

Scientific Panel on Plant Health

Minutes of the 61st Plenary meeting

Held on 25-26 May, 2016, Brussel (Belgium)
(Agreed on 29 June 2016)

Participants

■ Panel Members

Claude Bragard, 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, Gregor Urek, Wopke Van Der Werf, Stephan Winter, Jon West participated by web conference for two specific points of the agenda (scientific opinions on *Ceratocystis platani* and *Cryphonectria parasitica*)

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Dorothee Andre, Pasquale Di Rubbo, Gema Vila Cambra, Rosalinda Scalia (EU Commission, DG SANTE)

■ EFSA:

ALPHA Unit: Gabor Hollo, Virag Kertesz, Maria Rosaria Mannino, Gritta Schrader, Giuseppe Stancanelli, Emanuela Tacci, Sybren Vos

■ Observers:

Maria Asmyhr (The Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food Safety, Norway); Nuria Avendano-Garcia (Grupo TRAGSA, Spain), Ewelina Czwieniczek (Université catholique de Louvain (UCL) Earth and Life Institute Applied Microbiology - Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium), Nicky Denning (Brambless, Belgium), Jose Maria Guitian (TRAGSATEC, Spain), Séverine Hasgroucq (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium), Françoise Petter (EPPO), Nils Prétat (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium), Gerardo Sanchez (Ministry of Agriculture of Spain, Spain), Romans Vorss (Belgium).

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants and the observers to the 61st plenary meeting of the EFSA Plant Health Panel.

Apologies were received from David Caffier, Vittorio Rossi and Ariena Van Bruggen.

2. Brief introduction of Panel members and Observers

The Chair invited the participants to briefly introduce themselves.

3. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

4. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Committee/Scientific Panel/ Members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest², EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI) and the Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI) filled in by the Panel Members invited for the present meeting.

For further details on the outcome of the screening of the ADoI or the SDoI, please refer to Annex. Oral Declaration of Interest was asked at the beginning of the meeting and no additional interest was declared.

5. Presentation of the *EFSA Guidelines for Observers*

The new EFSA Guidelines for Observers for open plenary meetings, effective since 19 January 2016, were presented. New guidelines include a section that concerns reporting of discussions. Observers, including the media, are now free to report on the proceedings of the meeting, while reference to participants should respect their reputation and professional integrity.

6. Agreement of the minutes of the 60th Plenary meeting held on 16-17 March, 2016, Parma, Italy

The minutes of the 60th plenary meeting held on 16-17 March, 2016 were agreed (<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/160316b>).

¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

7. Report on written procedures since 60th Plenary meeting

- 7.1 Report on *Xylella fastidiosa* scientific opinion on Scientific advice in the field of plant health regarding *Xylella fastidiosa* (Well et al.) TOR 5, [EFSA-Q-2016-00183](#)

This scientific opinion dealt with treatment solutions to cure *Xylella fastidiosa* diseased plants. It was adopted by written procedure on 5 April, 2016 and was published on 20 April, 2016 (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4456>). The results provided confirmed the continued presence of *Xylella fastidiosa* after the treatments under evaluation. The positive effects of these treatments on crop performance shall be confirmed by long-term studies.

- 7.2 Report on scientific opinion on Citrus black spot ([EFSA-Q-2015-00601](#))

This scientific opinion was adopted by written procedure on 17 May 2016 by all panel members and is now published on the EFSA website (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/4513>). This scientific opinion dealt with new scientific information on Citrus black spot (CBS) published after the publication of the EFSA opinion from 2014 on the risk of CBS being established in Europe. The results were briefly presented by the chair of the WG. The opinion from 2014 concluded that there was a moderately likely probability of establishment in certain areas of southern Europe. The two main publications (Magarey et al. 2015 and Martínez-Minaya 2015) as well as all other relevant recent publications on CBS did not provide sufficient evidence to update the opinion from 2014. The discussion focused on the high uncertainty regarding the probability of establishment in Europe.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission (part 1)

- 8.1. Discussion and update on scientific advice in the field of plant health regarding *Xylella fastidiosa* (Well et al.) TOR 1, [EFSA-Q-2016-00182](#)

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

The terms of reference were presented (opinion on the diversity of *Xylella fastidiosa* populations in Apulia). The chairman presented the

methodology followed by the WG which analysed key scientific literature. *Xylella fastidiosa* isolates are classified into Sequence Types (ST) by partial sequencing of 7 house-keeping genes (MLST: Multi Locus Sequence Typing). The chairman also presented literature on use of MLST to detect genetic heterogeneity. Even if made with limited data available, the assessment shows that only the ST 53 was found in samples from Apulian infected plants and that other STs were detected on samples from intercepted plants in northern Italian regions and in France. The data available is compatible with the hypothesis of a single introduction event in Apulia.

The discussion focused on the use of MLST to detect genetic heterogeneity, on the efficiency of the vector in spreading *Xylella fastidiosa*, on the relevance of prevention and early detection in the plant health strategy and on the difficulty of the surveillance in cases of asymptomatic pests.

9. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

9.1. Discussion of scientific opinion on risk assessment of *Ditylenchus destructor* Thome, ([EFSA-Q-2015-00268](#))

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

The chairman raised problems and difficulties encountered by the working group on the interpretation of the new method of Risk Reduction Option (RRO) assessment. This part of the draft opinion is still under development, waiting for the comments of the RRO subgroup. The step "Impact" is also under development.

The chairman focused the presentation on the pathway "seed potatoes" and indicated that for ornamental bulbs (tulip bulbs) the same scheme was followed. The steps of the assessment were illustrated. Lack of data available on the presence of *Ditylenchus destructor* in countries exporting to the EU and in Member States was underlined. As already presented during the previous plenary, plants listed in the current legislation and assessed in the opinion were not fully representing the range of host plants. The list of RROs chosen by the working group was already presented at the previous plenary meeting. Their assessment will be finalized soon and presented at the next meeting. The calculations of infected seed potatoes for the steps of entry and spread including uncertainty were also presented.

