

PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH

**MINUTES OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING  
OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH  
HELD IN PARMA ON 17-18 DECEMBER 2008**

**(ADOPTED ON 21 JANUARY 2009)**

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## PARTICIPANTS

### *PLH Panel*

Richard BAKER, David Caffier, James William CHOISEUL, Patrick DE CLERCQ, Erzsébet DORMANNSNÉ SIMON, Olia Evtimova KARADJOVA, Gábor LÖVEI, Charles MANCEAU, Luisa MANICI, Dionyssios PERDIKIS, Angelo PORTA PUGLIA, Jan SCHANS, Gritta SCHRADER, Anita STRÖMBERG, Kari TIILIKKALA, Johan VAN LENTEREN, Irene VLOUTOGLOU

### *External Expert*

Antonio VICENT

### *JRC*

Marcello DONATELLI

### *European Commission (DG SANCO)*

Guillermo CARDON, Roman VAGNER, Michael WALSH

### *EFSA*

PLH Unit: Anna CAMPANINI, Elzbieta CEGLARSKA, Sharon CHEEK, Alexandra LIMPOK, Doreen RUSSELL, Giuseppe STANCANELLI, Sara TRAMONTINI, Sybren VOS, Malene YDESEN.

### *Apologies*

Bärbel GEROWITT, Alfons OUDE LANSINK, David MAKOWSKI and Robert STEFFEK from the PLH Panel, and Harry ARIJS from the European Commission

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## 1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Panel's Chair welcomed the Panel members and the Commission observers.

Apologies were received from Bärbel GEROWITT, Alfons OUDE LANSINK, David MAKOWSKI and Robert STEFFEK (PLH Panel), Harry ARIJS (Commission), Bruce FITT and Trond RAFOSS (external experts), Bettina BARUTH and Fabio MICALE (JRC officials).

## 2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

## 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The declarations of interests were submitted electronically. No new interests were declared or conflicts of interest reported. With regard to membership of EPPO panels, it was clarified that this interest should be declared although it is not perceived as a conflict.

#### **4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF 16TH PLENARY MEETING**

The minutes of the 16th Plenary were adopted with minor changes.

#### **5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT OPINION ON THE PEST RISK ASSESSMENT AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY SOUTH AFRICA ON CITRUS BLACK SPOT *GUIGNARDIA CITRICARPA* KIELY (EFSA-Q-2008-299)**

EFSA was requested to provide a scientific opinion on the pest risk assessment and additional supporting evidence provided by South Africa on citrus black spot (CBS) *Guignardia citricarpa* Kiely, with regard to the following issues:

- the suitability of the EU citrus fruit producing areas for establishment of CBS in terms of their climatic conditions,
- the likelihood of an introduction leading to an establishment of CBS,
- the appropriateness of the level of protection under the existing management options listed in Annex IV, Part A, Section I point 16.4 of Council Directive 2000/29/EC.

EFSA was also requested to identify whether effective options, alternative to those already present in Council Directive 2000/29/EC could be suggested to prevent the introduction of CBS into the community.

The Rapporteurs for the three sub-questions presented the draft opinions.

##### ***Sub Working Group Fruit Pathway***

The rapporteur presented the draft opinion produced by this sub WG. In conducting their evaluation, the sub WG adhered to ISPM 11 guidelines. It noted that there are limits to the effectiveness of South African procedures against CBS as infected citrus fruit continues to be intercepted in the PRA area. The WG considered transference to a suitable host as the most important consideration but identified uncertainties in relation to this aspect due to the lack of information and direct experimental evidence. The rapporteur concluded the presentation with an overview assessment that the WG considered that the organism can enter, establish and spread in the PRA area and thus infect citrus fruit.

The Panel discussed the need to use the same terminology as appears in the document submitted by South Africa, in particular in relation to the classifications used to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. A minor re-draft was advised to make more explicit the WG's conclusions for clarity.

##### ***Sub Working Group Climate***

The rapporteur presented the conclusions of the sub WG. The methodology used, literature review undertaken together with the points of agreement and disagreement with the South African document and possible enhancements to it were presented. As a consequence of the additional research undertaken together with colleagues from the JRC enabled the WG to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the suitability of the EU citrus growing areas in light of the South African CLIMEX assessment.

The Panel provided comments on the opinion, suggesting some amendments and supporting the suggestion that the novel approach used to address this part of the mandate should form the basis for a peer review journal publication. This suggestion was warmly received by the Panel.

#### ***Sub Working Group Management Options***

The sub WG presented its evaluation on management options providing an overview of current EU measures together with other non EU procedures from other organisations.

The Panel provided its input and comments on this component of the mandate and minor amendments were made to it.

At the end of the 3 presentations the Chair of the CBS WG provided an overview of the conclusions reached by the WGs.

The opinion was adopted unanimously.

