Module 5 - Risk Perception and Risk Communication
Tuesday 16th – Saturday 20th September 2014

The Risk Perception and Risk Communication module is the fifth element of the Advanced Study Programme in Regulatory Sciences. The module is designed to give course participants a broad and introductory understanding of risk perception and communication relevant to the agrochemical and chemical sectors.

Objectives
Effective risk communication is vital to maximize the acceptance of scientifically derived risk assessments and to assure regulatory acceptance and uptake of risk management measures. The challenge is that risk assessors and risk managers often perceive and react to risk in a different way than their stakeholders. To develop successful risk communication strategies for individual stakeholder groups, risk assessors and risk managers need to fully understand the psychological factors that can make a risk seem more threatening or less threatening than it really is.

Target audience
This module is aimed at risk assessors and risk managers in any industry sector, regulatory authority or academic institution dealing with human and environmental risk assessment and management of xenobiotics. The module is designed to complement other modules on the Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Regulatory Sciences programme or can be taken as a stand-alone teaching week.

Outline of module
This one week module will give a general introduction to psychological mechanisms underlying risk perception, risk communication and risk taking behavior. The course will (1) illustrate that people often perceive risks in different ways than would be indicated by normative theories of risk and probability theory (2) show how understanding the psychological principles underlying people’s risk perception can help in successfully assessing and communicating risks. The course is structured by theoretical sessions summarizing fundamental principles of human risk perception and risk taking behavior accumulated in empirical research. On the basis of these theoretical sessions participants will be working on case studies to acquire practical skills in risk communication strategies for individual stakeholder groups. As part of the practical part participants will also receive a one half a day media training for risk communication. Course participants are required to pass an exam on the final day of the module.

Learning objectives
After completion of the module participants should be able to understand

- the fundamental psychological factors that determine people’s risk perception and risk taking behavior
- how people’s risk perceptions affect the acceptance of scientifically derived risk assessments and regulatory acceptance and uptake of risk management measures
- the ethical aspects associated with risk taking decisions
- how to apply the concepts and principles of risk perception and risk communication to improve risk communication

Registration
The cost of this module is 3,500 CHF, which includes a presentation folder and all other teaching materials. The participant must meet all travel and subsistence expenses. A reduced fee of 1,750 CHF is available for members of Universities or regulatory authorities. Please register for the module by completing the details on the Registration Form. Places are limited to a maximum of 20 delegates therefore early registration is recommended. Booking will be confirmed by email after registration and final module details will be sent out to delegates in August 2014.