

Scientific Panel on Plant Health

Minutes of the 59th Plenary meeting

Held on 27-28 January, 2016, Parma, (Italy)
(Agreed on 16 March 2016)

Participants

■ **Panel Members**

Claude Bragard, David Caffier, Thierry Candresse, Elisavet Chatzivassiliou, Katharina Dehnen-Schmutz, Gianni Gilioli, Jean-Claude Gregoire, Josep Anton Jaques Miret, Michael Jeger, Alan MacLeod, Maria Navajas, Bjorn Niere, Stephen Parnell, Roel Potting, Trond Rafoss, Vittorio Rossi, Gregor Urek, Ariena Van Bruggen, Wopke Van Der Werf, Jon West, Stephan Winter

■ **EFSA**

ALPHA Unit: Miren Andueza, Ciro Gardi, Gabor Hollo, Virag Kertesz, Ioannis Koufakis, Svetla Kozelska, Marco Pautasso, Gritta Schrader, Giuseppe Stancanelli, Tramonti Sara, Sybren Vos

AMU Unit: Fulvio Barizzone

EFSA Quality team: Lesley Koschel, Dimitrios Spyropoulos

■ **European Commission representatives (observers)**

DG SANTE: Panagiota Mylona (by video-conference)

■ **Observers**

European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO):
Muriel Suffert

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed EFSA PLH Panel members.

Apologies were received from Jon West (EFSA PLH Panel), who could not attend this meeting.

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 and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Scientific Panel Members invited for the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting were identified during the screening process nor at the Oral Declaration of Interest at the beginning of this meeting. Information was provided to the Panel about the EFSA policy on independence and declaration of interests.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 58th Plenary meeting held on 17-18 November 2015, Parma (Italy)

The minutes of the 58th plenary meeting were adopted.

5. Report on written procedures since 58th Plenary meeting

No written procedures were performed since 58th Plenary meeting

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1. Presentation and discussion for possible endorsement of the draft "Scientific opinion on the health status of a managed honey bee colony" ([EFSA-Q-2015-00047](#))

To prepare for discussions related to possible endorsement of the draft opinion of the health status of a managed honeybee colony (Healthy bee project), the Panel was invited to provide its comments in writing to EFSA. The Panel consultation was limited to the sections of the document addressing the terms of reference 1, 2 and 3 of the mandate, corresponding to the conceptual framework, the mapping of factors and indicators affecting bee health and the identification of methods for measuring them. The methodological approach for performing the multifactorial assessment (terms of reference 4) was not subject of the discussion. EFSA provided an overview of the Panel's comments that were further discussed. With regards to the clarification of the methodology for performing the multi-stressors assessment, the main objectives of Healthy bee were reminded (i) to provide a full map of the factors/indicators relevant to bee health and (ii) to their selection for inclusion in an EU wide field survey. EFSA clarified that the draft output was to be considered in the broader context and the timeframe of the MUST Bee project, and that the design and the preparation of the protocol of the EU wide survey was not in the scope of this mandate. However, the criteria to take into

account the preparation of field surveys will be further expanded in ToR4. With regards to the rating system used in the assessment of the relevance to bee health of the indicators/factors, the formulation of the rating descriptors should reflect that they are based on the robustness and weakness of the scientific evidence. With regards to the possible relevance of plant viruses to bee health, further review of the literature is needed. With regards to the origin of the queen bees, this aspect is addressed in the document in terms of their geographical and genetic origin. The Panel endorsed the draft document (TOR1, TOR2 and TOR3), that will be shared with stakeholders in a dedicated workshop organised in Brussels mid-April 2016. Further updates on the progress of the work will be provided to the Panel during the next PLH plenary meetings.

7. New Mandates

No new mandates were presented.

8. Feedback from the Panels' working groups

8.1. Request from the European Commission to review recent scientific publications on Citrus black spot ([EFSA-Q-2015-00601](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

Update on the WG progress was provided. The Panel was informed that the author of the two publications under review by the WG has attended a hearing of the WG on 26 January 2016 to present their papers and to response to questions from the WG.

8.2. PLH Panel Working Group "Directive 2000/29 Methods": development of fit for purpose risk assessment methodologies and process to update EU listing of regulated plant pests ([EFSA-Q-2014-00351](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

The WG chair provided an update of the progress of the Methods WG presenting a detailed flowchart of the new methodology based on a mechanistic (population-based) approach. The changes in the population abundance from the production unit in the country of origin of the pest whose risk is to be assessed, to the production or service providing unit in the risk assessment area are followed and assessed. The updated template includes all steps and proposed tables of a future opinion where the pest abundance, multiplication factors or probabilities need to be estimated. It was stressed that the availability of a supporting calculation tool remains a main issue when applying the updated template by the

pilot WGs. Different possibilities such as use of @risk or R were discussed.

