
Global Past, Present and Future Challenges in Risk Assessment – Strengthening Consumer Health Protection



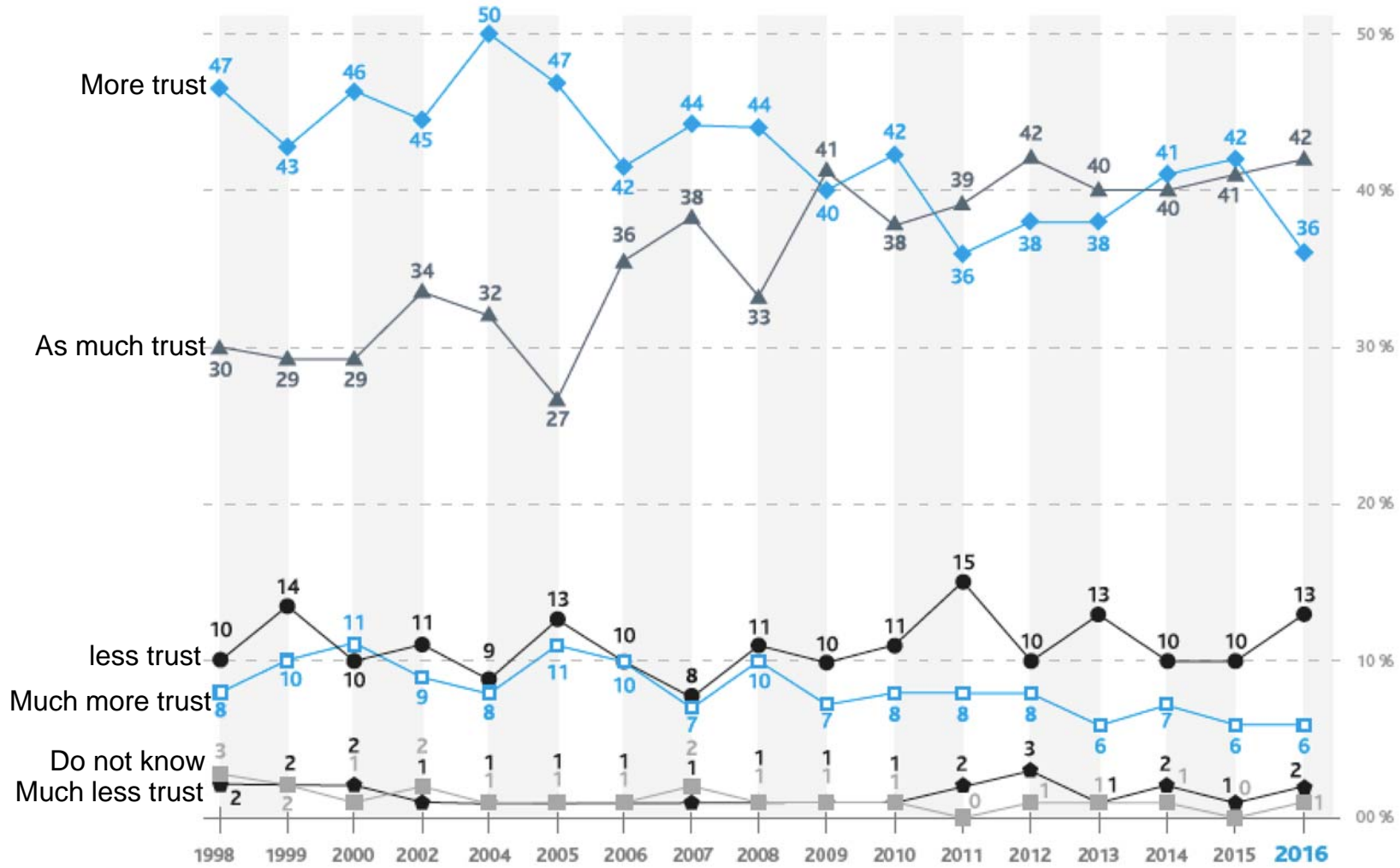
Societal challenges:

Trust in science, interaction with stakeholders
and risk communication

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ANSES, France
Berlin, December 1st, 2017

