



Scientific Panel on Plant Health Minutes of the 91st Plenary meeting

WEB conference, 27 & 28 January 2021 (Agreed on 18 February 2021)

Participants

■ Panel Members

Claude Bragard, Katharina Dehnen-Schmutz, Francesco Di Serio, Paolo Gonthier, Marie-Agnès Jacques, Josep Jaques Miret, Annemarie Justesen, Alan MacLeod, Sven Christer Magnusson, Panagiotis Milonas, Juan A. Navas-Cortés, Stephen Parnell, Philippe Reignault, Roel Potting, Hans-Hermann Thulke, Wopke van der Werf, Antonio Vicent, Jonathan Yuen and Lucia Zappalà.

■ Hearing Experts

Camille Picard, Anne-Sophie Roy, Rob Tanner and Muriel Suffert (EPPO); Daniel Flo (VKM); Gareth Richards (CABI); Tim Hirsch (GBIF); Lisa A. Castlebury (USDA ARS, Mycology & Nematology Genetic Diversity & Biology Laboratory);

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives

Alexandra Tuijtelaars (EC DG SANTE Unit D1); Panagiota Mylona, Maria Kammenou, Rosalinda Scalia, Wolfgang Reinert, Maria Mirazchiyska and Maria Belen Marquez Garcia (EC DG SANTE Unit G1); Martin Minjajev (EC DG SANTE Unit F3)

■ EFSA

ALPHA Unit: Caterina Campese, Ewelina Czwieczek, Eduardo De La Peña, Alice Delbianco, Ciro Gardi, Ignazio Graziosi, Svetla Kozelska, Nikolaus Križ, Andrea Maiorano, Giulia Mattion, Alzbeta Mikulova, Marco Pautasso, Oresteia Sfyra; Giuseppe Stancanelli, Franz Streissl, Emanuela Tacci, Sara Tramontini and Sybren Vos.

AMU Unit: Olaf Mosbach Schulz

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes

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

Nothing to declare.

4. Report on written procedures

4.1 90th PLH Plenary meeting minutes

The PLH plenary meeting minutes were agreed by written procedure on 17 December 2020 and published on the same date on the EFSA website

4.2 Report on written adoption of 5 scientific opinions on commodity risk assessment of *Momordica* fruit for *Thrips palmi*

- 4.2.1 Report on written adoption of the Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Momordica charantia* fruits from Honduras (Question number: EFSA-Q-2020-00044)

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as "High risk plants, plant products and other objects". *Momordica* fruits originating from countries where *Thrips palmi* is known to occur qualify as high risk plants. This Scientific Opinion covers the introduction risk for *T. palmi* posed by fruits of *Momordica charantia* L. imported from Honduras, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the National Service of Agrifood Health and Safety (SENASA) of Honduras. The risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Honduras were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. An expert judgement is given on the likelihood of pest freedom taking into consideration the potential pest pressure in the field, the risk mitigation measures acting on the pest in the field and in the packinghouse, including uncertainties associated with the assessment. For *T. palmi* on *M. charantia* fruits from Honduras, an expert judgment is given on the likelihood of pest freedom following the evaluation of the risk mitigation measures acting on *T. palmi*, including any uncertainties. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty that between 9,406 and 10,000 *M. charantia* fruits per 10,000 will be free from *T. palmi*.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel by written procedure on 31/12/2020

4.2.2 Report on written adoption of the Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Momordica charantia* fruits from Mexico (Question number: EFSA-Q-2019-00792)

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as "High risk plants, plant products and other objects". *Momordica* fruits originating from countries where *Thrips palmi* is known to occur qualify as high risk plants. This Scientific Opinion covers the introduction risk for *T. palmi* posed by fruits of *Momordica charantia* L. imported from Mexico, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the National Service of Health, Safety and Agrifood Quality (Senasica) of Mexico. The risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Mexico were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. An expert judgement is given on the likelihood of pest freedom taking into consideration the potential pest pressure in the field, the risk mitigation measures acting on the pest in the field and in the packinghouse, including uncertainties associated with the assessment. For *T. palmi* on *M. charantia* fruits from Mexico, an expert judgment is given on the likelihood of pest freedom following the evaluation of the risk mitigation measures acting on *T. palmi*, including any uncertainties. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty that between 9,492 and 10,000 *M. charantia* fruits per 10,000 will be free from *T. palmi*.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel by written procedure on 31/12/2020.

