

**SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON
PLANT HEALTH**
115th Plenary meeting



18 & 19 September 2023
9:00-18:00 & 8:30-12:30 (WET)
MINUTES - Agreed on 14 November 2023

Location: Polytechnic Institute of Bragança/ Agricultural School – Bragança (PT) - Onsite

Attendees:

- PLH Panel Members:

Claude BRAGARD (Chair), Paula BAPTISTA, Elisavet CHATZIVASSILIOU, Francesco DI SERIO, Paolo GONTHIER, Josep JAQUES, Alan MACLEOD, Christer MAGNUSSON, Panagiotis MILONAS, Juan NAVAS-CORTES, Stephen PARNELL, Philippe REIGNAULT, Roel POTTING, Emilio STEFANI, Hans-Hermann THULKE, Antonio VICENT CIVERA, Wopke VAN DER WERF, Jonathan YUEN.

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

EC: Maria Belen MARQUEZ GARCIA, Leonard SHUMBE (SANTE)

- Hearing Experts:

Ana Paula de Almeida Cruz de CARVALHO (DGAV), Isabel CALHA (INIAV), Elisabete FIGUEIREDO (ISA), José Carlos FRANCO (ISA), iLaria MARENGO (InPP), José Alberto Cardoso PEREIRA (IPB), Isabel RODRIGUES (FCT), Maria Clara SERRA (DGAV), Hadi SHEIKHNEJAD (InPP), Pedro SOUSA (UP).

- EFSA PLANTS Unit:

João Filipe CAVALHEIRO, Matteo CROTTA, Ewelina CZWIENCZEK, Alice DELBIANCO, Spyridoula DIMITROPOULOU, Ciro GARDI, Alex GOBBI, Ignazio GRAZIOSI, Agata KACZMAREK, Paraskevi KARIAMPA, Virág KERTÉSZ, Roumiana KRUSTEVA, Andrea MAIORANO, Marina MARTINO, Alzbeta MIKULOVA, Marco PAUTASSO, Eugenio ROSSI, Giuseppe STANCANELLI, Franz STREISSL, Emanuela TACCI.

Others:

- EFSA MESE Unit: Olaf MOSBACH-SCHULZ.

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants, apologies were received from Lucia ZAPPALÀ

II. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management², EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled

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

² http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf



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 of Interest made at the beginning of the meeting, please refer to the Annex I.

IV. Report on written procedures

Minutes were published on EFSA website.

V. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

5.1. Scientific opinion on Pest categorisation on *Diaprepes abbreviatus* (EFSA-Q-2023-00313) SO: Virag Kertesz

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of the citrus root weevil *Diaprepes abbreviatus* (L.) (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) for the European Union (EU) following the commodity risk assessment of *Ligustrum delavayanum* topiary grafted on *L. japonicum* plants from the UK in which *D. abbreviatus* was identified as a relevant non-regulated EU pest which could potentially enter the EU. This species is native to the Caribbean and was introduced to the continental USA in 1964, to Gran Canaria (Spain) in 2014, and to Madeira Island (Portugal) in 2018. It is a polyphagous insect, associated with more than 270 species in 60 plant families. Female *D. abbreviatus* can lay up to 5,000 eggs in clusters within leaves folded and glued together. Neonate larvae drop off the leaves onto the ground and enter the soil, where they feed on roots for several months. The mature larvae pupate in the soil. After emergence, adults usually stay on the first host plant they encounter and can move long distances on nursery stock. *D. abbreviatus* is not a regulated pest in the EU. It could enter and spread within the EU via the import and movement of host plants for planting, cut flowers, and soil. Some host plants for planting (e.g. *Vitis* spp., *Citrus* spp.), and soil are prohibited from entering the EU from countries where this weevil is known to occur. The import of other host plants for planting and cut flowers is subject to phytosanitary certificate and that of soil attached to machinery is regulated. Host availability and climate suitability suggest that the southernmost coastal areas of southern EU MSs would be suitable for establishment of *D. abbreviatus*. Temporary establishment in greenhouses in other EU territories would be possible. The introduction of *D. abbreviatus* would likely cause impacts. Measures to prevent entry, spread, and impact are available. *D. abbreviatus* 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 scientific opinion was adopted on 19 September 2023.