The discussion focused on uncertainty and variability assessments. The working group faced the difficulty of translating narrative evaluation of the pest distribution into quantitative assessment of the

input data. This fact made it difficult to solve the problem of the quantitative uncertainty assessment.

9.2. Discussion on draft scientific opinion on risk assessment of *Ceratocystis platani* (Walter) Engelbrecht et Harrington, (**EFSA-Q-2015-00265**)

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

A member of the WG presented a summary of the progress made so far. The conclusions on the pest categorisation were briefly summarised. There is no climatic reason for the fungus not to spread into areas where host plants are present. In the opinion, three main pathways were assessed: plants for planting, wood, and machinery.

It was found that the most susceptible hosts have mostly died out, so that the abundance of the pathogen goes down. Higher abundance was only found in newly infested countries. The graphical presentation of the results needs to be improved and explained better, negative coefficients should be avoided in the graphics since it causes confusion. The application of the software needs improvement as well. Concerning the spread of the pathogen, the situation was clearer for France than for Italy. The WG had found that it is important to understand the contribution of decomposed factors on establishment and spread to be able to address different contributions of RROs. This requirement has already led to a revision of the template, and this new feature helped a lot when doing the assessment. A summary of RROs was given, estimating their effects on the coefficients used in the template. The work is still in progress. An Excel file for RROs and their effectiveness had been developed by one of the WG members. Many assumptions and expert judgment were done, but concern was raised on the reliability on these assumptions. Very little data was available to base the figures on, therefore in many cases the assessment is based on expert judgment only. The discussion focused on how to justify ratings and how to find a common approach for all WGs.

9.3. Discussion of scientific opinion on risk assessment of *Cryphonectria parasitica* (Murrill) Barr ([EFSA-Q-2015-00266](#))

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

The current state of the opinion on the causal agent of chestnut blight was presented briefly. So far, three meetings have been held, the opinion is under development, only the current situation has been considered so far. It would also be important to assess the entry of non-European isolates, but this will need further discussions.

9.4. Discussion on draft scientific opinion on risk assessment of Grapevine Flavescence dorée (EFSA-Q-2015-00271)

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

The WG Chair presented the recent work progress of the WG on Flavescence dorée. The WG interpretation of the terms of reference was summarized and followed by an approach focusing on spread, impact and risk reduction options (RROs). Problems and difficulties encountered by the working group regarding the interpretation of the new method were raised. As mentioned by other pilot working group, it was also stressed that data availability is limited, therefore the assessment in many cases is based on expert judgment only. The WG put a lot of effort to justify ratings and clearly explain the uncertainties. The WG dedicated also time on discussing the new method. The fit for purpose approach would require more interaction with the risk managers but when this is not feasible for all steps choices concerning the scenarios can be proposed by the WG. The WG chair highlighted the importance of presenting the assessments results in a harmonised way and asked the Panel to find a common approach for all WGs. It was also stressed that certain parts of the opinion may not be fully in linewith the template provided by the Methods WG and this was acknowledged by the PLH Panel. Finally, the future meeting plan was also presented.

10 Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission

10.1 Scientific Committee and/or Scientific Panel(s) including their Working Groups

10.1.1. Request from the European Commission to complete the Pest Risk Assessment (step 2) of 7 regulated pests: update by PLH Panel Working Groups on work progress (EFSA-Q-2014-00351)

- Presentation and discussion on methodology and template for pest risk assessment and update on WG progresses

The current state of play of the methodology was presented by the chair of the WG. There are still issues to be solved or improved, however, this will be done when working on the second group of organisms. It can clearly be seen that all WGs dealing with the new approach face difficulties, but it has to be seen as a cooperative learning. Experiences should be integrated in the methodology, and

therefore an enhanced communication between the pilot working groups and the WG on Methods is crucial.

The working group has now to focus on how to communicate the results in the opinion. A proposal will be made to the pilot working groups and their feedback will be needed to reach a common approach. One WG member proposed different options on how to present and visualize the results in the opinions. Ideas were discussed by the plenary.

Interaction with the Commission and with stakeholders was discussed. Furthermore, there was a discussion on time efforts and on the application of shorter options when the main method is finalized.

AMU has launched a procurement to provide a web tool for calculating the ratings in the risk assessment. A presentation of ILVO (Belgium) at the Plant Health Network Meeting had shown that also other institutions are working on the development of methodologies for quantitative risk assessments.

- Presentation and discussion on methodology and template for risk reduction options (RROs) and update on WG progresses

Different tools are under development to assist the Panel with identification and evaluation of RROs. Timeline of the work plan and definitions of several terms were provided. Guidance for evaluation of RROs was presented in a 7-step plan, including a specific example of a possible scenario.

11 Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

11.1. Update on EFSA activities

An update was provided on ongoing EFSA activities on plant health.

11.2. Update on the state of the art of the Healthy Bee opinion

Due to time constraints this agenda point was postponed to the next PLH Panel meeting.

12 Answers to questions from Observers (in application of the EFSA Guidelines for Observers)

The observers did not ask specific questions to the Panel under this agenda item. They expressed their satisfaction with the opportunity to attend the plenary meeting and for receiving clarifications when needed during the discussion of the specific scientific items.

13 Any other business

13.1. EFSA Paperless procedure

The Panel members were informed about the EFSA paperless reimbursement procedures regarding participation to meetings organised by EFSA.

The next PLH Plenary meeting will be held in Parma on 29-30 June, 2016.