

Scientific Panel on Plant Health

Minutes of the 95th Plenary meeting

Held on 29-30 September 2021, WEB
(Agreed on 15 October 2021)

Participants

■ **Panel Members**

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

■ **Hearing Experts**

Françoise Petter and Camille Picard (EPPO); Quirico Micheli, Irene Vloutoglou

■ **European Commission and/or Member States representatives**

Maria Kammenou, Maria Belen Marquez Garcia, Maria Mirazchiyska, Panagiota Mylona, Wolfgang Reinert and Leonard Shumbe (EC SANTE).

■ **EFSA**

Alpha Unit: Caterina Campese, Martina Capelli, Ewelina Czwieniczek, Alice Delbianco, Ciro Gardi, Ignazio Graziosi, Virag Kertesz, Svetla Kozelska, Nik Kriz, Andrea Maiorano, Luka Mustapim, Patricia Nascimento, Marco Pautasso, Evgenia Sarakatsani, Giuseppe Stancanelli, Franz Streissl, Emanuela Tacci, Sara Tramontini and Sybren Vos.

AMU Unit: Olaf Mosbach Schulz

GMO Unit: Franz Streissl

RASA directorate: Juliane Kleiner

■ **Art. 36 Tasking Grant**

Alzbeta Mikulova (University of Padova)

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

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management, EFSA screened the

Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Panel members invited to the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process. Certain interests were declared orally by the members before the beginning of the meeting. For further details on the outcome of the screening of the Oral Declaration(s) of Interest made at the beginning of the meeting, please refer to the Annex.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 93rd Plenary

The minutes of the 94th Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption / endorsement

5.1 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Colletotrichum plurivorum*

The EFSA Plant Health Panel performed a pest categorisation of *Colletotrichum plurivorum* Damm, Alizadeh & Toy. Sato, a well-defined fungus of the *C. orchidearum* species complex which has been reported from Africa, Asia and America to cause anthracnose and pre- and post-harvest fruit rots on more than 30 plant genera. The pathogen has not been reported from the EU territory and is not included in EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. Because of the very wide host range, this pest categorisation focused on *Abelmoschus esculentus*, *Capsicum* spp., *Carica papaya*, *Glycine max*, *Manihot esculenta*, *Phaseolus lunatus*, *Pyrus bretschneideri* and *Vitis* spp. for which there was robust evidence that *C. plurivorum* was formally identified by morphology and multilocus gene sequencing analysis. Host plants for planting and fresh fruits are the main pathways for the entry of the pathogen into the EU. The host availability and climate suitability factors occurring in some parts of the EU are favourable for the establishment of the pathogen. Economic impact on the production of the main hosts is expected if establishment occurs. Phytosanitary measures are available to prevent the introduction of the pathogen into the EU. *Colletotrichum plurivorum* satisfies the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for this species to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest. However, there is a high uncertainty on the status of *C. plurivorum* in the EU territory because of the lack of specific surveys following the re-evaluation of the taxonomy of the genus *Colletotrichum*.

The scientific opinion was adopted by the Panel on 30/09/21.

5.2 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation on *Fusarium brachygibbosum*