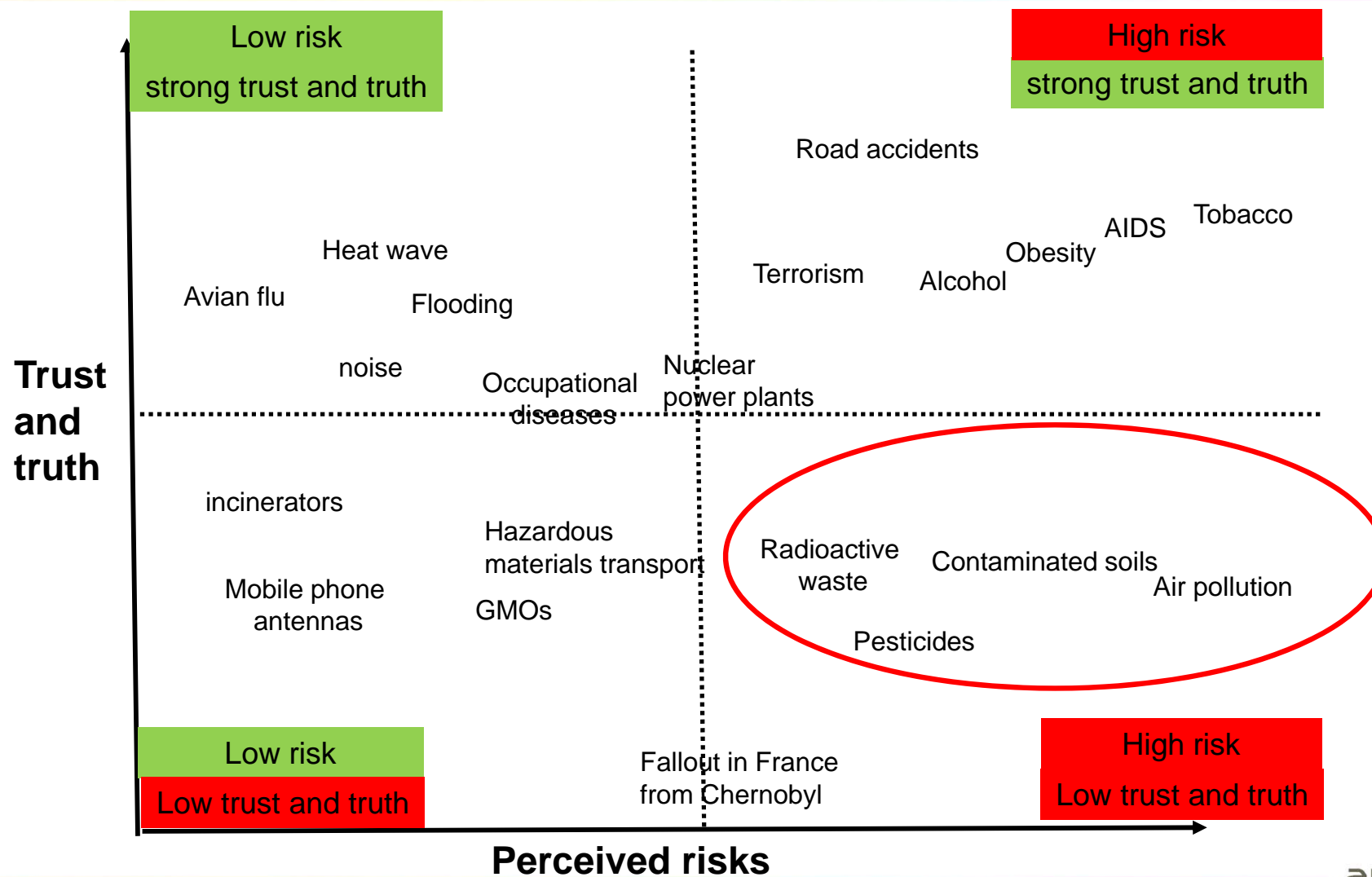
Would you say that today you trust science more than a decade ago?

