Scientific Panel on Plant Health
Minutes of the 66th
Open Plenary meeting

Held on 29-30 March, 2017, Parma (Italy)
(Agreed on 23 of May 2017)

Meeting open to Observers with all agenda items open to Observers

Participants

- Panel Members

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

- Hearing Experts:

  Niklas Bjorklund, Francoise Petter

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

  Yannis Karamitsios, Panagiota Mylona, Gema Villa Franca (DG SANTE), by video conference

- EFSA:

  ALPHA Unit: Nikolaus Križ, Giuseppe Stancanelli, Mitesha Aukhojee, Filippo Bergeretti, Ewelina Czwienczek Alice Delbianco, Ciro Gardi, Gabor Hollo, Virag Kertesz, Ioannis Koufakis; Svetla Kozelska, Marielie Mayrs, Marco Pautasso, Sara Tramontini, Sybren Vos

  SCER Unit: Bernard Bottex

  RASA Dept.: Verhagen Hans

- OBSERVERS:

Giovani Baldissera (European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization), Kałuski Tomasz (Institute of Plant Protection -National Research Institute), Students from the University of Parma: Tauber Simon, Fabrile Maria Pia, Matteo Bertagnolli, Vaiarelli Marta, Radogova Sonia, Dalla Serra Martina, Tavormina Delia, Antonaci Jacopo Jorge, Iafrate Nicola.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants and the observers to the 66th plenary meeting of the EFSA Plant Health Panel.

Apologies were received from Bjorn Niere.

2. Brief introduction of Panel/Scientific Committee members and observers

The Chair invited the participants to briefly introduce themselves.

3. Adoption of the 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 Processes[1] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest [2], 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 No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process or at the Oral Declaration of Interest at the beginning of this meeting.

5. Presentation of the Guidelines for Observers

The new EFSA Guidelines for Observers[3] for open plenary meetings, effective since 20 January 2017, 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. Report on written procedures since 65th Plenary meeting

The minutes of the 65th plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure by 3 February 2017 and published on EFSA web-page on 14 February 2017.

7. New Mandates

7.1. Request to provide a scientific opinion on the risk to plant health of 133 regulated harmful organisms, for the EU territory (M-2017-0055)

EFSA is requested to prepare and deliver pest categorisation for 133 regulated harmful organisms or groups of harmful organisms included in the Annexes of Directive 2000/29/EC for which a recent pest risk assessment or pest categorisation is not available. The delivery should

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

[2] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf

[3] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/observersguidelines.pdf

follow a stepwise approach, with the expectation that the pest categorisations are delivered in batches at regular intervals each year. In general, priority shall be given to the pest categorisations of the harmful organisms that will be subject to a change in quarantine status pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 on protective measures against pests of plants. The mandate was presented to the Panel together with a detailed work plan. Several taxonomic working groups have been and will be established to deal with the large number of pest categorisations. The following WG chairs have been nominated: Thierry Candresse (WG on Viruses), Jean-Claude Gregoire (WG on Forest Insects), Alan MacLeod (WG on Agricultural Insects), Michael Jeger (WG Forest Pathogens), and Vittorio Rossi (WG Agricultural Fungal Pathogens). The pest categorisation template developed in 2014 will be used for the exercise with some proposed modifications that were also presented for the Panel for discussion and agreement. The WGs on Viruses, Forest Insects and Agricultural Insects had their first meeting before the plenary meeting and thus provided update on their work progress including 2 draft opinions that were presented to the Panel also as a demonstration of the changes proposed to the template. The adoption of the first scientific opinions on pest categorisation is expected by May 2017.

8. Feedback from the European Commission

8.1. Presentation on the new EU phytosanitary regime

Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 on protective measures against pests of plants was adopted in October 2016. The new plant health law was presented to the Panel raising awareness of the most important changes in the legislation and of their implications. The regulation demonstrates a more proactive approach, focusing on risk and regulating pests on the basis of established criteria for risk assessment, as well as prioritising those pests with the most serious consequences. More focus is placed on high-risk trade coming from Third Countries, surveillance and early eradication of outbreaks of new pests. Any change of legislation in the future is to be based on a pest risk assessment. Implementing acts are being developed and are to be adopted by the time the regulation enters into force in December 2019.

9. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and/or possible adoption

9.1. Discussion of scientific opinion on Assessment of *Citrus junos* as a host of citrus canker (EFSA-Q-2017-00039)

The WG chair presented the draft opinion of *Citrus junos* as a host of citrus canker. The terms of reference require clarification of the host status of *Citrus junos* with regards to *Xanthomonas citri* pv *citri* and *X. citri* pv *aurantifolii*, causal agents of citrus bacterial canker, and to indicate whether *C. junos* fruit could represent a pathway for the introduction of citrus canker into the European Union. Although very little

literature is available (which leads to high uncertainty), *C. junos* can be considered as a putative host of *X. citri* pv. *aurantifolii*. Therefore the PLH panel considers that the conclusions of the previous EFSA opinion apply also to this *Citrus* species and that convergent lines of evidence provide sufficient demonstration that *C. junos* is a host of *X. citri* pv. *citri* and *X. citri* pv. *aurantifolii*. There is no reason to consider the *C. junos* fruit differently from other citrus species, consequently the assessment of the general citrus fruit pathway from the 2014 opinion still applies. The panel also emphasized the limited literature available, and especially that (i) most scientific papers investigating the susceptibility of *C. junos* used single genetically uncharacterized bacterial strain for inoculations; (ii) the genetic structure of the population of *X. citri* pv. *citri* in the *C. junos* productions zones is not precisely known. Up to now, *C. junos* has not been challenged to strains representative of the bacterial genetic diversity; (iii) a single scientific paper investigating the susceptibility level of five Chinese *C. junos* accessions suggested cultivar-dependent partial resistance levels among these.

9.2. Discussion of scientific opinion on risk assessment of Atropellis spp (**EFSA-Q-2016-00490**)

The Chair of the WG on *Atropellis* spp. presented an update on the progress made with the risk assessment for this quarantine pathogen of *Pinus* spp., which is still unreported in the EU. The ToRs and their interpretation by the WG were summarized. The WG is asked to carry on with the risk assessment building on the pest categorization produced by the Panel in 2014. Although there is no need to further study establishment (this can be taken for granted, given the widespread presence of susceptible hosts and the similarity of the climatic conditions in many parts of the EU with those found in the native range of the pathogen), the mandate mentions the need to provide further information on the probability of entry, risk reduction options and impact. Potential scenarios [the current situation (A0), the, removal of the *Atropellis*-specific measures (A1) and the addition of further RROs (A2)] and the main relevant pathways (plants for planting, wood with bark and isolated bark) were discussed. The WG, in agreement with the Commission and after endorsement of the Panel at the last plenary meeting, plans only to assess quantitatively the wood pathway for scenario A0, as the pathway of plants for planting is closed (there is a ban of importing into the EU *Pinus* plants from outside Europe) and there is missing information on the pathway isolated bark, for which nonetheless effective requirements are in place. Moreover, as the current regulations are expected to be very effective, there is no scope for assessing additional regulations. In addition, removing the measures specific to *Atropellis* spp. would still result in a risk of entry close to zero, because of the remaining generic measures for *Pinus* pests and *Pinus* spp. The WG has estimated most of the distributions needed for the quantitative assessment of the risk of

entry due to the wood pathway. The plan for the further work of the WG (on inserting the material assembled into the revised template, describing the results of the entry pathway model, clarifying the host range and providing additional information on the potential impacts) was summarized.