4.2.3 Report on written adoption of the Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Momordica charantia* fruits from Suriname (Question number: EFSA-Q-2019-00816)

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as "High risk plants, plant products and other objects". *M. charantia* fruits originating from countries where *Thrips palmi* is known to occur qualify as high risk plants. This Scientific Opinion covers the introduction risk for *T. palmi* posed by fruits of *Momordica charantia* L. imported from Suriname, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the National Plant Protection Organization of Suriname. The risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Suriname were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. An expert judgement is given on the likelihood of pest freedom taking into consideration the potential pest pressure in the field, the risk mitigation measures acting on the pest in the field and in the packinghouse, including uncertainties associated with the assessment. For *T. palmi* on *M. charantia* fruits from Suriname, an expert judgment is given on the likelihood of pest

freedom following the evaluation of the risk mitigation measures acting on *T. palmi*, including any uncertainties. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty that between 8,652 and 10,000 *M. charantia* fruits per 10,000 will be free from *T. palmi*.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel by written procedure on 31/12/2020.

4.2.4 Report on written adoption of the Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Momordica charantia* fruits from Sri Lanka (Question number: EFSA-Q-2019-00806)

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as "High risk plants, plant products and other objects". *Momordica* fruits originating from countries where *Thrips palmi* is known to occur qualify as high risk plants. This Scientific Opinion covers the introduction risk for *T. palmi* posed by fruits of *Momordica charantia* L. imported from Sri Lanka, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the National Plant Quarantine Service of Sri Lanka. The risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Sri Lanka were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. An expert judgement is given on the likelihood of pest freedom taking into consideration the potential pest pressure in the field, the risk mitigation measures acting on the pest in the field and in the packinghouse, including uncertainties associated with the assessment. For *T. palmi* on *M. charantia* fruits from Sri Lanka, an expert judgment is given on the likelihood of pest freedom following the evaluation of the risk mitigation measures acting on *T. palmi*, including any uncertainties. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty that between 9,831 and 10,000 *M. charantia* fruits per 10,000 will be free from *T. palmi*.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel by written procedure on 31/12/2020.

4.2.5 Report on written adoption of the Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Momordica charantia* fruits from Thailand (Question number: EFSA-Q-2019-00791)

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as "High risk plants, plant products and other objects". *Momordica* fruits originating from countries where *Thrips palmi* is known to occur qualify as high risk plants. This Scientific Opinion covers the introduction risk for *T. palmi* posed by fruits of *Momordica charantia* L. imported from Thailand, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the Department of Agriculture of Thailand. The risk mitigation measures

proposed in the technical dossier from Thailand were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. An expert judgement is given on the likelihood of pest freedom taking into consideration the potential pest pressure in the field, the risk mitigation measures acting on the pest in the field and in the packinghouse, including uncertainties associated with the assessment. For *T. palmi* on *M. charantia* fruits from Thailand, an expert judgment is given on the likelihood of pest freedom following the evaluation of the risk mitigation measures acting on *T. palmi*, including any uncertainties. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty that between 9,496 and 10,000 *M. charantia* fruits per 10,000 will be free from *T. palmi*.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel by written procedure on 31/12/2020.