The EFSA Plant Health Panel performed a pest categorisation of *Fusarium brachygibbosum* Padwick. *F. brachygibbosum* is a well-characterized fungal plant pathogen with opportunistic behaviour, mostly isolated along with other fungal pathogens in symptomatic hosts. It has been reported from Africa, America, Asia and Oceania where it has been associated with a wide range of symptoms on approximately 25 cultivated and non-cultivated plant species. The pathogen has been reported in Italy in soil/marine sediments and in quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*) and durum wheat (*Triticum turgidum* subsp. *durum*) seeds. The pathogen is not included in the EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. This pest categorisation focused on a selected range of host plant species on which *F. brachygibbosum* fulfilled Koch's postulates and was formally identified by multilocus gene sequencing analysis. Host plants for planting, seed of host plants, and soil and other substrates originating in infested third countries are main pathways for the entry of the pathogen into the EU. There are no reports of interceptions of *F. brachygibbosum* in the EU. Host availability and climate suitability factors occurring in the EU are favorable for the establishment of the pathogen in MSs. Phytosanitary measures are available to prevent the introduction of the pathogen into the EU. Additional measures are available to mitigate the risk of entry and spread of the pathogen in the EU. Despite the low aggressiveness observed in some reported hosts, it has been shown that, in the areas of its present distribution, the pathogen has a direct impact on certain hosts (e.g. almond, onion, soybean, tobacco) that are also relevant for the EU. The Panel concludes that *F. brachygibbosum* satisfies all the criteria to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest. However, high uncertainty remains regarding the distribution of the pathogen in the EU and some uncertainty exists about its potential impact in the EU. Specific surveys and re-evaluation of *Fusarium* isolates in culture collections could reduce these uncertainties.

The scientific opinion was adopted by the Panel on 30/09/21.

5.3 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation on *Retithrips syriacus*

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of the black vine thrips, *Retithrips syriacus* (Thysanoptera: Thripidae), for the EU territory. This species is not included in EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. This polyphagous species feeds, among others, on apple, avocado, banana, cotton, grapevine, persimmon, pear, walnut and other plants cultivated in the EU. *R. syriacus* occurs in several African and Asian countries and in Florida (USA), the Caribbean and Brazil, in a range of climates some of which also occur in the EU. It can complete up to seven generations per year. It overwinters at the adult stage in the soil. Adult females lay up to 60 eggs in 5 to 10 days in the leaf tissue or less frequently on the leaf surface. Larvae and adults usually feed on the lower side of

leaves. Larvae then drop down, enter the soil, and pupate. Potential entry pathways for *R. syriacus*, such as plants for planting, cut flowers and fruits, exist. Soil can be considered as a closed pathway. The pest is not known to be present in the EU territory and there are no reports of interceptions. Should *R. syriacus* arrive in the EU, the availability of hosts and occurrence of potentially suitable climates would be conducive for the establishment. Should this species establish in the EU, yield and quality losses in several fruit trees production is anticipated. *R. syriacus* satisfies the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for this species to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest.

The scientific opinion was adopted by the PLH Panel on 30/09/21.

5.4 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation on *Leucinodes orbonalis*

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of the eggplant fruit and shoot borer, *Leucinodes orbonalis* Guenée, (Lepidoptera: Crambidae), for the territory of the EU. *L. orbonalis* is a tropical and sub-tropical species native to Asia and Australia with India considered its centre of origin. Following taxonomic revision, literature reporting *L. orbonalis* from sub-Saharan Africa should be regarded as referring to members of a complex of other species of *Leucinodes* native to Africa and not as referring to *L. orbonalis*. *L. orbonalis* is not present in the EU and is not a regulated EU pest. *L. orbonalis* is a major pest of *Solanum melongena* (eggplant) in Asia where larvae feed within leaves, stems, shoots and fruits. Larvae can also feed on a range of other plants, mostly within Solanaceae although *L. orbonalis* is generally not reported as a pest of crops other than *S. melongena*. However, in recent years *L. orbonalis* has emerged as a pest of *Solanum tuberosum* in south-west India. In tropical areas there can be 10 generations per year if conditions are suitable. *L. orbonalis* has been intercepted 350 times in the EU from a range of Asian countries on a range of produce, mostly larvae in fruits of *S. melongena*. Biotic factors (host availability) and abiotic factors (climate suitability) suggest that some small areas of the EU could be suitable for establishment. Adult *L. orbonalis* can fly and the species could spread within the EU. The introduction of *L. orbonalis* into the EU would have an economic impact, most likely on *S. melongena* production, the magnitude of which is uncertain. Measures are available to prevent the entry of *L. orbonalis* into the EU. *L. orbonalis* satisfies the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for this species to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest.