9.3. Discussion of scientific opinion on risk assessment of *Diaporthe vaccinii* Shear, (EFSA-Q-2015-00267)

The WG chair presented the status of the *Diaporthe vaccinii* PRA, focusing on the latest progresses. The interpretation of ToR was reviewed. The potential scenarios were presented and discussed: the current situation (A0); the removal of the *Diaporthe*-specific measures (A1); the addition of further RROs (A2). The overall conceptual model was presented and discussed. The relevant pathways for the entry were presented: plants for planting (considering separately for blueberry and cranberry, and the different types of propagation material), berries (separately for blueberry and cranberry), and natural spread. All data (trade data) and parameters for the entry sub-model have been collected and/or estimated, providing justification and estimate of the uncertainty. The number of past outbreaks was also presented along with a climate suitability map, which suggests different locations in Europe have contrasting suitability of climate for the pathogen to establish. The proposed approach for the evaluation of establishment, spread and impact was presented, but the final structure of the conceptual and formal sub-models has still to be finalized. The deadline for delivering the opinion is May 2017.

9.4. Discussion of scientific opinion on risk assessment of *Eotetranychus lewisi* (McGregor), (EFSA-Q-2015-00270)

The WG chair presented the progress of the work on *Eotetranychus lewisi* draft opinion focusing on entry and establishment. The progress on the analyses of the relevant pathways for the entry and establishment of the pest was presented. It was concluded that the main pathway for introduction of *E. lewisi* within the EU was through the import, from third countries where the pest occurs, of plants of poinsettias in the form of cuttings and pots. The contribution to the number of founder populations entering and establishing in the EU of the other three pathways was considered insignificant, but the analyses are still ongoing. Regarding the spread and impact, these sections are still under development. Lastly, the Panel briefly discussed the structure of the opinion with regards to the proposed template by the methods working group.

9.5. Discussion of scientific opinion on risk assessment of *Radopholus similis* (EFSA-Q-2015-00269)

The WG chair presented the progress status of the work on *Radopholus similis* draft opinion focusing on entry and establishment parts. The relevant pathways for the entry were presented and entry sub-steps specified. The probability of establishment of *R. similis* in open fields was

evaluated with the conclusion that establishment is considered possible. Spread and impact parts are still under development. Estimation of all values was completed and simulation calculations are pending. The results of the approach for identification and evaluation of risk reduction options was presented as well.

10. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA

10.1. 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 :

- 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 WG chair presented first the progress and novelties in the new risk assessment guidance/template focusing on the following parts of the template: introduction; data and methodologies; tables; graphs; comparison between scenarios; uncertainties and Conclusions on the assessment of the step. Proposals for improvement of the efficacy in using the guidance/template were also presented, e.g. considering the level of resolution (grain) in the model development, hand-made versus process engineering, pre-defined allocation of resources. After this introduction, the chair presented the guidance/template itself explaining in detail the structure and the use of the guidance/template. In the follow-up discussion some general points were stressed:

- need to organise a feedback from the pilot working groups regarding the use/application of the guidance/template and the tools;
- need for a thorough detailed discussion of the guidance/template document by the PLH Panel before endorsement for the public consultation step, which has been agreed to be held in next Panel plenaty meeting in June 2017
- Importance of the storage of data and knowledge the PLH Panel produce

Specifically the possibility of aggregation of steps was discussed. Particularly in case of steps aggregation, it is recommended for transparency the publication of the @Risk file together with the opinion (as it is currently done) It was also stressed that the possibility to deviate from the model (e.g. for assessing the risk at step level) should be specifically foreseen/mentioned in the Guidance/template. Following

issues in the Guidance/template were proposed for further improvement (i) risk reduction options, (ii) uncertainties, (iii) conclusions on entry and (iv) justifications provided in the appendix of the opinions.

10.2. Scientific Committee and its Working Groups

10.2.1. Feedback from the WG on Uncertainty

The Panel Chair presented briefly the work progresses of the Scientific Committee WG on Uncertainty.

10.3. EFSA including its Working Groups/Task Forces

10.3.1. Update on the request from the European Commission to provide scientific and technical assistance on a horizon scanning exercise in view to crisis preparedness on plant health for the EU territory (EFSA-Q-2017-00037)

EFSA provided an update on the progresses of the mandate on plant pests horizon scanning, presenting the first pilot edition of the newsletter on media monitoring of plant pest developed in the JRC Medisys system.

