

2013 ECETOC stakeholder image survey

Introduction

In January 2013, 320 EU and national regulators were invited to share their views on ECETOC the organisation, the science programme the organisation leads, and how well it fulfils the needs of regulatory bodies in assisting with the regulation of chemicals, biomaterials and pharmaceuticals. We would like to thank all who responded and share below an overview of the answers received.

ECETOC, the organisation

Nearly all respondents (98.25%) have at least some familiarity with ECETOC and the majority (68%) see ECETOC as different from other organisations working within the same field. One comment was that *'its focus on best science leads to better decision making as well as facilitating interactions between scientists that might not otherwise occur'*. Another respondent stated that *'taking the scientific high ground in constructing defences against (or perhaps in support of) various advocacy positions elevates the recognition and status of ECETOC.'*

ECETOC performs well in its main roles:

- As a partner for the European Commission, ECHA, and EFSA... (Vision) (average rating 7/10)
- Promoting the use of good science in human and environmental risk assessment of chemicals, biomaterials and pharmaceuticals (Mission) (average rating 7.1/10)
- Promoting the use of scientific principles in translating policy into regulation in Europe (average rating 6.5/10)
- As a forum for industry experts to cooperate with government and academic scientists (average rating 7.4/10)

Science programme

70% of respondents have at least some familiarity with the 10 'strategic science areas' that are used to classify the ECETOC science programme and 57.5% of all respondents find the science programme easy to understand. All the strategic science areas are rated with similar importance with an average rating of 7.5/10.

The respondents indicated that ECETOC should focus on all the following areas:

1. Evaluating the latest developments in testing methods & risk assessment in (eco)toxicology (average rating 8/10)
2. Developing pragmatic approaches to regulatory requirements (average rating 7.5/10)
3. Topical issues in human and environmental health (average rating 6.8/10)
4. Basic science in health & safety of chemicals (average rating 6.2/10)
5. Communicating about the risk assessment of chemicals (average rating 5.8/10)

Importantly, 90% indicated that the ECETOC science programme is relevant to their needs and the needs of their institution.

Publications

Approximately 75% of respondents have at least a reasonable knowledge of ECETOC publications and find them useful.

Technical reports, workshop reports and articles in the peer-reviewed literature are considered as equally effective means of distribution of information.

Respondents indicated that free access to publications is valued and they would appreciate short summaries explaining, in non-technical terms, the content of technical reports and documents. To address this request ECETOC has recently piloted the introduction of the Science News Flash as a means of translating the content of technical reports into information that everyone can understand.

Activities

Workshops and symposia are considered the most important activities (average rating 7.3/10), followed by task forces (average rating 5.5/10) then the representing of industry's science in international institutions & conferences (average

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rating 5.2/10). Next is the targeted risk assessment tool (average rating 4.8/10) and finally providing a platform for member company staff development and peer networking (average rating 4.3/10).

Online

Most respondents (78%) consult the ECETOC website at least occasionally, and find it moderately easy to find what they are looking for. Regarding the e-newsletter, only half of respondents have read a copy but of those that have, 82% do find it interesting.

Future role

85% of all respondents felt it important for ECETOC to continue playing a major role in assisting with the regulation of chemicals, biomaterials and pharmaceuticals with 45% of respondents rating this role as very important and 10% as vital.

Next steps

The results of the survey show how the European regulatory science community recognises and approves the contribution ECETOC makes to science-based regulation of chemicals, biomaterials and pharmaceuticals. ECETOC is currently using this data to widen recognition, improve communications and enhance the science programme, thereby ensuring it meets the needs of its stakeholders in the years to come.

ECETOC is Europe's leading industry association for developing and promoting top-quality science in human and environmental risk assessment of chemicals.

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