



## Scientific Panel on Plant Health

### Minutes of the 97<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting

**Held on 24-25 November 2021, WEB**  
**(Agreed on 16 December 2021)**

#### **Participants**

##### ■ **Panel Members**

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

##### ■ **Hearing Experts**

Quirico Micheli

##### ■ **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 Czwieczek, Alice Delbianco, Ciro Gardi, Ignazio Graziosi, Virag Kertesz, Svetla Kozelska, Nik Kriz, Andrea Maiorano, Luka Mustapic, Patricia Nascimento, Marco Pautasso, Evgenia Sarakatsani, Giuseppe Stancanelli, Emanuela Tacci, Sara Tramontini and Sybren Vos.

AMU Unit: Olaf Mosbach Schulz

GMO Unit: Franz Streissl

##### ■ **Art. 36 Tasking Grant and Procurement**

Alzbeta Mikulova (Tasking Grant University of Padova); Oresteia Sfyra (Scientific and Technical support procurement)

##### ■ **Open Plenary Observers**

Picard Camille, Petter Francoise, Campbell F. H., Debode Jane, Sağlam Asuman, Opatowski David, Ferreira Luís, Carluccio Anna Vittoria, Preti Stefano, Maleki Mastaneh, Stergulc Fabio, Jacopetti Giovanni, Ruzzier Enrico, Marchioro Matteo; Rosace Maria Chiara, Mattion Giulia

#### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Panel Chair welcomed the participants.

## **2. Brief introduction of the Panel members, EFSA PLH team, observers and other participants**

The Panel Chair gave a brief introduction of the Panel members, EFSA Plant health team, observers and other participants.

## **3. EFSA guidelines for Observers**

The EFSA guidelines for Observers were presented.

## **4. Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted without changes.

## **5. 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.

## **6. Agreement of the minutes of the 95<sup>th</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> Plenary**

The minutes of the 95<sup>th</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure.

## **7. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption / endorsement**

### **7.1 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Xylotrechus chinensis* (EFSA-Q-2021-00338)**

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Xylotrechus chinensis* (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae) for the European Union (EU) territory. This species is not included in the EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. *X. chinensis* is native to China, Japan, the Korean peninsula, and Taiwan. It has recently been reported from Spain (Catalonia; Region of Valencia), Greece (Athens; Crete) and France (Hérault; Gironde). *X. chinensis* attacks and kills *Morus* spp. in Europe and is also a pest of *Malus domestica*, *Pyrus* sp. and *Vitis vinifera* in Asia. This last plant species, however, was not confirmed as a host in an experimental study in Spain. The pest is univoltine. The adults are 1.5 to 2.5 cm long; they emerge between May and August. Each female produces approximately 80 eggs which are laid on the bark. The larvae live in the phloem and tunnel into the xylem where they pupate. Infested trees show injuries including longitudinal slits in the bark, caused by larval activity next to the surface, and round exit holes from which frass emerges. The females respond to a male sex pheromone, which has not been developed into a detection method. The adults

spread by flight as suggested by the local expansion of damage in Europe. However, wood packaging material and wooden objects can also be a pathway as suggested by interceptions in Germany and the USA. In Greece and Spain, hundreds of *Morus* trees have already been attacked within a few years, and often killed. The infested area has been observed to expand from 44 to 380 km<sup>2</sup> within two years in Spain (Catalonia). Phytosanitary measures are available to inhibit further introductions and slow the spread within the EU. *X. chinensis* satisfies all the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for it to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest.

The opinion was adopted on 25 November 2021.

