting up analytical methods, method implementation and validation*

Description: The limited availability of reference materials for all the marine biotoxins and also for all the matrices involved in the contamination, in particular for new or emerging toxins, makes difficult the progress on the implementation of analytical methods for these particular toxins in these particular matrices. This activity will be focused in the coordination of specific tests among EU NRLs to verify the toxin content, and to provide an assigned value as a result of the intercomparison of the results obtained. These samples could be further used as laboratory reference materials with the mentioned assigned value. This activity will be initiated in 2018 working on samples contaminated with TTX to be able to provide laboratories with materials to implement methodologies for the control of these toxins. Future work could be focused on the verification of the content of additional toxins according to the needs.

Expected Output: *Increased availability of reference materials*

Duration: *January-December 2018*

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REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO OTHER LEGISLATION

Please specify applicable legislation:
(Number of Sub-activity boxes can be adjusted)

Sub-activity 5.1 (*name of Sub-activity*)

Objectives:
Description:
Expected Output:
Duration:

Sub-activity 5.2 (*name of Sub-activity*)

Objectives:
Description:
Expected Output:
Duration:

Sub-activity 5.3 (*name of Sub-activity*)

Objectives:
Description:
Expected Output:
Duration:

Sub-activity 5.x (*name of Sub-activity*)

Objectives:
Description:
Expected Output:
Duration:

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REMARKS

As a result of the reorganization of the tasks covered by the EURL for viral and bacteriological contamination of bivalve molluscs after BREXIT. The EU Commission informed the EURLMB about the assignment of the activities of this EURL related with the classification and monitoring of production areas for bivalve molluscs. Although these activities will not be formally introduced in the EURLMB Program until the discontinuation of the EURL for viral and bacteriological contamination of BM (31 Dec 2018), a transitional period was established to relocate the mentioned activities in the EURLMB. These activities are mostly related with the provision of technical advice and any necessary revision to Community Guidance on microbiological monitoring of bivalve molluscs. The activities that will be carried out in this transitional period are summarized as follows:

- Identification of experts among the EU Member States with production areas of bivalve molluscs, and identification of the EURLMB Network for this particular activity. This Network will include representatives from Laboratories EU Member States with production areas of bivalve molluscs, as well as Representatives from EURLs (Salmonella, E. Choli and Viruses). A Representative from the EURL for viral and bacteriological contamination of BM will be also included in this Network for this transitional period.
- Constitution of an EU Working Group on the microbiological monitoring of bivalve mollusc harvesting areas (by invitation to EU recognised experts in the field among Laboratories from Member States with interest in bivalve molluscs harvesting areas. The invitation of external independent experts will be also considered)
- Coordination of the activities of the WG: Definition of the scope of the activities (a physical meeting of the WG of experts is included in this WP)
- The Annual EURLMB Workshop will be expanded to include the new Network on classification and monitoring of production areas for bivalve molluscs with the aim of sharing information among the whole Network, as well as to enhance collaboration and communication.

*The EURLMB estimation budget has been increased to carry out the activities above indicated