#### **6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT OPINION ON THE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR EVALUATION OF PEST RISK ASSESSMENTS PREPARED BY THIRD PARTIES TO JUSTIFY PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES UNDER THE COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2000/29/EC (EFSA-Q-2008-259)**

Protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community are established by Council Directive 2000/29/EC (OJ L169, 10.7.2000). A transparent evaluation procedure is required, based on scientific principles, to ensure an objective and consistent approach for an evaluation of pest risk assessments to support decision-making by EU risk managers on organisms potentially harmful to plants or plant products. Currently there is no clear and shared consensus on the criteria by which a pest risk assessment dossier should be reviewed.

In view of the above the Panel on Plant Health was requested by EFSA to produce a guidance document on the evaluation of pest risk assessments prepared by third parties to justify phytosanitary measures under the Council Directive 2000/29/EC.

The Rapporteur presented the final draft of the guidance document. Revisions based on comments made by the Panel to the draft presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting were outlined. The amendments included a simplification to the overall process to assist the Panel with its future work. The rapporteur explained how the evaluation process is based on

internationally agreed standards, that uncertainty will be addressed as a separate element and the criteria used for ratings.

Comments on the draft were sought from the Panel. The Commission expressed their concern that evaluation of management options was not addressed. The rapporteur confirmed that the document can evolve and be amended in the future. The Panel Chair suggested that evaluation of management options may be addressed by a new self-tasking project. Further minor amendments to the document were suggested and agreed.

The draft guidance document was adopted unanimously for the purpose of public consultation that will take place in January 2009. It is envisaged that the comments received as a result of the consultation will be reported, reviewed by the Panel and eventually the guidance adopted for the Panel's use.

## **7. NEW MANDATE ON PLH SELF-TASK EFSA-Q-2008-704**

To assist the panel with its work, a self task activity has been accepted to produce a guidance document on a harmonised framework for the assessment of risks of organisms harmful to plants and plant products.

The Panel Chair presented the framework of the self-task mandate. The underpinning rationale accords with the central themes of EFSA's remit which are science-based, independence and transparency, while ensuring risk assessment is separate from risk management. The core objectives of the document are to create a transparent and science based framework regarding assessment of risks posed by organisms harmful to plants and plant products. The intention is to use outputs from sources such as PRATIQUE and respect the international standards such as those produced by the EPPO and other ISPM standards. When available the document will be subjected to consultation by stakeholders.

Milestones for the development of the document were outlined. The Panel decided to establish one working group with a possibility to divide the work in to subtasks if needed. Concurrently, and to test the guidance document, a number of calls will be issued under Article 36 to establish benchmark risk assessments for candidate organisms.

The composition of the working group was outlined and further volunteers were sought, nominated and accepted. The calendar of WG meetings was adopted and will be made available on the extranet.

## **8. NEW MANDATE ON THE PROCESSIONARY MOTH *THAUMETOPOEA PROCESSIONEA* EFSA-Q-2008-711**

EFSA is requested to provide a scientific opinion on a Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) provided by the United Kingdom on *Thaumetopoea processionea* L., the oak processionary moth (OPM), and in particular, whether this organism can be considered as a harmful

organism in the meaning of the definition mentioned in Art. 2.1(e) of the Council Directive 2000/29/EC.

A progress report was presented to the Panel in relation to the mandate. A proposal was made for collaboration with the JRC in Ispra to study both ecology and diffusion within the EU. Temperature budget maps are likely to be the most achievable outcome from this collaboration. Also suggested to the Panel was consideration of the abundant material available from the Eastern European EU Member States on the biology of the OPM.

The Panel's proposal for amending the terms of reference was discussed with the Commission representatives. An answer to the official request made in respect of this has not yet been received. In the meantime, and given the timescale for producing the opinion the working group will continue its work in accordance with the original terms of reference. However, obtaining additional information to enable extrapolation to the whole EU area as requested by the Commission may cause a delay in producing the opinion as this is the first occasion that the PLH Panel has received such a request. The Panel supported the notion that the experience of this mandate should be used as an opportunity for developing a mechanism between EFSA and the EC for streamlining the liaison in such situations.

The panel also proposed that a procedure should be developed for updating a pest risk assessment made for an individual country or limited territory at the EU level.

## **9. UPDATE FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

The Panel Chair advised the Panel that a detailed discussion took place on a document concerning scientific transparency.

## **10. MISCELLANEOUS**

A new version of the discussion document outlining the "Role of the PLH Panel in protecting plant health in the European Community" was presented to the Panel. Modifications to the draft have been made to which the Panel added further amendments. Suggestions for further improvements were made.

**Date of 18<sup>th</sup> PLH Plenary Meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009, Parma.**

**Inaugural meeting of the renewed panel will take place on 16-17 June 2009 in Parma.**