Experiences of the pilot WGs on *Ditylenchus destructor* and *Ceratocystis platani* applying this approach were shared. It was confirmed that lack of data is a general problem for the WGs. Due to data deficiency the spread and impact parts of the template were adjusted in the case of *Ditylenchus destructor*, following the adaptive approach of the new methodology. A discussion clarifying how uncertainty can be captured, graphically and verbally also took place. It was further stressed that cooperation/coordination between pest WGs and WG on Methods is essential. Pilot case studies have to be brought to an end, feedback from risk managers is needed and subsequently the methodology can be/has to be adapted or improved.

As a new method, it needs to be explained to the “end user”, showing the different calculations and benefit of increased transparency.. Intensive communication with risk managers is therefore needed.

- 1) *Ditylenchus destructor* Thorne, ([EFSA-Q-2015-00268](#)) and *Radopholus similis* (Cobb) Thorne.), ([EFSA-Q-2015-00269](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

The WG Chair outlined the progress of the WG on nematodes, focusing on *Ditylenchus destructor*. The composition of the WG was updated by inclusion of PLH Panel member to provide a direct link to the WG Methods. The first of assessed pathway (seed potatoes) was fully discussed and the quantile values for two scenarios (A0: current situation, A1: without phytosanitary measures) were estimated. The impact part needs further considerations regarding the lack of data. The data collection for the second assessed pathway (ornamental bulbs) was initiated.

- (2) *Ceratocystis platani* (Walter) Engelbrecht et Harrington, ([EFSA-Q-2015-00265](#)) and *Cryphonectria parasitica* (Murrill) Barr, ([EFSA-Q-2015-00266](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

The Panel was updated about the WG progress since the last plenary meeting. The use of the new template and the methodological approach was clarified and a detailed example was presented about the pathway plants for planting. The need for a dedicated tool for moving swiftly from quartile estimations to outputs was identified. Data were obtained on the proportion/numbers of *Platanus* street trees in various European towns (not actually shown). A provisional plan for future WG meetings was made; two experts on *C. parasitica* were identified. The WG plans to work on *Cryphonectria parasitica* after having completed the risk assessment for *C. platani*.

(3) Grapevine Flavescence dorée, ([EFSA-Q-2015-00271](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

The WG Chair described the progress of the WG on *Flavescence dorée* (FDP). The WG identified a need for further support in new methodology in general, calculations (impact, spread, etc), and risk reduction options. Olaf Mosbach Schulz (AMU Unit) and Roel Potting (PLH Panel member) joined the WG to support them with these tasks.

The WG interpretation of the Terms of Reference was summarized and followed by the description of the approach focusing on spread, impact and risk reduction options. The WG strategy is to identify suitable EU areas for the vector through climate matching and the calculation of a long distance spread rate from historical data. The challenge is whether the strategy based on historical data is feasible.

For impact, there is a need to better understand how to apply the new scheme. The key issue is to identify which factors are affecting the impact. The WG was requested to focus on control methods currently applied in the EU or methods that could be developed in the future. Risk reduction options currently used (list of possible measures) in the EU were discussed. Using concrete examples, the WG gained a general understanding of how to approach the calculations recommended by the Methodology WG. The next task is to identify the factors that influence risk reduction option efficacy.

It was highlighted that further links with the Methodology WG is essential. There is a strong need for further guidance on spread and impact quantile rating schemes. General concerns such as time constraints related to the risk assessment were also noted. Possible request for extension of the deadline was signalled. A future meeting plan was presented.

Based on discussion that followed the FDP presentation it became clear that other pilot projects are experiencing similar problems related to the new methodology. Panel Members agreed that further support from the Methodology WG is needed in the future. It was also stated that the spread and impact part still needs further development in terms of methodology.

(4) *Diaporthe vaccinii* Shaer ([EFSA-Q-2015-00267](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

The WG Chair summarized the progress of the WG on *D. vaccinii*. Since September 2015, the WG has collected literature data on global *D. vaccinii* occurrence, occurrence data from USA plant health clinics have been collected and species distribution models applied to *D. vaccinii* presence data, prepared a guidance for the planned *D. vaccinii* survey in the EU, discussed modelling results and further steps needed for risk assessment. Preliminary predictions indicate that the potential distribution of *D. vaccinii* is wider than previously thought. The involvement of Yoannis Koufakis,

who started a traineeship at EFSA ALPHA Unit in September 2015 was acknowledged. The analysis of the ISEFOR database of plants for planting for data on import of blueberry plants was initiated.

(5) *Eotetranychus lewisi* (McGregor), ([EFSA-Q-2015-00270](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

The WG Chair provided an update on the progress of the WG on *Eotetranychus lewisi*. The WG is waiting for the results of surveys in the Member States. ALPHA Team Leader informed that an extension of the deadline for delivery of the risk assessments for this pest, as well as for *Radopholus similis* and *Diaporthe vaccinii*, is being discussed, depending on when the results from the 2016 surveys will be made available.