Evolution from 1998 to 2016



Source: LISIS, France

Perceived risk and trust in institutions



Source: LISIS, France

Truth, knowledge and communication

Eurobarometer survey in 2000:

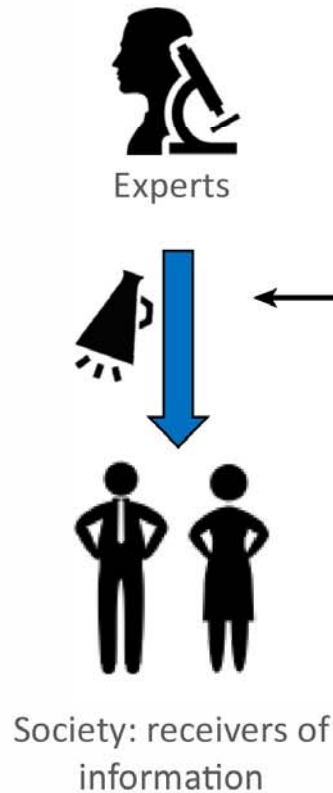
"Ordinary tomatoes do not contain genes unlike genetically modified tomatoes that contain them »

True	30%
False	30%
Do not know	40%

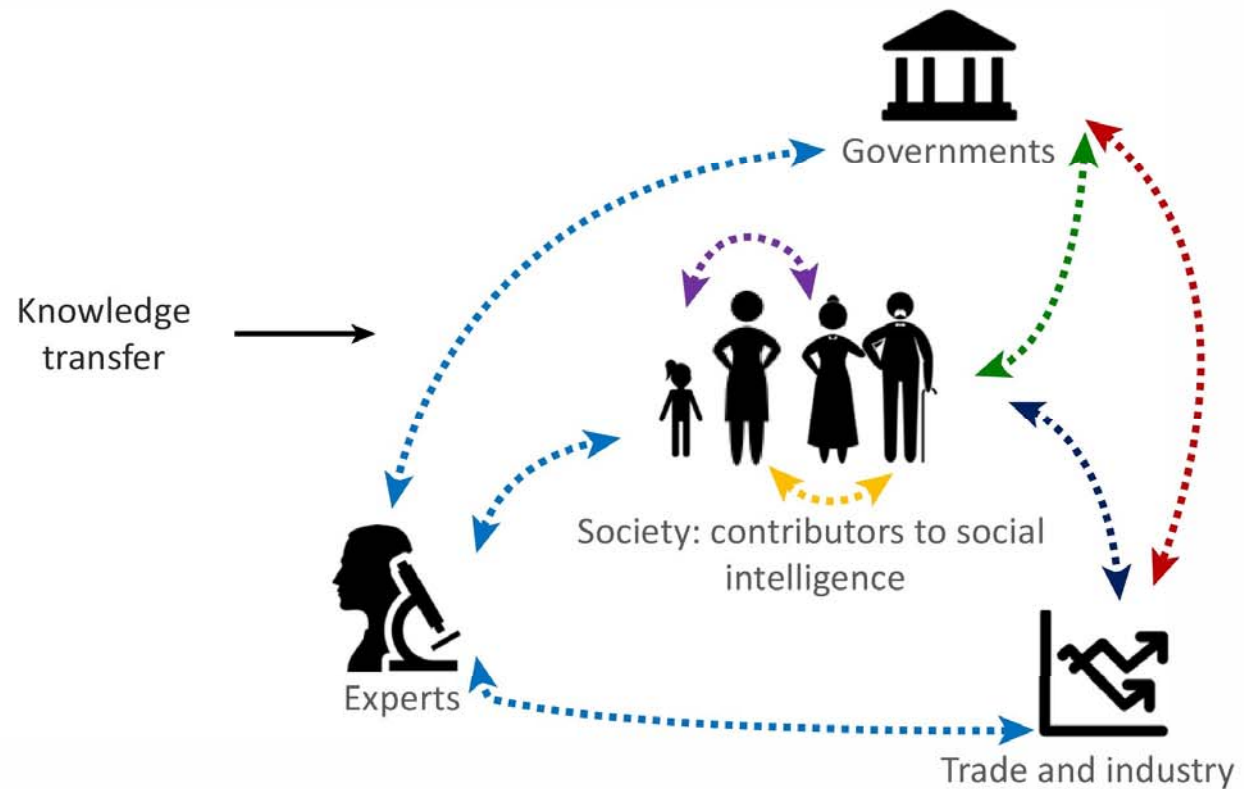
« So, if a majority of French people are against GMOs, it's because they do not know what it is! If we explain, they will accept !»