### **7.2 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Arboridia kakogawana* (EFSA-Q-2021-00639)**

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of the Japanese grape leafhopper, *Arboridia kakogawana* (Matsumura, 1932) (Hemiptera: Cicadellidae), for the EU territory. This species is not included in the EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. Adults of *A. kakogawana* overwinter in broad-leaved and mixed forests and move to vineyards in the spring where there may be up to four generations, before adults move back to forests during late summer-early autumn to overwinter, possibly under diapause. *A. kakogawana* has a restricted host range (*Vitis* spp. and *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*). It is native to Eastern Asia, from where it moved westwards reaching southern Russia in 1999, and subsequently Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia in 2020. *A. kakogawana* develops on the abaxial side of the leaves causing chlorotic spots that reduce grape quality. Plants for planting of *Vitis* L. are banned from entering the EU except from Switzerland, where *A. kakogawana* is not known to occur. Therefore, this can be considered as a closed entry pathway. However, other plants for planting including the host *P. quinquefolia* and many broad-leaved trees where overwintering takes place, as well as isolated bark and wood with bark provide potential pathways which are partly regulated but remain open. There are no EU records of interception. Additional introductions and further spread of *A. kakogawana* into/within the EU, coupled with the ample availability of grapevines and the climatic conditions would most probably allow successful establishment in most EU member states. Should this happen, economic impact in table and wine grapes is anticipated. *A. kakogawana* satisfies all the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for it to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest (UQP).

The opinion was adopted on 25 November 2021.

### **7.3 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Maconellicoccus hirsutus* (EFSA-Q-2021-00490)**

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Maconellicoccus hirsutus* (Hemiptera: Pseudococcidae), the pink hibiscus mealybug, for the EU. *M. hirsutus* is native to Southern Asia and has established in many countries in tropical and subtropical regions throughout the world. Within the EU, the pest has been reported from Cyprus and Greece (Rhodes island). *M. hirsutus* is not listed in Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. It is highly

polyphagous, feeding on plants assigned to 229 genera in 78 plant families, and shows some preference for hosts in the families Malvaceae, Fabaceae and Moraceae. Economically important crops in the EU such as cotton (*Gossypium* spp.), citrus (*Citrus* spp.), ornamentals (*Hibiscus* spp.), grapes (*Vitis vinifera*), soybean (*Glycine max*), avocado (*Persea americana*) and mulberry trees (*Morus alba*) may be significantly affected by *M. hirsutus*. The lower and upper developmental temperature threshold of *M. hirsutus* on *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* are 14.5 and 35.0°C respectively with optimal female development estimated to be at 29.0°C. There are about 10 generations a year in the subtropics but as many as 15 may occur under optimal conditions. Plants for planting, fruits, vegetables and cut flowers provide potential pathways for entry into the EU. Climatic conditions in EU member states around the Mediterranean Sea and host plant availability in those areas are conducive for establishment. The introduction of *M. hirsutus* is expected to have an economic impact in the EU through damage to various ornamental plants, as already observed in Cyprus and Greece, and reduction in yield and quality of many significant crops. Phytosanitary measures are available to reduce the likelihood of entry and further spread. Some uncertainties include the area of establishment, whether it could become a greenhouse pest, impact, and the influence of natural enemies. *M. hirsutus* meets the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for it to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest.

The opinion was adopted on 25 November 2021.

#### **7.4 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Fusarium oxysporum f.sp. cubense* TR4 (EFSA-Q-2021-00546)**

Following a discussion on the taxonomy of this fungus, the adoption of the opinion was postponed to the next plenary meeting on 16 December 2021.

#### **7.5 EFSA Scientific report on SCANCLIM tool for climate suitability (for discussion and possible endorsement)**

The R SCAN-Clim tool for climate suitability developed by EFSA and the related draft scientific report, including a user manual, were presented and discussed with the Panel. A demo of the tool was also run. The draft scientific report was reviewed, and modifications proposed by the Panel experts discussed.

The draft scientific report was endorsed by the Panel.

### **8. Feedback from Scientific Panel including their Working Groups (WG), Scientific Committee, EFSA and European Commission**

#### **8.1 Update from WG Arthropods pest categorisation**

The WG chair updated the Panel on the workplan for the coming months, highlighting that until mid-2022 work will focus on species that are present in the

EU, at least in one MS. EFSA is going to contact the NPPOs of the MSs where the pest is present to have information on the official status of the pests, when available.

