EFSA Network on Risk Assessment in Plant Health

Minutes of the 8th meeting

Held on 23-24 April 2015, Parma

(Agreed on 23 10 2015)

Participants

- **Network Representatives of Member States (including EFTA Countries):**

Country	Name
Austria	Sylvia BLUEMEL
Belgium	Kristien BRAEKEN
Bulgaria	-
Cyprus	-
Croatia	Dario IVIC
Czech Republic	Vaclav STEJSKAL
Denmark	Bettina GYLDEN
Estonia	Mart KINKAR
Finland	-
France	-
Germany	-
Greece	-
Hungary	Gabor SZALKAI
Ireland	Oliver McEVOY
Italy	-
Latvia	Liga GRISANE
Lithuania	-
Luxembourg	-
Malta	-
Netherlands	Dirk Jan VAN DER GAAG
Poland	Witold KARNKOWSKI
Portugal	-
Romania	-
Slovakia	-
Slovenia	Anita BENKO
Spain	-
Sweden	Lars BOLLMARK

United Kingdom	Richard MCINTOSH
Iceland	-
Liechtenstein	-
Norway	Elin THINGNAESS
Switzerland	-

- **European Commission (DG SANCO)**
  - Harry ARIJS
- **Istituto per la Protezione delle Piante, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Bari (IT)**
  - Maria SAPONARI
- **Joint Research Center of the European Commission, Institute for Environmental Sustainability, Ispra (IT)**
  - Pieter BECK
- **Center for Ecology and Hydrology,**
  - Dan CHAPMAN (via web)
- **Istituto Agronomo Mediterraneo (IAM), Valenzano Bari (IT)**
  - Anna Maria D'ONGHIA
  - Franco SANTORO

- **EFSA:**

ALPHA Unit Giuseppe STANCANELLI (Chair)

ALPHA Unit Ciro GARDI

ALPHA Unit Gabor HOLLO

ALPHA Unit Svetla KOZELSKA

ALPHA Unit Marco PAUTASSO

ALPHA Unit Sybren VOS

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Giuseppe STANCANELLI, Head of the Plant Health (PLH) Team of the Animal and Plant Health (ALPHA) Unit welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from Network Members from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain and Observer from Switzerland.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of interest

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes regarding Declarations of Interests (DoIs)[1] and the Decision of the Executive Director implementing this Policy[2], members of networks, peer

[1] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf
[2] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules.pdf

review meetings, networking meetings and their alternates shall be invited to complete and submit an Annual Declaration of interest (ADoI).

EFSA screened the ADoI filled in by the experts invited for the present meeting. No conflicts of interests related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process or at the Oral Declaration of interest (ODoI) at the beginning of this meeting.

The Chair thanked the representatives that have submitted an ADoI.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 7th meeting of the EFSA Scientific Network for Risk Assessment in Plant Health held on 20-21 November 2014, in Parma, Italy.

The minutes of the 7th Network meeting will be agreed after addition of further details suggested by Network members.

5. Topics for discussion

5.1 Network work plan 2014-2017

- Cooperation in data collection and fitness for purpose of pest risk assessment to support new legislation

At the previous meeting (20-21 November 2015) Network members confirmed the importance of cooperation in data collection and fitness for purpose of pest risk assessment to support new legislation

EFSA presented the request to provide a pest risk assessment for 38 plant pests for the EU territory. This was the last batch of pests listed in Annex II of Directive 2000/29/EC submitted to risk assessment by the EFSA PLH Panel in order to review the legislative annexes in preparation of the new legislation. With the experience gained from the previous two batches of pest risk assessments of listed harmful organisms and in order to further streamline the preparation of risk assessments for regulated pests, the work was split in two steps: step 1 consisted of delivering for all listed plant pests the pest categorisations, based on which the risk managers would then decide whether the pests should be delisted, considered for listing as quality pests or considered for listing as quarantine plant pests; in this latter case, EFSA would be requested, as step 2 of this process of interaction between risk assessors and risk managers, to conduct a complete pest risk assessment and identification and evaluation of risk reduction options.

Commission request for step 2 – complete pest risk assessment - is expected in 2015 for some of the pests screened in step 1, including:

- Grapevine Flavescence dorée
- *Eotetranychus lewisi*
- *Ceratocystis platani*
- *Chriphonectria parasitica*
- *Diaporthe vaccinii*
- *Radopholus similis*
- *Ditylenchus destructor*

5.2 Update on EFSA plant health activities (November 2014 – April 2015)

- EFSA presented the scientific opinion on Risk to plant health of the intentional release of the bud-galling wasp *Trichilogaster acaciaelongifoliae* for the control of the invasive alien plant *Acacia longifolia*.