5.2. Scientific opinion on Pest categorisation on *Didesmococcus unifasciatus* (EFSA-Q-2023-00314) SO: Virag Kertesz

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorization of *Didesmococcus unifasciatus* (Hemiptera: Sternorrhyncha: Coccidae) for the EU following commodity risk assessments of *Malus domestica* (apple), *Prunus dulcis* (almond) and *P. persica* (peach) plants for planting from Türkiye in which *D. unifasciatus* was identified as a pest that could potentially



enter the EU. It was first described in Uzbekistan and is widely distributed in Central and Western Asia, including Türkiye (where it was recently reported as limited to the Hakkari and Diyarbakir regions in the Asian part of the country). It has not been reported within the EU. It is not listed in Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. It completes one generation per year; a female lays between 1500 and 2400 eggs. It feeds on several important fruit trees of the family Rosaceae (e.g. *P. dulcis*, *M. domestica*), as well as *Ficus carica* and *Ulmus* sp. Most of its hosts are widely cultivated in the EU. Woody plants for planting and cut branches are the main potential pathways for entry of *D. unifasciatus* into the EU. Climatic conditions and availability of host plants would likely allow this species to establish and spread in southern parts of the EU. Just as in other invaded areas, the presence of many of its natural enemies in the EU is likely to prevent the scale from becoming an economic or environmental pest. Nevertheless, phytosanitary measures are available to reduce the likelihood of entry and spread. Considering the weight of evidence, *D. unifasciatus* does not meet all 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 on 19 September 2023.

5.3. Scientific opinion on Pest categorisation on *Pochazia shantungensis* (EFSA-Q-2023-00322) SO: Virag Kertesz

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Pochazia shantungensis* (Hemiptera: Auchenorrhyncha: Ricaniidae) for the EU following commodity risk assessments of *Malus domestica*, *Prunus persica*, *P. dulcis* and *Robinia pseudoacacia* plants for planting from Türkiye in which *P. shantungensis* was identified as a pest that could potentially enter the EU. The native range of *P. shantungensis* is China (Shandong and Zhejiang provinces), but around 2010, the species entered the Republic of Korea and rapidly spread. Small and localized populations were also recently found in Türkiye (Marmara) and southern Russia (Krasnodyarskiy kray). Within the EU, a few individuals have been recorded in Italy (Pistoia province, Tuscany), in one locality in southern France (Alpes-Maritimes), in the Netherlands (Western Netherlands), and in one garden in Germany (Baden-Württemberg) where it was eradicated. *P. shantungensis* is not listed in Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. It is polyphagous, feeding on plants belonging to more than 200 species including many crop and ornamental plants. Economically important hosts in the EU include apple (*M. domestica*), citrus (*Citrus* spp.), walnut (*Castanea* sp.) and ornamentals such as hibiscus (*Hibiscus* spp.) and camellia (*Camellia japonica*), as well as forest trees, mostly deciduous. In the Republic of Korea, the species has one generation per year. It overwinters as eggs and goes through five nymphal instars. Its impact is due to oviposition obstructing the vascular system of its hosts, depletion of the host resources, and egestion of honeydew promoting the development of sooty moulds. Plants for planting constitute the main pathway for entry into the EU and for spread. Climatic conditions in southern EU countries and host plant availability in those areas would allow establishment and spread. The introduction of *P. shantungensis* is expected to have an economic impact in the EU through the reduction in yield, quality, and commercial value of fruits and ornamental plants. Phytosanitary measures are available to reduce the likelihood of entry and further spread. *P. shantungensis* meets the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for it to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest.



The scientific opinion was adopted on 19 September 2023.

5.4. Scientific opinion on Pest categorisation on *Pestalotiopsis disseminata* (EFSA-Q-2023-00346) SO: Marco Pautasso

The draft of the pest categorisation on *P. disseminata* was discussed by the Panel. It was decided to further revise the draft and rediscuss it at a later plenary meeting.