5 Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

5.1 Art. 29 Scientific opinion whether the import of bananas constitutes a potential pathway for the importation of non-EU Tephritidae into the EU

Following a request from the European Commission (EC), the EFSA Panel on Plant Health examined evidence as to whether the import of fruits of *Musa* (bananas and plantains) could provide a pathway into the EU for *Bactrocera dorsalis* (Hendel) (Diptera: Tephritidae) or other non-EU Tephritidae for which *Musa* is a host. Relevant scientific and technical information, including unpublished information provided to the EFSA Panel on Plant Health by the EC from research conducted in Cabo Verde, were taken into account. The majority of EU imports of *Musa* fruit comes from Ecuador, Colombia and Costa Rica where *B. dorsalis* does not occur. Commercial *Musa* fruits are harvested at "green stage one" before they begin to ripen naturally. Postharvest processes are designed to ensure that only high quality, unripe fruit are exported. Green stage one fruit are transported to the EU in controlled conditions and stimulated to ripen when exposed to exogenous ethylene in ripening rooms in the EU. There is no evidence that any Tephritidae can naturally infest commercial varieties of *Musa* fruit at green stage one or earlier. When experimentally infested with eggs of Tephritidae, larvae fail to develop in green stage one fruit. Physical and chemical changes that occur during fruit ripening enable *B. dorsalis* and 11 other species of Tephritidae to oviposit and develop in *Musa* at later stages of fruit development. Reports of *B. dorsalis* or other Tephritidae infesting bunches of *Musa* fruit are a consequence of the fruit being left to develop beyond green stage one in the field. There is no evidence that commercially grown fruits of *Musa*, for export to the EU, provide a pathway for the entry of non-EU Tephritidae. Passengers bringing *Musa* fruit from countries where Tephritidae can infest ripened *Musa* fruit do however provide a potential pathway for the entry of non-EU Tephritidae into the EU territory.

This opinion was adopted on 28/01/2021.

5.2 Art. 29 Scientific opinion on the effectiveness of the citrus systems approach for *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* submitted by Israel

The European Commission requested EFSA Panel on Plant Health to evaluate a dossier from Israel in which the application of the systems approach to mitigate the risk of entry of *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* to the EU when trading citrus fruits is described. After collecting additional evidence from the Plant Protection and Inspection Services (PPIS) of Israel, and reviewing the published literature, the Panel performed an assessment on the likelihood of pest freedom for *T. leucotreta* on citrus fruits at the point of entry in the EU considering the Israeli systems approach. An expert judgement is given on the likelihood of pest freedom following the evaluation of the risk mitigation measures on *T. leucotreta*, including any uncertainties. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty that between 9,863 and 10,000 citrus fruits per 10,000 will be free from this pest. The Panel also evaluated each risk mitigation measure in the systems approach and identified any weaknesses associated with them. Specific actions are identified that could increase the efficacy of the systems approach.

This opinion was adopted on 28/01/2021.

5.3 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Ullucus tuberosus* from Peru

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as 'High risk plants, plant products and other objects. This Scientific Opinion covers plant health risks posed by tubers of *Ullucus tuberosus* imported from Peru, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by Peru. The relevance of an EU quarantine pest for this opinion was based on evidence that: (i) the pest is present in Peru; (ii) *U. tuberosus* is a host of the pest, and (iii) the pest can be associated with the commodity. The relevance of any other pest, not regulated in the EU, was based on evidence that: (i) the pest is present in Peru (ii) the pest is absent in the EU; (iii) *U. tuberosus* is a host of the pest; (iv) the pest can be associated with the commodity and (v) the pest may have an impact and can pose a potential risk for the EU territory. There are five pests i.e., one insect (*Amathynetoides nitidiventris*), two nematodes (*Atalodera andina* and *Nacobbus aberrans*) and two viruses (the Andean potato latent virus (APLV) and the potato virus T (PVT) that fulfilled all relevant criteria were selected for further evaluation. For the five pests, the risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Peru were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. For each of the five pests, an expert judgement is given on the likelihood of pest freedom taking into consideration the risk mitigation measures acting on the pest, including uncertainties associated with the assessment. The degree of pest freedom varies among the pests evaluated, with PVT being the pest most

frequently expected on the imported commodities. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty, that between 9,157 and 10,000 tubers out of 10,000 would be free of PVT. This opinion was adopted on 28/01/2021.