Science and risk communication

Deficit model



Dialogue model



Trends in Ecology & Evolution

Perceived risks and communication

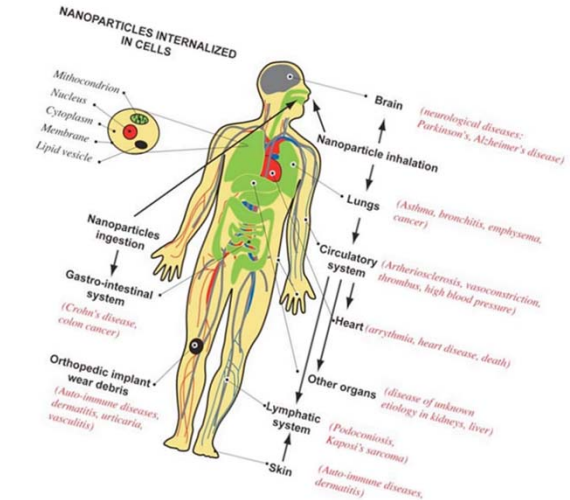


Transmitter

message



Social networks
NGOs, media...



Risk communication: what is at stake?

From a classical to to a new risk governance framework

- Risks conceived as a social construct and not only treated as a function of probability and effects
- Need to capture multiple dimensions of risks and to deal with complexity and uncertainty
- Need to qualify risks : acceptability and tolerability (severity, reversibility, people exposed...)

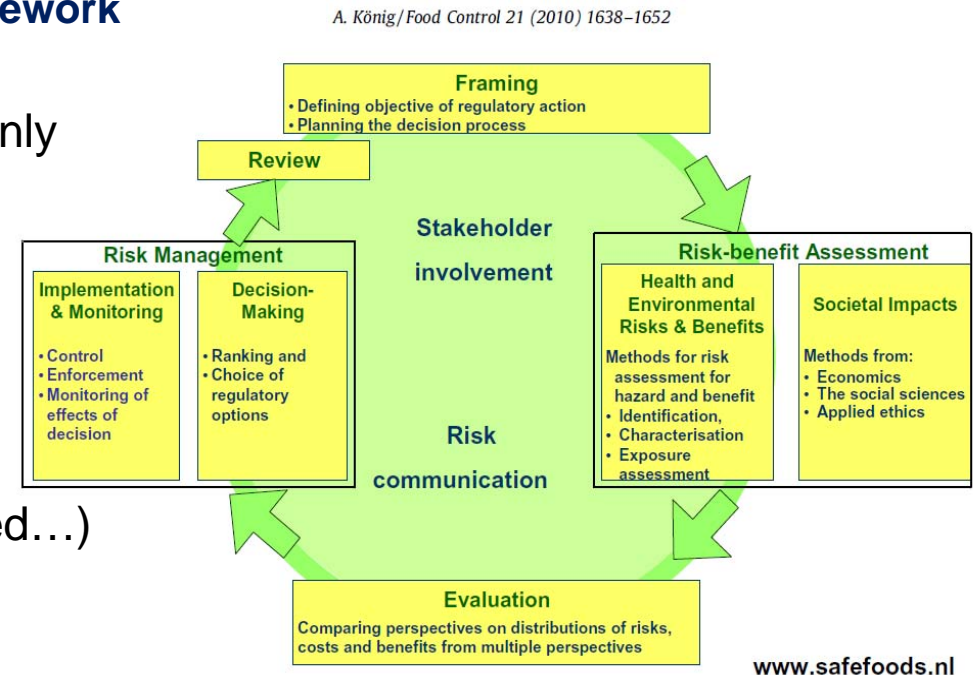


Fig. 1. The SAFE FOODS framework for the risk analysis of foods.

Effective mutual communication is one of the key challenges: not a separate step, but central to the whole process through involvement of different stakeholders (Renn 2011)

Risk communication: what is at stake?

