

**MINUTES OF THE 22ND PLENARY MEETING
OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH
HELD IN PARMA ON 16-17 SEPTEMBER 2009**

(ADOPTED ON 25TH NOVEMBER 2009)

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PARTICIPANTS

Members of the PLH Panel

Richard BAKER, Thierry CANDRESSE, Erzsébet DORMANNSNÉ SIMON, Gianni GILIOLI, Jean-Claude GRÉGOIRE, Michael John JEGER, Olia Evtimova KARADJOVA, David MAKOWSKI, Charles MANCEAU, Maria NAVAJAS, Angelo PORTA PUGLIA, Trond RAFOSS, Vittorio ROSSI, Jan SCHANS, Gritta SCHRADER, Gregor UREK, Johan Coert VAN LENTEREN, Irene VLOUTOGLOU, Stephan WINTER, Marina ZLOTINA

Apologies

Dorothee ANDRE, Harry ARIJS, Jean-François MALJEAN (European Commission)

European Commission (DG SANCO)

Guillermo CARDON and Michael WALSH

EFSA

Riitta MAIJALA (Director, Risk Assessment), Daniela MAURICI (Scientific Committee and Advisory Forum), Mauro NOCCA (Library), Carola SONDERMANN (Scientific Cooperation).

PLH Unit: Elzbieta CEGLARSKA, Sharon CHEEK, Virag KERTESZ, Elizabeth MOORE, Doreen RUSSELL, Giuseppe STANCANELLI, Sara TRAMONTINI, Sybren VOS.

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Panel Chair welcomed the Panel members and the Commission observers. Apologies were received from Dorothee ANDRE, Harry ARIJS, Jean-François MALJEAN (European Commission) and Gábor LÖVEI (PLH Panel).

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interest, EFSA screened the Annual Declaration of Interest (ADoI) and Specific Declaration of Interest (SdoI) filled in by the experts invited to the meeting. No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in the meeting have been identified during the screening process. At the beginning of the meeting, one expert declared an interest in relation to the mandate on *Tilletia indica* Mitra. For further details on the outcome of the declaration of interests please refer to Annex 1.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 21ST PLENARY MEETING

The minutes were adopted without changes.

5. UPDATE ON NEW MANDATES

5.1 *Dryocosmus kuriphilus* Yasumatsu

EFSA is requested to provide a scientific opinion on the risk to plant health of *Dryocosmus kuriphilus* Yasumatsu, the Oriental chestnut gall wasp, for the EU territory. The mandate requests that EFSA identifies risk management options and evaluates their efficiency in reducing the risk to plant health posed by this organism. The mandate is registered in the EFSA Register of Questions as EFSA-Q-2009-00677.

The Chair of the Working Group (WG) provided an introduction to the organism and the terms of reference for the mandate. Originating in China, the organism has been introduced into parts of Europe and is reported as one of the most damaging insect pests of chestnut (*Castanea* spp.). Emergency measures have been introduced to prevent the introduction into and spread within the community of the organism. The work plan of the WG was presented to the Panel, and the need to seek additional data highlighted.

5.2 *Gibberella circinata* Nirenberg & O'Donell

EFSA is requested to provide a pest risk assessment of *Gibberella circinata* Nirenberg & O'Donell, for the EU territory. The mandate requests that EFSA identifies risk management options and evaluates their efficiency in reducing the risk to plant health posed by this organism. The mandate is registered in the EFSA Register of Questions as EFSA-Q-2009-00678.

The rapporteur described the effects of the fungus which is the agent of Pine Pitch Canker. It has a high level of infection and is potentially a serious pathogen with respect to deforestation, exacerbated by the possibility of symptomless appearance of pines infected with it. Though not listed as a harmful organism in Council Directive 2000/29/EC, emergency measures have been introduced to prevent the introduction and spread of the organism within the community. Collaboration with the JRC is needed on the mapping of forestry species and modelling of climate change.

5.3 *Tilletia indica* Mitra

EFSA is requested to provide a scientific opinion on the Quantitative Pathway Analysis on U.S. wheat – April 2008 for the EU territory. The mandate is registered in the EFSA Register of Questions as EFSA-Q-2009-00760.

The organism, listed in Annex 1 of Directive 2000/29/EC, is a fungus affecting wheat, and is not known to be present in the EU. The U.S. has provided a quantitative pathway analysis to support their request for derogation from the current plant health provisions to allow the importation of wheat for grain. The Panel discussed the workplan to address the mandate and nominations for the working group.

Following the discussion of the new mandates, the Panel were asked to consider how the working groups should be organised in order to address commission requests in a most efficient way. The Chair proposed that given the skill sets present in the Panel, the creation of mandate specific working groups is now more relevant than taxon working groups. The Panel was favourable to the suggestion,

but asked for consideration of a realistic number of meetings for experts to attend and the role of modelling experts in the Panel to be addressed. As a consequence of the discussion on modelling a fuller exploration ensued of what is needed from the JRC to assist EFSA with aspects such crop yield forecasts, crop distribution maps and climate suitability. This data is invaluable for the Panel's outputs but the type of collaboration with the JRC needs to be clarified. A representative of the JRC will be invited to a future plenary meeting to discuss the data requirements and access to them by the Panel.

5.4 Self-task on environmental risk assessment in plant health

Proposals for a new self-task were presented to the Panel to examine levels of impact, quantitative analysis, effects on biodiversity and development of the Panel approach to environmental impact assessment based on affects on ecosystem services. The Panel postponed the discussion in the absence of the competent Panel experts.