6 Feedback from Scientific Panel including their Working Groups, Scientific Committee, EFSA and European Commission

6.1 Discussion session on data sources for pest distribution

6.1.1 Europhyt and Traces EU databases

Mr Martin Minjajev (DG Sante) gave an overview of the Europhyt activities. He showed the Europhyt Outbreaks platform and its new functionalities. The switch to TRACES database regarding interceptions was explained.

6.1.2 EPPO evidence on pest distribution: EPPO Global Database, EPPO reporting service, etc. (Anne-Sophie Roy, EPPO)

Anne-Sophie Roy (EPPO) explained how pest distribution is documented in the EPPO GD. There are two main sources for the data archived: 1) EPPO member countries and Europhyt notifications; 2) data from scientific and grey literature searches (including collaboration with CABI). In EPPO GD also data of "absence" are archived but not shown on the map. The classification of pest status is done according to ISPM 8. Anne-Sophie Roy replying to a question from Alan and from Giuseppe says that cases of contradictions on the presence of a pest between country declarations and interceptions/literature evidences are not frequent, EFSA WGs provide information to EPPO that help keep pest distribution maps up to date.

6.1.3 CABI databases for pest distribution (Gareth Richards, CABI)

Gareth Richards (CABI) explained the data infrastructure and the data sources that are feeding the CABI Compendia. The main sources of data are: 1) CABI researches and projects (including field activities); 2) Literature searches (including collaboration with EPPO); 3) CAB abstracts; 4) data from partners institutions. Data on distribution are updated weekly.

6.1.4 GBIF: organisms occurrences and basis of records databases for pest distribution (Tim Hirsch, GBIF)

Tim Hirsch (GBIF) briefly described the story of the Intergovernmental network and research infrastructure of GBIF, that actually count 64 associated countries. The data are stored using common standard (DWC).

The main sources of data are: 1) digitised specimens from museums, herbariums, etc; 2) human observations (also through other networks e.g Inaturalist); 3) Scientific literature; 4) Remote sensing data (especially on animal tracking); 5) Environmental DNA (bulk soil, water DNA – these are of increasing importance).

6.1.5 USDA Fungal database (Lisa A. Castlebury, USDA ARS Mycology & Nematology Genetic Diversity & Biology Laboratory)

Lisa A. Castlebury (USDA Fungal database) briefly described the story of USDA Fungal database, that originated from the Smithsonian fungus collection in 1869 and illustrated in deep the data infrastructure. The database contains 817,433 records and almost half of them are georeferenced; 47,065 records hold the combination of data for fungus-host-location interaction.

6.2 Template HRP

The updated template for the scientific opinions on commodity risk assessment of High Risk Plants was presented, showing the comments received from the Panel and the replies/changes proposed.

Reacting to some proposals from the Panels members the following points were agreed:

- The aim of the template is to support the activity of the HRP WGs and harmonise the outputs produced, however a margin of flexibility should be foreseen.
- A flow chart explaining the criteria adopted for the selection of the pests for further evaluation should be included in the template.
- The endorsement of the proposed changes, including the ones discussed in the Plenary, has been postponed to the March Plenary.

6.3 Short Climate suitability for pest categorisation

A draft document on climate suitability assessment for pest categorisation' was presented to the Panel. This is an internal short document aimed at supporting WGs in climate suitability assessments in the context of pest categorisations. The deadline for Panel comments/review was set to 10 February 2021. The final version will be presented at the next Panel Plenary.

6.4 Discussion on spread and spread models in plant health

The participants were welcomed to the Panel discussion on spread and spread models in plant health. This is the fifth Panel discussion session on the new quantitative methodology for pest risk assessment, after basics on distributions (March 2020), entry and scenario comparison (June 2020), establishment (theory – July 2020, and practice – September 2020). The aim

of the session is not learning how to use and run spread models, but how to choose and interpret them. Normally spread models are expected to be used and run during EFSA WGs by specialised staff (e.g. EFSA PLH team and AMU unit scientific officers, WG modelling experts or Tasking Grants or Procurement experts), whereas most panel members would review the outcomes of the models.