- **Communication:**
 - Is depending on the nature of risks and the governance context
 - Might serve the sharing of information about the risks and possible ways of handling them
 - Might support building and sustaining trust among various actors
 - Might result in involving people in risk related-decisions (ownership and empowerment)

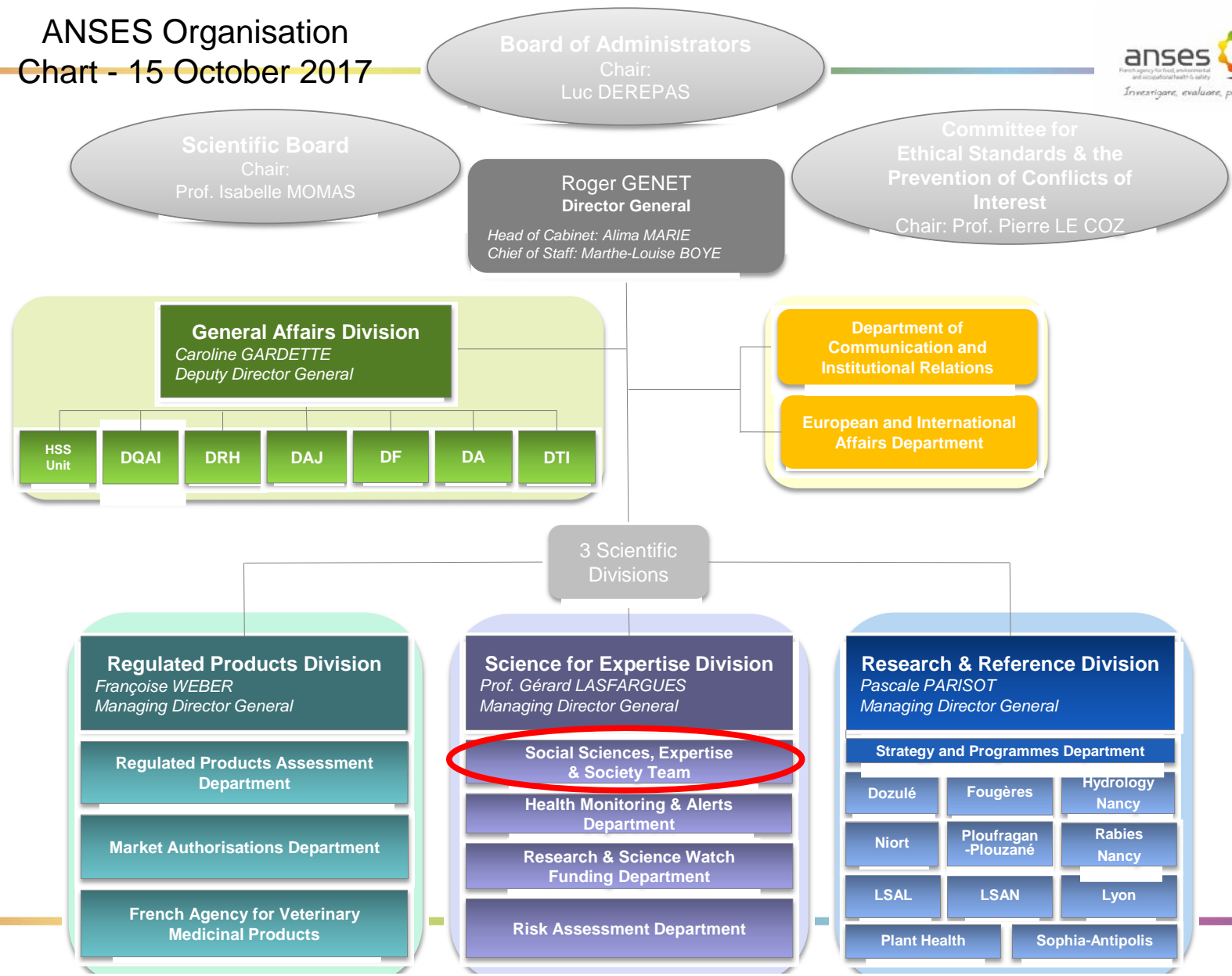
Risk communication: some key challenges

- Facilitating successful interactions among various players from different backgrounds and with diverse expectations is not an easy task: communication in controversial situations can sometimes fuel conflict rather than resolving or attenuating it.
- Media can narrow framing of risks, oversimplify scientific information and contribute to potential misunderstanding of the situation
- "Fright factors" to be taken into account when anticipating communication impacts on target audiences, i.e. risks perceived as
 - Involuntary,
 - unequally distributed,
 - unfamiliar,
 - poorly understood by science,
 - impacting children or pregnant women,
 - man-made, etc.

dp4

Note : "themselves" pas clair
d.pottratz; 29.10.2014

ANSES Organisation Chart - 15 October 2017



Anses: core values

Independence, impartiality

A code of conduct and independent committees which stakeholders can solicit, collegial and multidisciplinary scientific panels, prevention of conflicts of interests, public funding, etc.