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health was requested by the European Commission to assess the risk to plant health in the European Union caused by the Australian bud-galling wasp *Trichilogaster acaciaelongifoliae* in case of release of this biological control agent for the control of the invasive alien plant *Acacia longifolia* in Portugal. The risk assessment was published in the EFSA Journal in April 2015 and is available at:

- http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/efsajournal/pub/4079.htm
- An update was provided on draft scientific opinion on the Risk to plant health of Soil and Growing media

EFSA was requested:

- to provide a scientific opinion on the risks to plant health posed by soil or growing media
  - attached to plants for planting,
  - as commodities and
  - as a contaminant on imported consignments.
- to identify risk management options and to evaluate their effectiveness in reducing the risk to plant health posed by the introduction and movement of soil and growing medium.
- to carry out an evaluation of the effectiveness of the present EU requirements for soil and growing medium.

The scientific opinion will be presented for discussion and possible adoption at the EFSA- PLH Panel plenary meeting on 27-29 May 2015 in Bruxelles.

- Outcomes of the 2014 pest categorisation exercise and 2015-2016 work plan on pest risk assessment of listed pests

A summary of the results of the 2014 pest categorisation exercise was given and the 2015-2016 work plan for pest risk assessment of listed pests was introduced by EFSA. Upon completion of the pest categorisation, based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee and of the Annexes WG Section II, EFSA was informed whether further analysis was needed for specific organisms. In particular, EFSA was requested to complete the pest risk assessment (PRA), to identify risk reduction options and to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of current EU phytosanitary requirements. Following the pest categorisation of 40 harmful organisms of plants and plant products, a complete pest risk assessment was requested for 7 organisms (see point 5.1).

5.3 Update on EFSA outsourced projects

- Project on "Inventory of spread models for pest risk assessment"

Presentation of the final results of this EFSA funded project and guidance on the use of the databases were given by Dan CHAPMAN, Center for Ecology & Hydrology, Edinburgh (UK). The final report of the project including its Annexes is available on the EFSA web-site at http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/795e.htm

- Update on Media monitoring project with examples of results

Timely information on emerging plant pests and pathogens is essential for early action to avoid their entry, establishment, spread and impact. The EFSA PLH Medisys project, i.e. the use of the JRC Medisys media monitoring tool in plant health, was presented. This project is adding new and appropriate media information sources to the Medisys sources, so as to also cover adequately the plant health domain. The EFSA PLH network members were invited to suggest new sources that should be monitored. A multilingual ontology for the global identification of emerging plant health threats has been developed. The Medisys tool is already proving very helpful in monitoring the media attention to the *Xylella fastidiosa* outbreak in Southern Italy, as shown by the web page:

http://medusa.jrc.it/medisys/alertedition/en/XylellaFastidiosa-PHT.html

The next step of the project will be to develop a strategy to identify unknown plant health threats from reports in the media.

5.4 Items suggested by MSs

No additional topics for discussion were suggested by MSs. Poland informed the Network about a training course on Pest Risk Assessment performed by EFSA Plant health staff in Poznań, Poland, on February 11-12, 2015.

5.5 *Xylella fastidiosa* risk assessment and data

- **EFSA activities: pest risk assessment, host plants categorisation and database, urgent advices to risk managers**

EFSA gave a summary of the *Xylella fastidiosa* pest risk assessment published in January 2015. The opinion is available at:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/efsajournal/pub/3989.htm

Following a request from the European Commission, EFSA was also asked to provide urgent technical assistance in the field of plant health as regards the list of host plants of *X. fastidiosa.* The scientific report is available at:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/efsajournal/pub/4061.htm

EFSA also received a request for an urgent response to scientific and technical information provided by an Italian non-governmental organisation (NGO). The scientific report is available at:

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/efsajournal/pub/4082.htm

- Overview of activities on *Xylella fastidiosa* by Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR) and intermediate results of the EFSA funded pilot project on host range of the Apulian strain of *Xylella fastidiosa*

The current situation on the spread of *X. fastidiosa* in Apulia and new insight for the pest epidemiology and control were presented by Maria SAPONARI. An update was provided on the natural host range of the Apulian strain CoDiRO: new host species for *X. fastidiosa* CoDiRO strain found in Apulia, are *Rosmarinus officinalis*, *Myrtus communis* and *Rhamnus alaternus*.

