

This is a background paper for discussion.  
It does not reflect the final views of the Committee and should not be cited.

TOX/2021/02

## COMMITTEE ON TOXICITY OF CHEMICALS IN FOOD, CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### Additional data on MYTOX research group: Matters Arising

#### Background

1. The potential risks from combined exposure to mycotoxins is currently a topic that the Committee on Toxicity in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) is reviewing. The first draft of the statement (TOX/2020/52)<sup>1</sup> was present in October 2020.
2. Following the discussion, COT Members requested clarification on the ongoing projects by the Mycotoxin and Toxigenic Moulds (MYTOX)<sup>2</sup> research group in order to confirm if the impact of multi-mycotoxin exposure is within the scope of their research.
3. The Secretariat has confirmed with the MYTOX coordinator (De Saeger, personal communication, 2021)<sup>3</sup> that the research group has several ongoing/or about to start projects to evaluate the impact of multi-mycotoxin exposure (*Table 1*), and that publications are expected in the future. It was noted that the research projects are a combination of epidemiological/association studies and mechanistic studies.

#### Questions on which the views of the Committee are sought

4. Members are invited to consider the following question:
  - i). Do Members have any comments on the MYTOX research projects?

**Secretariat**  
**February 2021**

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<sup>1</sup> TOX/2020/52 is available on the [COT website](#).

<sup>2</sup> MYTOX is a multi-disciplinary research group, which deals with issues involving toxigenic moulds, mycotoxins, mycotoxins and human health, and mycotoxins and animal health. Further information can be found at the [MYTOX website](#).

<sup>3</sup> De Saeger, S. (2021) Personal communication.

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Table 1 – provides the list of research projects by the MYCOTOX research group which explores the impact of multi-mycotoxin exposures in humans (personal communication, 2021).

<b>Research Title</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>In conjunction with</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Impact of multi-mycotoxin exposure on cancer risk: Uniting a large-scale epidemiological design & next-generation sequencing coupled with public cancer genomic data mining	2017-2021	Research Foundation Flanders, Brussels, Belgium	Research project
Dietary exposure to multi-mycotoxins as a predisposing factor for oesophageal squamous cell carcinoma in Malawi	2020-2024	Ghent University, Belgium	Special Research Fund, Doctoral grants for candidates from developing countries
The Flemish Exposome project FLEXIGUT: Towards a comprehensive understanding of the life-course impact of dietary and environmental exposure on chronic low-grade gut inflammation	2021-2025	Ghent University, Belgium	Special Research Fund, Inter-university projects
Impact of early-life multi-mycotoxin exposure on B cells epigenetic profile and infection by oncogenic viruses: unravelling interaction with immune-regulatory cytokines profiles & co-infections in young children	2021-2025	Research Foundation Flanders, Brussels, Belgium	Research project
HUMYCO: Investigating the Human Mycobiome through Uniting Large-scale Epidemiological and Mechanistic Poly-omic Designs	2020-2025	European Commission	European Research Council Starting Grant