8.3. Report and discussion from the *X. fastidiosa* workshop ([EFSA-Q-2015-00527](#))

The Chair expressed gratitude of the EFSA PLH Panel to the EFSA PLH team for the organization of the workshop, preparation of the briefing notes, participation in the workshop, and support provided to the chairs and rapporteurs. Praise for the organization at such a short notice of a very informative workshop and for the contributions by the session Chairs and Rapporteurs were expressed by the Panel members attending the meeting

The workshop, organised by EFSA together with DG RTD, DG AGRI and DG SANTE, focused on research gaps. It was stressed that research has also to address farmer and citizen expectations. The proposed open-field initiative in Salento to test olive variety susceptibility was found very positive.

EFSA confirmed positive feedback obtained from the participants on the workshop, which provided a great opportunity for researchers from various countries and disciplines to come together, exchange views and start collaborating for the upcoming Horizon 2020 call on *X. fastidiosa*. The framework now established will make it possible to avoid duplication of research efforts in the future.

8.4. Report on "Evaluation of data concerning the necessity of flumioxazin to control a serious danger to plant health which cannot be contained by other available means"([EFSA-Q-2015-00570](#))

The [Composition of the WG](#) was presented.

The EFSA WG presented the methodology for the evaluation of alternative to flumioxazin. The Panel discussed how this type of assessment could be

developed. Key issues would be defining what is a serious danger to plant health and then how the availability of alternative chemical and non-chemical control methods could be assessed.

It was suggested to invite the EFSA Pesticides Unit to a future PLH plenary to present the legislation and risk assessment framework for pesticides in the EU.

8.5. Prometheus survey

In agreement with the activity plan presented during previous plenary meeting, the PLH Panel members completed the PROMETHEUS questionnaire during the plenary meeting. This allowed for questions and clarifications to representatives from the AMU Unit. The PROMETHEUS survey represents a crucial opportunity to express experts view on the methodological needs in EFSA to improve the process for dealing with evidence and facilitate the daily work of experts and staff. In addition, it provides information on some existing EFSA documents, tools, projects produced by/for EFSA and already available in support to the Panels tasks. The summary of the replies obtained will be reviewed by the PLH Panel during next plenary meeting and compiled in a single comprehensive answer representing the whole PLH Panel view.

8.6. Update on EFSA outsourcing activities on plant health

On 16-19 August 2016 EFSA will host the Annual Conference of the International Pest Risk Research Group (previously called Risk Mapping Research Group) expecting up to 100 participants. This meeting is open for participation to the EFSA PLH Panel members. A website with information about this group was indicated. More information is coming.

ALPHA Team Leader provided a recap to the EFSA PLH Panel about the joint EPPO-EFSA workshop on modelling, which will also be hosted by EFSA in the first half of December 2016 (probably 12-14 December 2016).

The Panel was also informed about a new project founded by EFSA started in January 2016 to improve knowledge on *Xylella fastidiosa* potential vectors biology and control. The project involves scientists from University of Bari, Brescia, Torino, IPSP-CNR. The plan covers two years of activity during which data will be collected from literature and Mediterranean EU countries on potential vectors biology and control on woody crops.

At the same time, for two years, data on biology and ecology of *Philaenus spumarius* populations will be collected in the field (2 olive orchards in Liguria and 2 in Apulia Regions) and from 2 mesocosms located in Bari and Turin universities.

8.7. Report from the Joint EPPO / COST-SMARTER Workshop on the Evaluation and Regulation of the use of Biological Control Agents in the EPPO Region

Feedback was provided from a workshop on Evaluation and regulation of biological control agents which took place in November 2015 in Budapest. EFSA's contribution to this workshop was presented as well as other participants' presentations. Conclusions and recommendations from this workshop can be found on EPPO website. Main areas for improvement identified at the workshop were: harmonization, legislation support, agreement on definitions, independent review (where EFSA could play a possible role) and sharing of information.

8.4. Report from the annual customer feedback from DG Sante on EFSA plant health activities

EFSA Quality Team presented customer feedback results from an exercise performed in 2015. The outcomes were presented and areas for improvement were also identified and discussed. The team discussed the next steps and proposed actions by EFSA. Specific opinions were discussed and concrete examples were used to demonstrate positive and/or negative features appreciated by the EC. The overall feedback was very positive.

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1 Discussion of future PLH Panel self-tasks

This item was postponed to the next meeting due to lack of time.

Next PLH Plenary meeting will be held in EFSA (Parma) on 17 March, 2016 (9.00-18.00) and 18 March 2016 (8.30-13.00). The PLH Panel meetings calendar was confirmed (at EFSA in Parma, unless otherwise specified): 25-26 May 2016 (open Plenary in Bruxelles); 29-30 June 2016; 28-29 September 2016; 23-24 November 2016.