5.5. Scientific opinion on commodity risk assessment on *Quercus petraea* plants from the UK (EFSA-Q-2022-00460) SO: Franz Streissl

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 plants of *Quercus petraea* imported from the United Kingdom (UK) as: (a) bundles of 1- to 2-year-old whips and seedlings, (b) 1- to 7-year-old bare root plants for planting and (c) less than 1- to 15-year-old plants in pots, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the UK. All pests associated with the commodity were evaluated against specific criteria for their relevance for this opinion. Two EU quarantine pests, *Cronartium quercuum* and *Phytophthora ramorum* (non-EU isolates), two protected zone quarantine pests, *Cryphonectria parasitica* and *Thaumetopoea processionea*, and four pests not regulated in the EU, *Trinophyllum cribratum*, *Meloidogyne mali*, *Coniella castaneicola*, and *Phytophthora kernoviae*, fulfilled all relevant criteria and were selected for further evaluation. For the selected pests, the risk mitigation measures included in the technical dossier from the UK 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. In the assessment of risk, the age of the plants was considered, reasoning that older trees are more likely to be infested mainly due to longer exposure time and larger size. The degree of pest freedom varies among the pests evaluated, with *C. castaneicola* being the pests most frequently expected on the imported plants. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated with 95% certainty that between 9,711 and 10,000 per 10,000 less than 1- to 15-year-old plants in pots will be free from *C. castaneicola*.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 19 September 2023.

5.6. Scientific opinion on commodity risk assessment on *Quercus robur* plants from the UK (EFSA-Q-2022-00461) SO: Franz Streissl

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 plants of *Quercus robur* imported from the United Kingdom (UK) as: (a) bundles of 1- to 2-year-old whips and seedlings, (b) 1- to 7-year-old bare root plants for planting, and (c) less than 1- to 15-year-old plants in pots, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the UK. All pests associated with the commodity were evaluated against specific criteria for their



relevance for this opinion. Two EU quarantine pests, *Cronartium quercuum* and *Phytophthora ramorum* (non-EU isolates), two protected zone quarantine pests, *Cryphonectria parasitica* and *Thaumetopoea processionea*, and four pests not regulated in the EU, *Trinophyllum cribratum*, *Meloidogyne mali*, *Coniella castaneicola*, and *Phytophthora kernoviae*, fulfilled all relevant criteria and were selected for further evaluation. For the selected pests, the risk mitigation measures included in the technical dossier from the UK 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. In the assessment of risk, the age of the plants was considered, reasoning that older trees are more likely to be infested mainly due to longer exposure time and larger size. The degree of pest freedom varies among the pests evaluated, with *C. castaneicola* being the pest most frequently expected on the imported plants. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated with 95% certainty that between 9,711 and 10,000 per 10,000 less than 1- to 15-year-old plants in pots will be free from *C. castaneicola*.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 19 September 2023.

5.7. Scientific opinion on commodity risk assessment of *Malus domestica* plants from Bosnia and Herzegovina (EFSA-Q-2022-160) SO: Agata Kaczmarek

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 bare root plants of *Malus domestica* grafted on rootstocks of either *Malus domestica* or *Malus sylvestris* imported from Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH), taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by Bosnia and Herzegovina. All pests associated with the commodities were evaluated against specific criteria for their relevance for this opinion. One protected zone quarantine pest, *Erwinia amylovora*, fulfilled all relevant criteria and was selected for further evaluation. For *E. amylovora*, special requirements are specified in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. Based on the information provided in the Dossier, these specific requirements for *E. amylovora* are not met.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 19 September 2023

5.8. Scientific opinion on commodity risk assessment of Petunia and Calibrachoa unrooted cuttings from Guatemala (EFSA-Q-2022-00238) SO: Ciro Gardi

The draft opinion and the reply to the comments from the Panel were presented. The WG however still will have to review part of the comments. Furthermore, it was decided to request additional clarifications to the NPPO of Guatemala, and it was agreed to postpone the presentation and discussion for possible adoption to a next plenary meeting, after the sought replies to the clarifications were received.