The scientific opinion was adopted by the PLH Panel on 30/09/21.

5.5 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation on *Leucinodes pseudorbonalis*

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of the snout moth *Leucinodes pseudorbonalis* Mally, Korycinska, Agassiz, Hall, Hodgetts & Nuss (Lepidoptera: Crambidae), for the territory of the EU. This

species is not included in the EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. This oligophagous species, which feeds on fruit and leaves of *Solanum aethiopicum* (Ethiopian eggplant) and *S. melongena* (eggplant), is known to occur in sub-Saharan Africa (Angola, Liberia, Senegal, Uganda). Adults oviposit on leaves and newly hatched caterpillars can bore into shoots, causing wilting and dieback, before moving into the fruit, which they tunnel. Damage may be visible only if the fruit is cut open. A single aubergine can be infested by up to 20 larvae. Mature larvae abandon the fruit to pupate in a cocoon in the soil. Adult moths fly for short distances only in darkness. Potential entry pathways for *L. pseudorbonalis*, such as *Solanum* spp. plants for planting and soil/growing media are regulated and can be considered as closed. The fruit and leaves pathways remain open from countries where *L. pseudorbonalis* is known to occur. Indeed, this species was intercepted in the EU with *S. aethiopicum* eight times from January to June 2021. Should *L. pseudorbonalis* enter the EU, host availability (*S. melongena*) and climatic conditions in some limited areas of southern EU Member States could allow this species to successfully establish and spread within these areas. Economic impact on aubergine production is anticipated if establishment occurs. *L. pseudorbonalis* satisfies the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for this species to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest. Because this is a recently described species, there are knowledge gaps related to the biology of this moth and its distribution. However, these gaps do not affect the conclusions of this categorisation.

The scientific opinion was adopted by the PLH Panel on 30/09/21.

5.6 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Malus domestica* L., EFSA-Q-2020-00436, Ukraine

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 1–3-year-old dormant grafted plants and rootstocks of *Malus domestica* imported from Ukraine, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by Ukraine. All pests associated with the commodity were evaluated against specific criteria for their relevance for this opinion. Two quarantine pests (*Lopholeucaspis japonica* and Tobacco ringspot virus), one protected zone quarantine pest (*Erwinia amylovora*) and one non-regulated pest (*Eotetranychus prunicola*) that fulfilled all relevant criteria were selected for further evaluation. For *Erwinia amylovora*, for which special requirements are specified in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072, Annex X, item 9, the fulfilment of these requirements was evaluated. Based on the information provided in the dossier the specific requirements for *Erwinia amylovora* were not met. For the three remaining selected pests, the risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Ukraine were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. For the selected 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 *Eotetranychus prunicola* being the pest most frequently expected on the imported plants. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated with 95% certainty that between 9,912 and 10,000 bundles (consisting of 50 plants each) per 10,000 would be free from *Eotetranychus prunicola*. The scientific opinion was adopted by the PLH Panel on 30/09/21.

5.7 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Lonicera caprifolium*, EFSA-Q-2020-00092, Turkey

Based on the clarification provided by EC on Protected Zone Quarantine Pests, it was outlined that an additional pest (*Bemisia tabaci*) should be retained for further evaluation. The EKE will be done for *Bemisia tabaci* on the commodity *Lonicera caprifolium* from Turkey. The opinion will be moved for adoption in a next Plenary, as soon as the EKE will be completed.

