

Statement of advice on the risk to human health from consumption of bivalve molluscs (shellfish) harvested from UK waters associated with marine biotoxins

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1. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is considering the current advice and monitoring programme for marine biotoxins and whether there is a need to

update or change existing legislative standards. The main purpose of this work is to identify any emerging marine biotoxins in UK waters, including those whose occurrence has increased due to rising temperatures as a result of climate change. The views of the Committee on the Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) were sought on whether the identified emerging marine biotoxins could pose a risk to human health.

2. A scoping paper and a summary paper were presented to the COT in 2023 and 2024 respectively ([TOX/2023/59](#); [TOX/2024/25](#)). These provided an overview of emerging marine biotoxins with summaries of the available toxicological information, occurrence data with an emphasis on UK waters, estimated adult exposures and any additional relevant information. The Committee could not conclude on the risks of the emerging biotoxins due to a lack of information, most notably toxicologic studies, without which deriving health-based guidance values (HBGVs) was not feasible. Instead, a numerical risk ranking designed to assist in prioritisation of the biotoxins was proposed by the Committee and discussed in March 2025 ([TOX/2025/15](#)). Risk rankings for each group of biotoxins were generated by assigning a numerical score to each biotoxin for the following categories: toxicity, occurrence, human case reports, and monitoring.

3. The following statement provides the risk ranking and advice of the COT on whether the identified emerging marine biotoxins pose a risk to health.

4. Please note, pinnatoxin (PnTX) ([TOX/2023/37](#)) and pectenotoxin (PTX) ([TOX/2023/58](#)) have been discussed separately and are not included in this statement.