The preliminary data and on-going experiments of the pilot project to reduce risk assessment uncertainties were also introduced. It was concluded that olive and oleander appear to be the most susceptible hosts of the CoDiRO strain (Apulian strain) and that olive cultivars display different degree of susceptibility. However in grapes there was record of systematic movement of the bacteria, while susceptibility of citrus species need to be further investigated in the coming months.

- **Inventory of spread model: the case study on *Xylella fastidiosa***

A preliminary spread model for *X. fastidiosa* in Apulia was presented by Dan CHAPMAN, Center for Ecology & Hydrology, Edinburgh (UK). It was concluded that the model could be useful to predict the large-scale development of the epidemic and for *X. fastidiosa* risk assessment, however more information is needed about the epidemiology and the actual spread within olive groves and across the landscape.

- Overview of Mediterranean Agronomic Institute (Bari, Italy) activities on *Xylella fastidiosa* and first results of remote sensing image analysis for monitoring *Xylella fastidiosa* in olive groves in Apulia

Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (IAMB) presented its main activity concerning education, applied research and cooperation. Raising awareness on phytosanitary emergencies in the Mediterranean region is also an important part of their activities. IAMB supports the Regional Phytosanitary Service in fields like sanitary controls in the certification programme of nursery plants of citrus and stone fruits and mandatory monitoring of different quarantine pathogens.

Their activity on *Xylella fastidiosa* is focusing on technical and scientific support, research and monitoring of the pathogen and its vector(s) to provide the Apulia Region with data and tools for a fast and accurate pathogen monitoring and control. Besides diagnosis and characterisation methods, the first results of remote sensing analysis for monitoring *X. fastidiosa* in olive groves in Apulia were presented.

- Application of remote sensing image analysis for pine wood nematode and insights for *Xylella fastidiosa*

A presentation on the detection of declining pine trees using remote sensing analysis for Pine Wood Nematode was given by Pieter BECK, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC), Institute for Environmental Sustainability (IES), who presented how these trees affected by pine wood nematode can be detected using remote sensing.

- Discussion on *Xylella fastidiosa*

Based on the presentations the following issues were raised by the participants and discussed: reliability of testing symptomless trees and sensitivity of detection methods; measures available for containing the pest; response of different varieties and influence on spread modelling; importance of considering

the social acceptability of the proposed measures etc.); control of vectors and need to develop integrated pest management strategies.

The importance of continuing the investigation of host range for the Apulian strain CoDiRO of *X. fastidiosa* was highlighted. It was emphasised that, even when eradication is very difficult, slowing down the spread is an important part of the strategy to control this disease. Scientific knowledge on the strains and the behaviour of this pathogen in the European environment is very important and it was stresses the need for sufficient resources for research, particularly to know more about epidemiology and disease management.

EFSA highlighted that its activity at the time of the meeting was focused on updating the host plants database.

Participants suggested further work on vector control as an important part of the disease management.

The EU Commission representative gave an update on the emergency measures.

5.6 Agreement on PLH Network meeting dates in 2015

The next PLH Network meeting will take place on 13 October 2015 in Parma, as in the same week starting from 14 October 2015 EFSA will host a scientific conference at the EXPO in Milano.

5.7 Any Other Business

EFSA will host its 2nd Scientific Conference "Shaping the Future of Food Safety, Together" at the EXPO in Milano on 14-16 October 2015 (http://www.efsaexpo2015.eu/). For Network members who will register a shuttle transport from Parma will be available.

The EFSA PLH Panel will hold its 55th plenary meeting in Bruxelles on 27-29 May 2015 as plenary open to the participation of observers. Network members are welcome to attend.

5.8 Action Points

1) EFSA to upload the remaining presentations to the PLH Network DMS folder for this meeting:

- Overview of CNR activities on *Xylella fastidiosa* and interim results of the EFSA funded pilot project on host range of the Apulian strain of *Xylella fastidiosa*
- Overview of IAM activities on *Xylella fastidiosa* and first results of remote sensing image analysis for monitoring *Xylella fastidiosa* in olive groves in Apulia
- Application of remote sensing image analysis for pine wood nematode and insights for *Xylella fastidiosa*

2) EFSA to add more details to the Minutes of the 7th Network meeting to all PLH Network members and submit for adoption together with Minutes of the 8th Network meeting.