

Assessing risks by mobilising collective expert appraisal

→ ANSES's primary mission is to assess health risks, whether in food, the environment, the workplace, or concerning animals or plants. To do this, it mobilises groups of experts according to principles that ensure high standards of quality and independence. Its reports and opinions are used for public decision-making and help safeguard health.

A STRICT, TRANSPARENT FRAMEWORK

The Agency's role is to rule on the existence, nature and extent of risks raising concerns among the authorities and society in situations of high uncertainty or crisis, on the basis of the available scientific knowledge. The collective expert appraisals it performs meet strict scientific, methodological and ethical requirements. In addition to provisions laid down by regulations or ISO standards, **ANSES has developed a specific framework** establishing the fundamental principles of its expert appraisals, which can be viewed on its website.

The expert appraisals conducted by ANSES are **collective, adversarial and multidisciplinary**: the experts meet to answer a question put to ANSES through a formal request, and formulate their conclusions based on the different evidence available and the hypotheses expressed. On the basis of their work, ANSES draws up opinions and recommendations that it makes public.

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY POOL OF EXPERTS

Each year, ANSES calls on **nearly 800 French and foreign experts** from universities or research organisations with recognised skills in various disciplines - toxicology, epidemiology, medicine, occupational health, biostatistics, physical chemistry, human and social sciences, etc. These experts are selected through public calls for applications and are subject to public declarations of interests, which are published on the Ministry of Health's DPI-Santé website.

Collective expert appraisals at ANSES:

- ↳ **scientists who are independent** of ANSES and the interests at stake;
- ↳ **the most recent scientific knowledge** at national and international level taken into account;
- ↳ collective work performed within a strict framework ensuring **conclusions that can serve as a reference**;
- ↳ **innovative methodologies** for assessing emerging or complex risks (exposome, cumulative effects, no-threshold effects, etc.);
- ↳ the **scientific basis of ANSES's recommendations** used by decision-makers, professionals, research communities and citizens.

In 2021

Renewal of 10 expert committees and working groups in the fields of human food and nutrition, animal health and welfare, and plant health

In 2021

Creation of a 16th expert committee, devoted to socio-economic analysis



Who can make formal requests to ANSES?

The State, the French Parliamentary Office for Assessing Scientific and Technological Choices, other public establishments, the organisations represented on its Board of Administrators, and the associations identified by the French Public Health Code (Article L.1313-3). The Agency may also issue internal requests on its own initiative.



Research: essential for risk assessment

→ To advance scientific knowledge and methods, ANSES conducts research, alone or in conjunction with the French and international scientific communities. It also funds research projects in its sphere of competence. The knowledge generated informs its risk assessment, surveillance and crisis management support activities.

ANSES CONDUCTS RESEARCH OF ITS OWN

Its nine laboratories, employing more than 700 people, carry out research in three main areas: **animal health and welfare, plant health and food safety** (including drinking water). Their output also contributes to the analytical reference work of the Agency, which holds more than 100 national, European or international mandates. Research is also conducted by the Agency's other entities. This helps with the development of new **risk assessment methodologies**, for example. Seven cross-functional scientific directors coordinate and guide the work of the different teams.

Widely recognised within the research community, ANSES hosts around a hundred doctoral students each year and forges numerous partnerships with other organisations. It is also active and participates in many research projects funded at European level. In 2021, 11 projects involving ANSES teams were submitted to **Horizon Europe**, the EU's current research and innovation framework programme. So far, five of these projects, including the PARC programme coordinated by ANSES and a collaborative research project jointly coordinated by the Agency, have already been selected for funding. Other projects involving ANSES are currently being developed.



What is ANSES's research used for?

- ↳ Gaining a better understanding of pathogens, their relationship with hosts and their ability to cross the species barrier.
- ↳ Improving knowledge of plants and insects of concern, and chemical contaminants.
- ↳ Better detecting, diagnosing and characterising their presence using cutting-edge analytical methods.
- ↳ Monitoring them more closely through effective epidemiological approaches.
- ↳ Contributing to the work of the epidemiological surveillance platforms for animal health, plant health and food-chain safety.
- ↳ Gaining a better understanding of the determinants of animal welfare and health, and in particular the impact of farming systems.
- ↳ Contributing to the development of control tools, including vaccines against animal and plant diseases, through a specific policy to promote the transfer of results.
- ↳ Advancing risk assessment methods in all ANSES's areas of competence.

In 2021 **355**
publications in
scientific journals
in category A and A+

In 2021 **33**
research projects
selected under
the PNR EST,
with €6M mobilised

FUNDING RESEARCH: THE NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

The PNR EST is the research component of the National Environmental Health Action Plan (PNSE) and the Occupational Health Plan (PST). Its objectives are to:

- ↳ produce scientific knowledge on environmental and occupational health risks;
- ↳ develop new methods and tools for health risk analysis;
- ↳ organise and stimulate research and scientific teams to tackle the targeted issues.

Every year, ANSES issues two calls for research projects, whose results can then be used in its risk assessment work or to support management measures.

Committed to preventing and managing health crises

→ ANSES is always on the lookout for recurrent and emerging health risks. In the event of a health crisis, it can rapidly mobilise its expertise in emergency risk assessment and scientific support for the public authorities.

In 2021 2 new reference mandates

- ↳ Contagious equine metritis (international)
- ↳ Monitoring of SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater and sewage sludge (national)

MONITORING HEALTH WARNING SIGNALS

ANSES coordinates or takes part in national schemes that detect warning signals and enable action to be taken against diseases and harmful exposure:

- ↳ **platforms for epidemiological surveillance** in animal health, plant health and food-chain safety;
- ↳ **surveillance networks** such as RESAPATH for antimicrobial resistance in animals;
- ↳ **vigilance schemes:** toxicovigilance, nutrivi-gilance, phytopharmacovigilance, veterinary pharmacovigilance and the National network for monitoring and prevention of occupational diseases (RNV3P).

ANSES's laboratories are constantly improving methods for identifying, analysing and diagnosing viruses, bacteria, fungi, parasites, insect pests and vectors, invasive plants and chemical contaminants. They also have a role as **reference laboratories**. The authorities call on their scientific and technical support to draw up surveillance plans and manage crises affecting food, domestic and wild animals, crops and other plants.



In 2021 ANSES held **66** national, 13 European and 29 international reference mandates in animal and plant health, food and environmental safety. They guarantee the performance of official analysis systems.

In 2021 **10** urgent formal requests dealt with, including four on avian influenza, one on brucellosis in the Bary ibex population, and two on COVID-19

SUPPORTING HEALTH CRISIS MANAGEMENT

As soon as a crisis occurs, ANSES can mobilise its state-of-the-art scientific equipment, its emergency expert groups and its networks, according to the situation. Its reference laboratories coordinate official analyses to identify pathogens or contaminants and trace their source. When receiving a formal request, the Agency assesses the risks without delay and recommends appropriate measures.

ANSES'S COMMITMENT THROUGHOUT THE CURRENT AVIAN INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC

Since 2020, the western half of France has been severely afflicted with avian influenza. ANSES has been supporting crisis management in several ways:

- ↳ coordination of analyses to confirm the presence of the virus and sequence the strains;
- ↳ support for field investigations to determine the source of the contamination;
- ↳ scientific support to the public authorities to control the disease;
- ↳ participation in a duck vaccination experiment.

Seven opinions have been published since 2021.

Taking action to improve the safety of substances and products placed on the market

→ Within the framework of European and national regulations and policies on the safety of chemical substances and products, ANSES helps determine safe and effective conditions of use, and reduce exposure to risks.

CONTRIBUTING TO EUROPEAN-LEVEL REGULATION OF CHEMICALS

The Agency supports national and European authorities in:

- ↳ carrying out **scientific assessments of substances**, including active substances – REACH and the regulations on plant protection products, biocides and veterinary medicines;
- ↳ analysing the best **risk management options** (classification, authorisation, restriction of a substance) - REACH and CLP;
- ↳ drafting dossiers for identifying substances of very high concern and **proposals for restrictions on use** in high-risk situations, including the analysis of socio-economic impacts - REACH;
- ↳ drafting classification dossiers - CLP;
- ↳ responding to **public consultations** on revisions of definitions, methodological guides, regulations, etc.

ANSES assessed:

- ↳ **32 plant protection active substance applications**, as rapporteur or co-rapporteur Member State;
- ↳ **2 biocidal active substance applications** and contributed to **9 assessments** by other MSs;
- ↳ **1 substance under REACH**, and supported the **harmonised classification for 4 chemicals** proposed by France and validated by ECHA.

In early 2022, it also provided scientific and technical support to the French authorities for preparing a restriction dossier for creosote (REACH).

COMMITTED TO EVER MORE PROTECTIVE REGULATIONS

ANSES's work echoes the EU's Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability and its ambition for a toxic-free environment.

In particular, it supports the "one substance, one assessment" approach.

The Agency is also proposing changes to existing regulations: in 2021, it published two opinions aimed at better defining and taking into account the hazards associated with endocrine disruptors and nanomaterials.

ESTABLISHING HEALTH REFERENCE VALUES

Every year, ANSES produces or updates health-based guidance values (HBGVs), indoor air quality guidelines (IAQGs), occupational exposure limits (OELs), etc. These values are essential for assessing health risks and enable the public authorities to define **regulatory thresholds that must not be exceeded** in air, water, food, etc. in order to protect the population, including workers.

- In 2021** Production of reference values for six substances including 1,3-butadiene, chlordecone and sodium valproate

ASSESSING AND EXAMINING APPLICATIONS TO MARKET PRODUCTS

ANSES issues and withdraws marketing authorisations (MAs) in France for veterinary medicinal products, plant protection products, fertilisers and growing media, and biocides. It thus assesses their effectiveness and the health and environmental risks they pose, according to assessment methodologies that are harmonised and constantly evolving at European level. The way ANSES is organised enables it to **conduct its scientific assessments independently of the examination of MA applications**. As with all its risk assessments, ANSES relies on committees of experts, appointed after a public call for applications.



Authorisations and approvals: new missions entrusted to ANSES

2021

- ↳ Biocidal products contained in embalming fluids.
- ↳ Treatment products and processes for swimming pool and artificial bathing pool water.
- ↳ Laboratories conducting sampling and analysis for water quality monitoring (94 dossiers processed).
- ↳ Testing of feed additives.

January 2022

- ↳ Environmental risk assessment for organisms meeting the regulatory definition of GMOs and for which applications have been submitted for use in an open environment, for all biotechnology's fields of application - agricultural, medical, agri-food.