The Panel also considered if further guidance is needed in considering the effect of management options on the level of risk. The Panel is regularly requested to address this issue within their opinions so views on developing such guidance were sought.

6. PRESENTATION BY EFSA DIRECTOR OF RISK ASSESSMENT ON DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

The EFSA Director or Risk Assessment provided a presentation to the Panel on the importance of Declarations of Interest. The new decision with regard to Specific declarations of interest was also explained to the Panel.

The director also provided a report on the experts' satisfaction survey undertaken in 2008 and an overview of the external review system, a quality system involving the evaluation by external experts of selected Panel opinions, which commences shortly.

The Panel sought clarifications on matters arising from the presentation.

7. GOOD RISK ASSESSMENT PRACTICE AT EFSA IN LIGHT OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE'S DOCUMENTS

EFSA's document on Transparency in Risk Assessment was presented to the Panel. Produced by the Scientific Committee, the opinion gives the measures needed to provide transparency. The opinion examines the differing components that constitute transparency in risk assessment: data, including referencing, quality and relevance; proper explanation of assumptions; all qualitative and quantitative reasoning adequately explained; variability and uncertainty issues properly described and finally that the general conclusions should be transparent, understandable and capable of being reproduced.

The Panel discussed the presentation. The general principles of the document have been addressed in the "Guidance document on Evaluation of Pest Risk Assessments prepared by third parties to justify phytosanitary measures under the Council Directive 2000/29/EC". Additionally the audience for

Plant Health opinions are largely the international plant health sector so the experts' view was that the terminology used in opinions should be the internationally accepted terminology within this arena.

8. RAISING EFSA'S SCIENTIFIC VISIBILITY: THE NEW EFSA JOURNAL

The Panel were introduced to the new EFSA Journal. The aims of the Journal are to improve visibility, to provide an outlet for authors, allow citations in literature searches in bibliographic databases and to comply with best practice in academic publishing. The Journal will be published on the EFSA website and the new opinion templates which include an abstract and digital object identifier will enable enhanced online access. The Panel questioned the presenter about authorship and ensuring improved visibility in bibliographic databases.

9. LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR PANEL EXPERTS

A representative from EFSA library service presented to the Panel the assistance it offers to support the EFSA objective of providing excellence in science. The Library allows access from the desktop to numerous databases as well as scientific journals, books and newsletters. It is open to requests for new subscriptions to journals which assist the Panel in ensuring that they have the most current information that is available when addressing mandates. The Panel asked questions concerning requests for additional journal and the use of these sources in accordance with copyright principles.

10. SPECIAL ADVISORY FORUM ON PLANT HEALTH – 2ND MEETING 20-21 OCTOBER 2009

The EFSA Secretariat highlighted this forthcoming event, explaining that it is a forum for EFSA consultation with member states' designated representatives on Plant Health. The Panel's involvement was outlined and the draft agenda presented. The Panel was invited to provide comments on the agenda.

11. MISCELLANEOUS

PLAN OF PLENARY MEETINGS FOR THE PANEL MANDATE 2009-2012

A timetable for future plenary meetings was drawn up with the Panel covering the time period until the current Panel's mandate expires. The dates and venues for the next four meetings were agreed as follows:

25-26 November 2009 – Ljubljana

20-21 January 2010 – Parma

17-18 March 2010 – Bulgaria (venue to be confirmed)

11-12 May 2010 – London

PANEL DISCUSSION OF COMMISSION FEEDBACK CONCERNING OPINIONS

The Commission feedback was positive and it was noted that the Panel conclusions had been followed in most cases. Panel members expressed concern about the lack of follow up on the 30 opinions concerning the citrus and banana pests in the French overseas departments as they represented the majority of the Panel work and outputs in its first term. The Commission representative explained why decisions on some Panel outputs are still pending. New developments since the first term include mechanisms for validity checks of the submitted dossiers to improve the terms of reference of commission mandates. Other Panel members endorsed this view that the experience gained in producing the earlier opinions provided the Panel with the platform to develop improved working methods, procedures and practice.

FEEDBACK FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The Panel Chair gave brief report from the recent meeting of the scientific committee.

OTHER

As the public consultation on the Guidance Document for a harmonised framework for the assessment of risks of organisms harmful to plants and plant products will close on 30 September 2009, the rapporteur of the working group agreed to provide a presentation on the terminology used in it for the benefit of the newer Panel members at the next plenary meeting.

The Secretariat advised the Panel that a presentation of the scientific opinion published on the Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea* L) will be presented to the Standing Committee on Plant Health on 22 September by the Chair of the working group.

Date of Next Meeting: 25-26 November 2009, Ljubljana (SI)

Annex 1

INTERESTS AND ACTIONS RESULTING FROM DECLARATIONS DONE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING

With regard to this meeting Dr Marina Zlotina declared the following interest: As part of her activities with her previous employer USDA APHIS she had been part of the team involved with the preparation of the document on *Tilletia Indica* Mitra. The EFSA Panel on Plant Health is addressing a mandate (EFSA-Q-2009-00760) concerning this document produced by USDA APHIS on the organism. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interest and Implementing documents thereof, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a conflict of interest (level B). Pursuant to EFSA's Procedure on Identifying and Handling Declarations of Interest, the said expert as per point C.III.bⁱ is excluded from participating in drafting the opinion and discussing and adopting the final Panel output.

ⁱ Implementing act to the policy on declaration of interests procedure for identifying and handling potential conflicts of interest.
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs/BlobServer/resource_EFSA/about/who/does/doiconflict.pdf?ssbinary=true