## **8.2 Update from WG plant pathogens pest categorisation**

An overview was provided on the ongoing and planned activities of the WG pathogen pest categorisation. The number of plant pathogens among the different groups of organisms such as fungi, bacteria, viruses and viroids, nematodes and parasitic plants for which a pest categorisation needs to be developed was shown. The Panel was informed that pest categorisation opinions on *Plicosepalus acaciae*, *Atalodera andina* and High plains wheat mosaic virus will be delivered for possible adoption in January 2022.

## **8.3 Update from WG Quantitative Pest Risk Assessment (QPRA) section 1**

The WG Chair of QPRA section 1 gave an update on the work plan and presented equation and concept of the *Amyelois transitella* entry model. The available data about interceptions of this pest from the literature were shown to the PLH Panel. The update from the subgroups on establishment and spread/impacts were summarized for the Panel.

## **8.4 Update from WG Quantitative Pest Risk Assessment (QPRA) section 2**

The WG Chair Updated the Panel about the progress of the WG. Work since the last plenary meeting focused on the PRA on *Xanthomonas citri* pv. *viticola*, especially on the entry pathways and the required climate data.

## **8.5 Update from WG on High Risk Plants (HRP) section 1**

The coordinator of the WG updated the Panel about the progress of the WG. The activities of the WG since the last plenary meeting focused on the finalisation of the Commodity risk assessment of *Lonicera* potted plants from Turkey addressing the PLH Panel comments. In addition to this the WG analysed the pest list of *Jasminum polyanthum* from Uganda and, based on the additional information received from the applicant country, selected the potential actionable pests. For other dossiers the clock is stopped until EFSA will receive the requested additional information.

## **8.6 Update from WG on High Risk Plants (HRP) section 2**

The Chair of the WG updated the Panel about the progress of the WG. Work since the last plenary meeting focused on the Commodity risk assessment of bonsai plants from China consisting of *Pinus parviflora* grafted on *Pinus thunbergii*, especially on performing the expert knowledge elicitation, finalising the draft opinion and addressing the PLH Panel comments. In parallel the WG finalised the evaluation of the pest list for *Acer palmatum* from China based on the additional information received from the applicant country. For other dossiers the clock is stopped until EFSA will receive the requested additional information.

### **8.7 Update from WG on High Risk Plants (HRP) section 3**

The coordinator of the WG updated the Panel about the progress of the WG. The activities of the WG since the last plenary meeting focused on the finalisation of the Commodity risk assessment of *Malus domestica* plants from Moldova addressing the PLH Panel comments. During the revision of the draft opinion it emerged the need of requesting further information concerning the possible presence of a quarantine pest in the country and a request for clarification was sent on this regard. In addition to this, the WG has completed the EKE on the actionable pests of *Malus domestica* from Turkey. The integration of information requested to UK in relation to the dossier on *Malus domestica* were received and verified. For other dossiers the clock is stopped until EFSA will receive the requested additional information.

**For replies to questions from observers:** see Annex 1

**DAY 2: OPEN SESSION | 25 November 2021 | 9:00 - 13:00**

## **7. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption / endorsement (continues)**

### **7.6 Art. 29 Scientific Opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Lonicera caprifolium*, (EFSA-Q-2020-00092, 0023 – Turkey)**

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 as 'High-risk plants, plant products and other objects'. This Scientific Opinion covers plant health risks posed by potted plants (2 to 4 years old) of specified *Lonicera* species produced in nurseries and that are imported from Turkey, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the NPPO of Turkey. The relevance of any pest for this Opinion was based on evidence following defined criteria listed in section 4.1. Three species, the EU-quarantine pests *Lopholeucaspis japonica* and *Meloidogyne chitwoodi* and the Protected Zone Quarantine pest *Bemisia tabaci*, fulfilled these criteria and were selected for further evaluation. For these pests, the risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Turkey were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. For these 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 estimated degree of pest freedom varies among the pests evaluated, with *B. tabaci* on evergreen species of *Lonicera* spp. being the pest most frequently expected on the imported plants. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty, that between 9,293 and 10,000 plants per 10,000 would be free of *B. tabaci*.

The opinion was adopted on 25 November 2021.