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

6.1 Update on EFSA new organigramme. ART programme, Risk assessment workflow and Declaration of interests (Juliane Kleiner, Head of EFSA RASA Department)

The Head of the RASA Department explained the reasons behind EFSA's new organisational structure. In order to implement the new obligations and new processes required by the Transparency Regulation (TR), the ART Programme designed a harmonised high-level Risk Assessment (RA) process divided in four main steps: Mandate & dossier intake, Preliminary activities to Risk Assessment, Risk Assessment, and Output publication and dissemination. To best support the changes triggered by the TR, the next step was to redesign EFSA's internal structure: among other changes, EFSA will have one department focusing on RA production (Assess Department), and one focusing on services in support of RA production (Enable Department). The final organigramme will be confirmed by the EFSA Management Team on 24 September. The Head of the RASA Department also gave an overview of the most recent DOI issues, explaining that while the technical Task Force will work on the issues reported, the automatic request for expert DOI submission will be disabled from 18 September. Experts will be asked to use the alternative workflow described in the EFSA Competing Interest Management rules. More info will follow via email.

6.2 Update from QPRA WGs (section 1 and 2) & workplan,

QPRA Section 1

The Chair of QPRA section 1 updated the Panel regarding the latest activities of the group. Work is ongoing on the data gathering of the PRA of *Amyelois transitella*.

QPRA Section 2

The chair of the qPRA section 2 WG updated the panel about the progress of the WG. Work is ongoing on the planning of the QPRA on *X.c. pv viticola*. The WG is also in close contact with QPRA section 1 WG to be consistent in the application of the PRA methodology. A preliminary workplan to deal with the foreseen workload was shown to the Panel.

6.3 Update from WGs on Pest Categorisation & workplan

The chair of the WG plant pathogens pest categorisation updated the panel on the progress with the work program and the opinions which are planned to be sent to the panel for review and possible adoption in the October and November plenaries.

The chair of the Arthropod pest categorisation WG briefly presented the workplan for the upcoming months. The WG is planning to deliver 3 opinions for each plenary. To some of the outputs, external collaborators contribute via tasking grants.

6.4 Update from High Risk Plants WGs (section 1, 2 and 3) & workplan

The status of the ongoing activities in the three WGs was presented.

6.5 Update on EFSA activities to support EU risk-based plant health surveillance

An overview was provided by EFSA of the pest survey toolkit developed within the previous mandate:

- Methodological framework
- Pest survey cards
- Index of Pest survey toolkit
- Achievements

The ongoing work under the current new mandate was described in detail:

- Pest survey cards for all quarantine pests and systemic approach to crop-based surveys
- New expert system for pest survey design
- Data collection for multi-pest surveys in Citrus
- Crop based approach
- Relational database

6.6 Feedback from Scientific Committee

The Panel chair presented the ongoing activities of the Scientific Committee

6.7 Update on EFSA ONE conference

The Panel was reminded of the possibility to submit abstract for the EFSA Scientific Conference (deadline 30 September 2021).

6.8 Update from EFSA on outsourcing and cooperation in plant health

The PLH Panel Coordinator updated the panel on the outsourcing plan, grants and EFSA tasking grants

6.9 Feedback from European Commission

The EC DG SANTE representative European informed that the Amending of Annex 2019/2079 draft has been published for comments, also sent for Public Consultations to Third Countries. The amendment is a result of risk assessments conducted by EFSA, EPPO and other institutes.

7. AOB

The 2021 & 2022 PLH plenary calendar was reminded to the Panel, including the PLH plenary of November 2021 which is going to be OPEN to observers.

Annex

Interests and actions resulting from the Oral Declaration of Interest done at the beginning of the meeting

With regard to this meeting, Dr. Francesco Di Serio declared the following interest with regard to the draft Scientific opinions on:

- Commodity risk assessment of grafted plants of *Malus domestica* from Moldova;

He informed the Panel that he participates to the work on this opinion as coordinator of an EFSA Art. 36 Tasking Grant Specific Contract. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management², and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a Conflict of Interest (CoI).

This results in the exclusion of the expert from discussion or voting as PLH Panel Member of item 6.5, however, he can participate to this agenda meeting to present the work he conducted as coordinator of the related EFSA Art 36 Tasking Grant Specific Contracts.

¹ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf

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http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf