The Steering Committee of the EU scientific programme for Expo 2015, a joint initiative of the European Commission and the European Parliament, was launched on 21st March 2014. Its chairman is Franz Fischler, former Commissioner for Agriculture and Fisheries.

EXPO will focus the world’s attention on global food security - a hugely important theme for the EU. Many EU policy areas are related to it, from agriculture to development, from food safety and health to environmental protection, from industry to research and innovation.

Given the political importance of the Expo theme, this Committee was set up to in order to ensure that the European Union takes the opportunity offered by the platform of Expo 2015 “to establish its role as a key player in this global debate [...] and to work towards fruitful collaboration on these matters with other stakeholders, both public and private” (COM(2013) 255 final).

THE ROLE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE IS TO

• provide scientific and knowledge-based analysis & advice related to the Expo theme
• promote the policy debate and contribute to the legacy of Expo 2015
• give recommendations on the definition and implementation of the EU scientific programme for Expo 2015

These objectives translate in the following concrete deliverables:

• a recommendation document to decision makers with main priorities for research, development & innovation in the areas where Europe can make a contribution
• guidance on the draft programme of EU events for Expo 2015 (setting priorities, identifying gaps, recommending speakers, etc.)
• organisation of complementary activities during Expo 2015

KEY MILESTONES

The discussion document should serve as a basis for a dialogue with stakeholders and the general public during Expo 2015 through scientific workshops, conferences and an online consultation. The discussion in numerous events taking place during the Expo will be framed by 2 major events of the Steering Committee:

• at the beginning of the Expo - Official Launch Event to present the discussion document and discuss its 7 Themes among the SC members, in front of a scientific audience.
• a final event in October 2015 - To present answers that have come up during the Expo, and to present a recommendation document that proposes some results and sets the scene for actions to be taken after the Expo.

OUTLOOK

At the end of this process, the SC will further develop the discussion document, giving recommendations to decision makers on future priorities for research, development & innovation in the food sector as an EU contribution to the legacy of Expo 2015.