## **8. Feedback from Scientific Panel including their Working Groups, Scientific Committee, EFSA and European Commission**

### **8.8 Collection of data and information in Balearic Islands on biology of vectors and potential vectors of *Xylella fastidiosa* – Final results of EFSA Grant GP/EFSA/ALPHA/017/01 (Miguel Miranda, UIB, Mallorca ES)**

Prof. Miguel Miranda from the University of Balearic Islands gave a detailed presentation on the results of the EFSA grant. The pathogenic bacteria *Xylella fastidiosa* (Proteobacteria: Xanthomonadaceae) was detected in the Balearic Islands in October 2016. In November 2017 EFSA granted the data collection on the biology of vectors in the Balearic Islands. The grant included the following objectives: i) Data collection in the Balearic Islands by macrocosm and microcosm observations of the vectors in the major agroecosystems; ii) Proposal on field sampling protocols of vectors; iii) Identification of the major vectors of *X. fastidiosa* in the Balearic Islands. For the study of macrocosm, samplings were conducted in Majorca, Ibiza, Formentera and Minorca. For the microcosm study, cages containing one male and one female of *P. spumarius* and one plant per cage were placed at semi-field conditions. For the development of the guidelines, literature research was conducted. For the vector competence experiments, field collected insects were caged with *X. fastidiosa* free plants of *Medicago sativa*. From the macrocosm results, two Aphrophoridae (Hemiptera; Cicadomorpha) species of vectors have been detected in the Balearic Islands, *Philaenus spumarius* and *Neophilaenus campestris*. Nymphs of Aphrophoridae were more abundant from early March to the end of May in the cover vegetation of olive crops, followed by vineyard and almond ones. Adults of Aphrophoridae were more abundant in the cover vegetation from May to June and from October to November, in the tree canopy from June to August and in the border vegetation from August to October. The microcosm trials showed that *P. spumarius* and *N. campestris* were able to develop in *Lavandula dentata*, *Rosmarinus officinalis*, *Menta x piperita*, *Pistacia lentiscus* and *Ocimum basilicum*. The average prevalence of *X. fastidiosa* from vectors collected from 2017 to 2020 was 23 %. Adults of *P. spumarius* and *N. campestris* collected from infected areas of Majorca successfully transmitted *X. fastidiosa* to uninfected plants of *M. sativa*.

The full report and supporting materials are now published and available online: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/en-6925>

**For replies to questions from observers:** see Annex 1

## 8.9 Update from Scientific Committee

The Panel Chair updated the Panel on the ongoing Scientific Committee activities:

- Draft guidance on **scientific criteria for grouping chemicals** into assessment groups for human risk assessment of combined exposure to multiple chemicals
- Update on the revision of the **benchmark dose (BMD) guidance** document
- Update on the development of a **system-based approach for a holistic Environmental Risk Assessment of multiple stressor in honey bees** (MUST-B):
- Preliminary discussion on the **work programme Scientific committee 2022-2024**
- Draft review of the **existing health-based guidance values for copper** and its exposure assessment from all sources
- Draft opinion on evaluation of existing guidelines for their adequacy for the food and feed risk assessment of microorganisms obtained through **synthetic biology**
- Feedback from Panels - **Overview of the work programme of GMO and PPR panels**
- The **Farm to Fork strategy**
- EC Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability and the **One Substance One Assessment (OSOA) approach**
- Review of the guidance on the **Margin of Exposure**

## 8.10 Update from EFSA

The PLH Panel coordinator updated the Panel on Grants and Procurements, recent and upcoming events, improvement initiatives and follow up.

## 8.11 Feedback from EC SANTE

The EC DG SANTE representative updated the Panel on the status and changes of the Annexes of the EU Plant Health Law.

## 8.12 Update on EFSA new units and NEW Teams organisations

The Panel was informed about the changes in the EFSA organigramme, new units and teams.

**For replies to questions from observers:** see Annex 1

## 9. AOB

The 2021 - 2022 Plenary calendar date was shared with the Panel.