Transparency

Assessment process, minority opinions, publication of opinions, public declarations of interest, public calls for experts and research projects, etc.



Access to stakeholders
Charter on the openness of expertise to society, contribution of civil society, dialogue committees, etc.

Excellence/scientific expertise

Selection of experts through open calls for applications

Anses : opening up expertise to civil society

Charter signed by 7 public organisations
(involved in research and health/environmental risk assessment)
aiming at:

- **Improving transparency** on the results of expertise and methods used in risk assessment
- **Sharing scientific knowledge and uncertainties** (discrepancies, minority positions and possible controversies among experts)
- **Capacity-building among stakeholders** for a better understanding and possible contribution to the assessment procedure (information, training, public debate, etc.)



Anses: interaction with stakeholders

- Focus put on
 - “Citizens” NGOs: environment, patients, consumers, sustainable development...)
 - Professional organisations (industrial federations...)
 - Trade unions

→ To favour the equity of access to information and reduce the gap of knowledge between these stakeholders
- Other interested parties such as Ministries, elected officials or experts are considered in a separate setting

A wide range of stakeholders

- ANSES deals with stakeholders involved in many sectors

- Human health and safety in the fields of environment, work and food

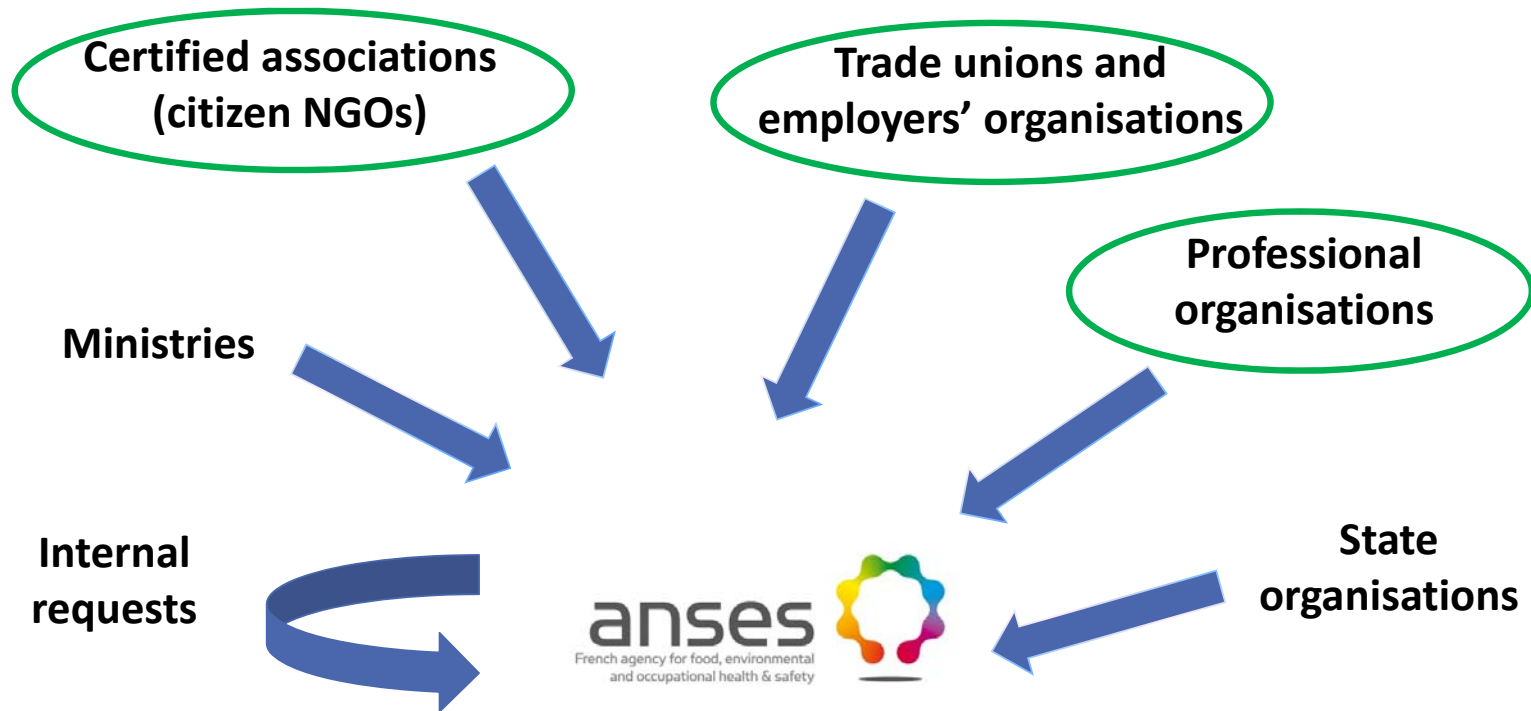


- Animal health and welfare and plant protection



→ more than 75 organizations and 184 representatives

Stakeholders can make requests to ANSES



Involvement at various levels

1. Governance bodies:

- Board of administrators
- Thematic steering committees

2. Dialogue committees on controversial issues:

- Radiofrequencies,
- Nanomaterials
- Others to come ? Pesticides...

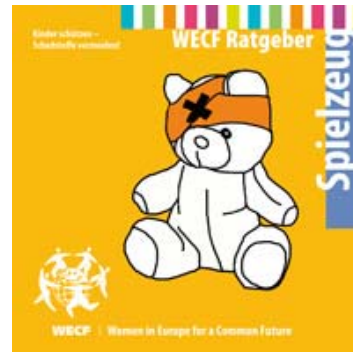
3. Along the risk assessment process:

5 thematic steering committees

- **Composition:**
 - Ministries and public bodies, associations (NGOs) professional organisations (PO), trade unions (TU) and employers' organisation, scientific and technical experts
 - **Food:** 47 members - 12 NGOs - 14 PO - 1 TU
 - **Environment:** 37 members - 11 NGOs - 6 PO - 3 TU
 - **Occupational health:** 34 members - 5 NGOs - 9 PO - 5 TU
 - **Animal health and welfare:** 38 members - 5 NGOs - 14 PO
 - **Plant protection:** 30 members - 3 NGOs - 7 PO – 2 TU
