Risk, Ethics and European Food Policy

Dr. David Coles Centre for Professional Ethics University of Central Lancashire



Development of Government Policy on Risk Communication

- Policy development usually lags behind research by about 5-10 years
- Traditionally Government adopted a paternalistic approach and did not communicate with the public about uncertainties or possible food risk.
- 1990's early development of Risk Communication practice in the UK and US
- Very little elsewhere in Europe (except Denmark and Sweden)
- Often a crisis is needed to "kick-start" policy implementation

リスクコミュニケーションに関する政府 の政策の発展

■ 政策の発展には、通常、研究から約5-10年間の遅れがある

- 従来、政府は家父長的姿勢をとっており、市民と不確実性や 起こりうる食品リスクについてコミュニケーションを取ってこな かった。
- 1990年代 英国及び米国でリスクコミュニケーション実践の 初期の発展
- 他のヨーロッパ諸国では非常に少なかった(デンマークとス ウェーデンを除く)
- 政策の実施を"キック·スタート"させるには、しばしば、危機 が必要とされる





































UK: Cases of vCJD Diagnosed by Year									
1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000			
0	7	8	12	17	17	27	-		
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007			
25	16	16	8	6	6	1			
							23		

英国: vCJD症例数(年次別)

1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
0	7	8	12	17	17	27
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
25	16	16	8	6	6	1
	[*]					

Norldwide reported cases of vCJD							
UK	France	Ireland	Italy	Canada			
163	23	4	3	1			
Saudi Arabia	Japan	Netherlands	Portuga I	Spain			
1	1	2	2	2			

各国のvCJD症例数									
	英国	フランス	アイルランド	イタリア	カナダ				
	163	23	4	3	1				
	サウジアラビア	日本	オランダ	ポルトガル	スペイン				
	1	1	2	2	2				
						26			





GM FOOD

(1998)

UK Government supported Novartis initiative to introduce GM food and crops into UK

No perceived benefit to consumer

<text><text><text>





Impact on Policy

Recognition that:

- Some scientific developments are so important they need a public debate
- Public perceptions of science play an increasingly important role in developing policy.



WHAT CHANGED IN SOCIETY?

- Public more aware of risk in relation to developments in science
- Increased public access to information about science (Television, Internet etc.)
- Decreased public trust in government and regulatory bodies
- More debate about social and ethical impacts of new technology



Data from the world value survey

www.worldvaluessurvey.org

Two dimensions:

Plot:

"emancipative values" = lifestyle: autonomy, democracy, individual choice, non-hierarchical and non-authoritarian attitude, tolerant towards other groups etc.

Against:

"support for technological progress"

On the world scale:

- NOT better informed more support for science
- BUT advanced emancipative values unconditional support for science and technology

7







A CLIMATE OF CHANGE

Conclusions from Phillips Report on BSE (2000)

- Government and Civil Service should move to a culture of openness and transparency
- the public should be involved in the debate
- sensitivity to BSE and GM issues a powerful impetus for change







The UK Government recognised the need to allow for the inclusion of value-based judgements in decisions about risk



IN 2000 THE UK GOVERNMENT SET UP NEW STRUCTURES FOR DISCUSSING IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS IN FOOD, HEALTH, AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Food Standards Agency
- Human Genetics Commission
- Agriculture and Environment Biotechnology Commission (now defunct)



THESE NEW STRUCTURES WERE TO BE BASED ON:

- Openness
- Broad range of expertise
- Public involvement
- Consultation
- Debate



UK Food Standards Agency

Holistic approach

- Responsible for:
 - Risk Assessment
 - Risk Communication
 - Risk Management

Commands high level of public confidence







Understanding Underlying Cultural Values

- Europe: A rich cultural tapestry
- Heterogeneous backgrounds produce divergent positions on ethics and science
- Better understanding essential





2005 EU "Eurobarometer" survey on ethics in science:

- In 32 European countries
- To analyse the value systems of Europeans
- To understand how they affect public attitudes to science and technology.



Some Results of Eurobarometer Survey

- European society is optimistic about the benefits of science
- But still has plenty of worries about science























EU shares responsibility for the management and governance of risk with its Member States

2 Principles

- Subsidiarity Member States responsible
- EU Legislation (Treaties, Directives and Regulations) – EU responsible
- Member States of the EU have learned lessons from the experiences of the UK – but adoption of practices has been haphazard and slow. Usually stimulated by a crisis (e.g. dioxins in Belgium 1999)




What does the EU currently do about risk communication?

- Engages in some stakeholder consultation
- Does communicate risks mainly through mandatory labelling and other compulsory forms of information. Other mechanisms are more ad hoc.
- Communicates with policy-makers, decision makers and the public through EU committees responsible for risk management.
- Published guidelines in 2002 for its scientific advisory bodies



2003 Review of EU Risk Communication

Weaknesses Identified

- No overall policy framework for risk analysis
- No formal statement on risk communication in policymaking and legislation
- Lack of enforceable guidelines on provision to policymakers of information about hazards
- Variable quality of risk assessments by scientific advisory committees
- Few internal mechanisms to ensure compliance and effectiveness
- No systematic training provided for advisers, officials or regulators

75



Limitations

- Much of the information communicated is factual scientific risk assessment data
- Scientific experts, EU officials and politicians lack risk communication skills
- EFSA established 2002 to improve EU food safety, ensure a high level of consumer protection and restore and maintain confidence in the EU food supply.
- Current guidelines are not mandatory



Review Recommendations

"Officials have to recognise the depth of cultural change required"

- Legislation to ensure balanced information on hazard and risk is provided
- Formal and binding policy to include risk communication in policy-making
- · Mandatory quality standards for scientific advice
- Effectiveness of risk communication and its impact on policy should be monitored
- · EU risk analysis framework should be revised
- Risk-based legislation and risk management should enforce risk communication procedures
- EU officials, scientific advisers, MEPs and Council members should receive regular training



European Food Safety Agency 2002

- Openness and transparency
- High quality independent risk assessment
- Regular stakeholder consultation
- EFSA's role is risk assessment, not risk management. It therefore identifies risks and communicates them to the risk managers (through Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed).
- It should also communicate risk to the public. But does not always do this well.
- Responsibility for risk management rests with the European Institutions EC, Council and Parliament – and the Member States



2006 Evaluation of EFSA

- Improve impact and effectiveness of its risk communication
- Develop a better understanding of public perceptions
- Better meet the needs of non-technical audiences
- Improve interaction with EU institutions and regulatory bodies in EU Member States



Buffalo, Rubbish, Mafia and Mozzarella









No mention of it on the EFSA website but....

- Sales of mozzerella have fallen by 40%.
- Shoppers are afraid that the animals are eating grass laden with dioxins from illegal burning of rubbish
- Supermarkets are removing the region's "Made in Campania" labels from products
- 30% of the buffalo herd is also infected by brucellocis
- 32,000 have been slaughtered

EFSAのホームページでは何も言及さ れたかったが....

- モッツアレッラの販売は40%下落.
- 小売店は、家畜が、不法にゴミを燃やしたこと
 により発生するダイオキシンに汚染された牧
 草を食べていることを危惧
- スーパーマーケットは、"メイド・イン・カンパー
 ニア州"のラベルを商品からはがす
- バッファローの30%が、ブルセラ病にも感染
- 32,000 頭がと殺された。

WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES?

Internal institutional culture

- existing internal governmental structures that do not facilitate public consultation
- lack of appropriate skills e.g. few social and natural scientists in government
- resistance to change of paternalistic organisations
- culture of secrecy
- Iack of adequate and appropriate resources



<u>内在的な制度文化</u>

- 市民との協議を行わないような政府の内部構造がある
- ふさわしい技量にかけている e.g. 政府内に社会科 学者・自然科学者がほとんどいない
- パターナルな組織を改善することへの反発
- 秘密主義的風潮
- 十分で適当な資源がない

WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES?

INVOLVING THE PUBLIC

- Consult the public when developing policy on important scientific issues
- Involve all groups in the population (avoid social exclusion)
- Ensure public access to good information
- Evaluate the *effectiveness* and *impact* of consultation
- Let the public know how consultation has made a difference



<u>市民の参加の促進</u>

- 重要な科学的問題について政策を構築するときは市 民と協議
- すべての関係者集団の関与を促進(社会的排除を防 ぐ)
- 優良情報への市民のアクセスを確保
- 協議の有効性と効果を評価
- 協議によって何が変わったか、市民に知らせること

WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES?

Social barriers

- fear of litigation
- public distrust of government motives
- true public involvement or "public relations"
- adversarial versus co-operative culture change of approach from all actors (interest groups, media, industry and government)