## **ANNEX 1**

Question from Observers (received by email and replied at the end of the sessions)

**Question 1:** An observer asked by email to suspend the adoption of a Panel opinion on pest categorisation due to not specified patent's related issues.

**Answer:**

It was explained that according to EFSA Guidelines for observers for EFSA plenary meetings, an observer may not attempt to influence the meeting participants, in particular members of the Panel, nor engage in the discussion, drafting, deliberation of the scientific output at hand.

The pest categorisations are delivered for a number of pests listed in a mandate from the European Commission to EFSA. The mandate requires that the pest categorisation concludes whether a pest fulfils the criteria of a potential quarantine pest for the area of the EU excluding Ceuta, Melilla and the outermost regions of Member States, other than Madeira and the Azores, and so inform European Commission decision making as to its appropriateness for potential inclusion in the lists of pests of Commission Implementing regulation (EU) 2019/2072.

**Question 2:** An observer had a general question on the EFSA/SANTE process, not specific to the pests discussed. Following the discussion on potential candidate Quarantine Pests and official control: once a pest has been regarded by EFSA as a potential Union Quarantine Pest (UQP), how then does it afterwards actually become a UQP? Is it an automatic process or a decision is made by SANTE? If so, then how would the discussion around "official control" be addressed?

**Answer 2:** In the European Union the Risk Assessment is separated and independent from the Risk Management. EFSA conducts its risk assessment (including the pest categorisations presented today) independently from the risk managers.

Once a Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation is adopted by the Panel, it is published on the EFSA Journal and communicated to the risk managers. After an EFSA pest categorisation concludes that a pest fulfils the minimum requirements for potential quarantine plant pest, it is not automatic that the pest would become a Union Quarantine Pest. There is then a well-established risk management process for plant health decision making in the EU, where the EU risk managers considering the scientific evidence will decide whether the pest should become a Union Quarantine Pest

**Question 3:** Why, unlike any other Country, does EFSA require from the exporting country information on global pests of a commodity and not just information only on those pests present in its territory?

**Answer 3:** As detailed in the EFSA (2018) Technical report (<https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/sp.efsa.2018.EN-1492>), the applicant should provide lists of all pests potentially associated with the commodity in the exporting country and provide the requested information

as indicated below. The compilation of these pest lists by the applicant should be supported by a documented literature search.

- List all the pests potentially associated with the plant species or genus of the commodity in the exporting country supported by evidence
- List all the pests potentially associated with the plant species or genus of the commodity in the exporting country that are EU regulated and provide information as indicated in Table D1
- List all the pests potentially associated with the plant species or genus of the commodity in the exporting country that are not regulated in the EU, and for these pests provide information as indicated in Table D2.

Please note that the applicant is invited to submit any additional information or evidence that is considered useful in supporting the risk assessment (e.g. list of all pests known to use the plant species or genus of the commodity as hosts at the global level, records of interceptions on the exported commodity, etc.), but this is not a compulsory information requirement.

**Question 4:** An observer commented that PRA information requested from an exporting country should be relevant to the commodity/country and not global-wide or nursery specific. It is understandable and agreeable that nursery specific information can be requested and provided, however, it should not later be interpreted into requirements unless PRA justified.

**Answer 4:** The commodity risk assessment conducted by EFSA is based on the commodity type described by the applicant Third Country in the dossier submitted, including the clarifications provided by the applicant in reply to EFSA questions. EFSA is not conducting a "commodity/nursery/country" specific assessment, but a commodity risk assessment for a commodity from a specific Third Country, based on the description of the commodity and its cropping practices, as detailed in the dossier submitted, including the clarifications provided by the applicant in reply to EFSA questions. Therefore, the commodity risk assessment cannot cover commodities different from the commodity described in the dossier or from the cropping practices described in the dossier. Plants of the same species, but very different in age, size and type of cultivation, represent different type of commodities and can have a different risk (for example the probability of infestation/infection of a young and small plant can be quite different compared to the one associated to an older and larger plant). This difference may affect both the pests associated with the commodity as well as the estimation of likelihood of pest freedom for particular pests.