- Selection: following internal or external proposals
- Objectives: Consultation on the strategic orientations of the Agency, contribution to research and work programme, listening to civil society's concerns on health and environment issues

Along the risk assessment process

- Upstream engagement
 - Consultations on the renewal of Anses internet website, framing of expertise, etc.
 - Some examples: iTDS (choice of priority chemical substances to be assessed in food), toys/textiles, endocrine disruptors, etc.



Along the risk assessment process

- Hearings of stakeholders by expert groups:
 - Lay knowledge, field expertise
 - Grey literature
 - Additional papers/studies
 - Positions and expectations
 - Societal stakes



Along the risk assessment process

- Knowledge and capacity building
- Ad hoc training sessions, etc.
- Work feedback events
 - explaining RA methodology, uncertainties, results and recommendations
- Public consultations on draft reports and opinions
 - Controversial topics: endocrine disruptors, EHS...
 - Some regulated products

Transparency and credibility

- Results of our work systematically made public
- Public declaration of interest of experts and in-house staff are published
- Committee for ethical standards and prevention of conflicts of interest
 - specific independent body created by ANSES
 - 8 members; 5 years
 - Appointment by ministerial decree
 - Lawyers, philosophers, sociologists, ...
 - Can be petitioned by a member of the Board of administrators, the Scientific Board, the Expert committees, by the Director General, or by ANSES employees



Positive impacts

- Sharing of information and improving equity among stakeholders in access to information
- Capacity-building and empowerment : better understanding of Anses opinions and more accurate conveying of information to the public
- Role in preventing “crises of trust” and diminishing the degree of controversy
- Increase reach of scientific outputs into the public
- Clarify and improve understanding on RA methodologies and communication strategy

Conclusion

- Effective interaction with stakeholders
 - Improve trust in the risk assessment and communication
 - « Neither alarm nor reassure, but provide benchmark scientific information »
 - Allows us to
 - Consolidate the institutional fundamentals
 - Make it possible to fulfil our mission of informing and simplifying, on a daily basis, while remaining highly reactive
 - Clarify our position if false statements are made
 - Enhance credibility and usefulness of a health and safety agency

Thank you for your attention