6.4.1 Introduction & schedule

The schedule of the session was presented: after an introduction on methodological approaches and spread models by Hans-Hermann Thulke, the participants will answer questions specific to four topics (pest categorisation, quantitative PRA, priority pest and pest surveillance) and three subjects (methodological approaches; questions, units and scenarios; and data). There will be then feedback of the 12 breakout groups to the plenary and a general discussion on how to make better use of spread models in future PLH opinions.

6.4.2 Presentation on methodological approaches & spread models

A presentation was given by Hans-Hermann Thulke on methodological approaches for pest spread modelling.

6.4.3 Instructions for the breakout sessions

The breakout session was introduced. The participants were reminded of the group composition. The questions to be answered in the different groups were:

- a. Given the different spread modelling approaches that are available and have been used in previous opinions on PRA/pest categorization/ priority pests/surveillance, which methodological approaches are most suited for the assessment? Which criteria do you use to assess suitability of a methodological approach?
- b. What are the pertinent questions on spread that need to be answered and what are the quantities that need to be elicited when assessing spread in the context of PRA/pest categorization/ priority pests/surveillance? What are the units in which these quantities are expressed? (And, if time permits) Are scenarios needed in the assessment of spread, and if so, why are scenarios needed and which scenarios are required?
- c. Is there scope to use data to assess spread for opinions on PRA/pest categorization/priority pests/surveillance, or will it always be necessary to use expert knowledge? Is there a need for a global/regional database on spread data to support the assessment of spread? What kind of data should such a database contain? Which criteria do you use to assess which data need to be gathered?

6.4.4 Breakout sessions

Breakout groups discussed the questions detailed above.

6.4.5 Feedback to plenary

The main points discussed during the breakout session were reported to the plenary.

6.4.6 General discussion on how to make better use of spread models in future PLH opinions

A general discussion on how to make better use of spread models in future PLH opinions was held. New Mandates

6.5 New mandate on Xylella host plants database update

The new mandate on the Xylella spp. host plant database and the workplan were presented to the Panel. The new mandate is an extension of the previous mandate and will cover the period 2021-2026. Xylella host plants database workplan

The workplan includes the publication of two updates per year (to be approved by May and by November of each year). A tasking grant to support this activity has been established with the Institute for Sustainable Plant Protection of the National Research Council of Italy (IPSP-CNR) for the period 2021-2022.

6.6 New mandate on horizon scanning and perspectives on future mandates on pest categorisation and pest risk assessment for new plant health threats

The new mandate on the horizon scanning and perspectives on future mandates on pest categorisation and pest risk assessment for new plant health threats was presented to the Panel. The new mandate is an extension of the previous mandate and will cover the period 2021-2026.

6.7 Short Update on scientific conferences, workshops and webinars

6.7.1 3rd European Conference on Xylella fastidiosa and XF-ACTORS final meeting (online 26-30 April 2021)

The organization of the 3rd European Conference on Xylella fastidiosa and XF-ACTORS final meeting were presented to the Panel. The event will be held online from 26 to 30 April 2021 (26, 27 and 28 (pm) the XF-ACTORS final meeting; 29 and 30 the 3rd European Conference on Xylella fastidiosa). The 3rd European conference is organised by EFSA and XF-ACTORS with the

contribution of BIOVEXO, CURE-XF, ERC MultiX, EUPHRESCO, EUROXANTH, and Life Resilience. An e-poster session will be held through the entire length of the conference. The Young researcher's initiative was launched to support young researchers. Registration and abstract submission are open, with deadline 7 March 2021. Suggestions on the organization of the e-posters session were provided by the Panel.

6.8 Process improvement for pest categorisation and quantitative pest risk assessment

An introduction was provided on an EFSA initiative for process improvement for pest categorisation and quantitative pest risk assessment in preparation of future mandates.

6.9 Short update on EFSA Grants and Procurement

A short update on the EFSA grants and procurements was given to the Panel.

7 Any other business

Dates for additional WEB PLH plenary small sessions for 2021-2022 were agreed. Outlook invitations are going to be sent out to boot the calendars.