10.3.2. Update on results of the plant health crisis preparedness exercise in Portugal

EFSA provided a presentation on the first Workshop on Crisis Preparedness organised in the field of Plant Health. The event, which took place in Lisbon from 8 to 10 March 2017, was coordinated by the SCER Unit with the support of ALPHA (PLH Team) and COMMS Department and hosted by the Directorate-General for Food and Veterinary of Portugal (DGAV) which took care of all the logistic aspects.

Participants included representatives from 7 Mediterranean Member States (Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain), European Commission (DG SANTE) and EPPO. The event received positive feedbacks from participants, in particular on the proposed scenario, which was about *Candidatus Liberibacter africanus* (the causal agent of the citrus greening disease).

10.3.3. Update on the activity of *Xylella* (EFSA-Q-2016-00445-00445) host plant database

Next update of the *Xylella* host plants database is planned for finalisation by September 2017. In connection with that project, a new urgent mandate was sent from the European Commission at the beginning of March 2017 asking EFSA to collect the available scientific information on research results regarding susceptibility of different olive varieties to *Xylella fastidiosa* subsp. *pauca* ST53 (strain CoDiRO) infections (deadline: end of March 2017). EFSA conducted a systematic literature search and data extraction with the support of DistillerSR software to retrieve all relevant published evidence and contacted different key institutions and projects in order to complete the overview about ongoing and future research studies on the topic. At the end of the process 21 references

were retained as relevant and the report includes a brief analysis and summary table on the main results currently available.

10.3.4. Update on the upcoming publication of the Insecticide protocol (EFSA-Q-2016-00378)

The EFSA Insecticide (Art.4.7) WG has finalized the preparation of the technical report, that was approved on the first day of the Plenary (29 March 2017), and that will be published at beginning of April 2017. The overall approach for the evaluation of the requests of derogation was presented, describing the guiding principles (consideration of integrated pest management principles, sustainable management of the insecticide risk of resistance), and the main steps of the procedure were illustrated.

11. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

11.1. EPPO: Presentation on commodity pest lists and on the prioritizing ranking system.

EPPO presented the history of the EPPO studies leading to the lists of pests associated with the pathway of fruit of *Solanum lycopersicum* with supporting information for pests that could be possible candidates for addition to the EPPO Alert List or for PRA. The EPPO involvement in DROPSA EU project on strategies to develop effective, innovative and practical approaches to protect major European fruit crops from pests and pathogens was explained in detail including methodology and applied criteria to prioritise pests. Based on the methodology developed in tomato study and DROPSA, EPPO developed its standard. For the prioritization process the criteria are given but for the time being, no rating nor combination of criteria is recommended.

11.2. Presentation of a new unit for risk assessment of plant pests at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Niklas Björklund from the Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences (SLU) presented a new unit for pest risk assessment at SLU in Sweden. He presented the organization and mission, the ongoing collaboration with EFSA and the work in progress.

12. Answers to Observers (in application of the guidelines for Observers)

Some questions were received by the observers:

Question 1: Slide 10 states: "*C. junos* inoculated with *X. citri* pv. *citri* exhibits typical canker-like lesions, although the extent of water soaking, tissue hypertrophy and lesion increase in size was less than on susceptible cultivars". Did you mean cultivars of *C. junos* or other *Citrus* species?

Reply 1: we mean here other *Citrus* species.

Question 2: Regarding *Atropellis* spp., is *Pinus concorta* the only host plant of *Atropellis* in the *Pinus* genus? Or there are any others too?

Reply 2: There are several *Pinus* spp. susceptible to *Atropellis*, including *Pinus nigra*, *Pinus strobus* and *Pinus sylvestris*.

Question 3: There are many examples in the literature about genetic changes after biological invasions. What do you think about the possibility of the nematode *Radopholus similis* adapting to cool temperatures in Europe after invasion?

Reply 3: Adaptation needs more generations; if there will not be many generations. the pest will most probably not adapt to the Northern Europe conditions.

At the end of the plenary meeting, the observers 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**

The next plenary is on 23 and 24 May, 2017 in Parma.

The June PLH Plenary meeting will be a two full day meeting held in Parma on 27 June (09.00 – 18.00) and 28 June (08.00-15.00) 2017.