VI. Feedback from EFSA, SC and EC

6.1 Presentation Article 36 Project: *Xylella* vectors in Portugal



The project team updated the Panel on the objectives, work plan and progresses of the EFSA funded Art 36 Grant project on biology of insect vectors of *Xylella fastidiosa* in Portugal.

6.2 4th European conference on *Xylella fastidiosa* SO: Giuseppe Stancanelli

The PLH panel coordinator provided the Panel with a presentation of the results of the 4th European conference on *Xylella fastidiosa*, organised by EFSA. Next conference is going to be held in Italy, location to be confirmed, in 2025.

6.3 ICPP2023 SO: Agata Kaczmarek

A presentation on EFSA and Panel members involvement in 12th ICPP2023 was given.

6.4 WEB OPEN Plenary: 26 October 9:00-13:30 and 2023 - 2024 PLH Plenary calendar, and confirmation of last PLH plenary date in June 2024

The PLH panel coordinator informed the Panel on the upcoming PLH Open plenary foreseen for 26 October and showed the presentation with the guidelines. Panel approved the agenda and it was decided to extend the PLH open plenary to 13:30, to allow sufficient time for questions from observers. PLANTS Assistant showed the 2023 and 2024 PLH meeting Calendars. Panel agreed to have the last Plenary on 18-19 June.

6.5 Update on climate suitability PLANTS SO: Andrea Maiorano

An overview of the Climate Suitability group endeavours and accomplishments in the year 2023 was presented. The presentation emphasized two key areas: the comprehensive literature search conducted for Pest Categorisations and QPRA and the current status of the SEED project. Additionally, the presentation offered insights into the group's future direction and challenges, encompassing their daily activities spanning from assessing pest climate suitability to developing innovative GIS tools and methodologies aimed at enhancing the robustness, reliability, and user-friendliness of climate suitability analyses in EFSA's scientific outputs.

6.6 Update by WG QPRA 1

An update on the qPRA on *L. orbonalis* was presented by the WG chair. The working group has collected all the data and has completed the EKE on spread using data on the spread of *L. laisalis* in Europe. EKEs on the other steps will be elaborated in September and October and will require substantial further data analysis and synthesis. Meta-analysis is ongoing. The WG aims to complete the opinion for adoption in November. The opinion on *L. pseudorbonalis* will be developed by making comparisons of African species (for which little information is available) and *L. orbonalis*, for which much more information is available.

6.7 Update by WGs QPRA 2 and 3 SO: Matteo Crotta

An update on the ongoing qPRAs on *R. syriacus* (QPRA2) and *P. callosus* (QPRA3) was presented. The WG working on *R. syriacus* has completed the systematic identification of the priority entry pathways and is currently working on the quantitative model with the support



of two ISA experts for what relates to the within-EU redistribution model. The WH working on *P. callosus* only had the kick of meeting so far and is still completing the data extraction from the literature with the support of an ISA expert.

6.8 EFSA UPDATE: Scientific Committee

Next SC Panel plenary meeting is going to be on 20 September, there will be a discussion for possible adoption of the draft guidance on protocol development. When the guidance is adopted, a standard protocol would have to be developed for mandates addressing recurrent scientific generic questions, like pest categorisations, quantitative pest risk assessments and commodity risk assessments for derogations to EU plant health law. High risk plants commodity risk assessments would be exempted from the need to develop specific protocols as these are risk assessments based on applications.

6.9 Feedback from DG SANTE

DG SANTE informed Panel that two acts on High-Risk commodity were adopted in July.
http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2023/1511/oj
http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2023/1535/oj

VII. Any Other Business

Nothing to report.



Annex I

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI)

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

- Scientific opinion on commodity risk assessment of *Malus domestica* plants from Bosnia and Herzegovina ([EFSA-Q-2022-160](#)) (item 5.7.)

The Panel was informed that he participates to the work on these opinions as coordinator of EFSA Art. 36 Tasking Grant Specific Contracts. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence^[1] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management^[2], 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 items 6.d, 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

^[2]

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