SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH

116th Plenary meeting – Open to observers

26 October 2023
9:00-13:30
MINUTES - Agreed on 14 November 2023

Location: Teleconference

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, Lucia ZAPPALÀ.

- EFSA PLANTS Unit:

João Filipe CAVALHEIRO, Matteo CROTTA, Ewelina CZWIENCZEK, Ciro GARDI, Alex GOBBI, Agata KACZMAREK, Paraskevi KARIAMPA, Virág KERTÉSZ, Alzbeta MIKULOVA, Marco PAUTASSO, Giuseppe STANCANELLI, Emanuela TACCI.

- EFSA Risk Assessment Logistics (RAL) Unit: Francesca ALFIERI

- EFSA Coordinated Communications: Filippo POSITANO

- Observers:

Antigoni AKRIVOU, Ilaria ALBERTI, Katica ARAR, Francesco BARUZZO, Valerio BATTAGLIA, Miryam BENALLA, Pietro BERTOLOTTO, Paola CARUSO, Maria CHIARA ROSACE, Eva CORREIA, Marina DAMONTE, Tomáš FEKIAČ, Lilia FORMICA, Magdalena GAWLAK, Liccardelo GRAZIA, Maira GROSSI DE SA, Vladimiro GUARNACCIA, Marie-Hélène KESTEMONT, Stefania LANZA, Nadia LUCIA CERIOLI, Ines MACCHIAROLA, Cristina MARZACHÌ, Giada MIGLIORE, Luka MUSTAPIĆ, Agata OLEJNICZAK, Ernst PFEILSTETTER, Tamara POPOVIC, Agata PRUCIAK-NOWAK, Joanna PULAWSKA, Alessandra SBIZZERA, Nikolay SPASOV, Pasquale TREMATERRA, Ana VARGAS, Tatyana VELICHKOVA.

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

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 Independence[1] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management[2], EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Working Group 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, and no interests were declared orally by the members at the beginning of this meeting.

[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

IV. Panel members introduction

PLH Panel Chair presented the PLH Panel mission, how it works and its composition. He opened a tour de table to give the opportunity to the Panel members to introduce their expertise. He then presented the PLANTS unit, its mission and focused on the PLH teams, especially PLH team Risk Assessment that strictly works with the Panel and with the Art. 29 Mandates.

V. Presentation on EFSA guidelines for observers

The PLH panel coordinator presented the EFSA guidelines for observers, the presentation was already sent to them. Highlighted the dos and don'ts for observers: not interfering with decision, no recording or transcription of what it was discussed during the plenary. Reminded them the Q&A would be held at the end of the Plenary, from 13:00 to 13:30 and that the questions could be asked either in the chat, during the Q&A question session or by emailing to the PLANTS functional mailbox.

VI. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

6.1. Draft opinion on Scientific Opinion of Pest categorization on *Anomala testaceipes* EFSA-Q-2023-00316) SO: Virag Kertesz

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorization of *Mimela testaceipes* (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae), the striated chafer, for the EU, following a commodity risk assessment of dwarfed *Pinus parviflora* grafted onto *P. thunbergii* from China in which *M. testaceipes* was identified as a pest of possible concern to the EU. *M. testaceipes* occurs in Japan, north-east China, Far East Russia, South Korea, and very likely North Korea. Adults are recognised pests feeding on and damaging the needles of Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*), Japanese cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*) and Japanese larch (*Larix leptolepis*) which are important forestry trees where the pest currently occurs. It has adapted to feed on the needles of *Pinus* species introduced into its native area, such as *Pinus taeda,* which is native to southeastern USA although *M. testaceipes* is not regarded as a significant pest of pines. Larvae are reported to cause root damage to grasses, as well as conifers. Eggs are usually laid in grassy soils by females that develop on conifer species. Larvae develop in the soil feeding on the roots of grasses or conifer hosts. Larvae overwinter in the soil and take two or three years to develop. In principle soil, host plants for planting, and cut branches with foliage could provide pathways into the EU. However, prohibitions on the import of soil and hosts such as *Chamaecyparis*, *Larix*, and *Pinus* close such pathways into the EU. Nevertheless, certain dwarfed *Pinus* spp. from Japan are provided with a derogation for entry into the EU. In addition, the host *C. japonica* is unregulated and could also provide a pathway. Hosts occur in the EU in climate zones that match those where *M. testaceipes* occurs in Asia. If *M. testaceipes* were to enter the EU, conditions in central and northern EU are conducive to establishment. Following establishment, impacts on Japanese cedar, Japanese cypress, and Japanese larch would be expected; it is possible that *M. testaceipes* could adapt to feed on *Pinus* and *Larix* species growing in Europe. *M. testaceipes* satisfies 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 26 October 2023.

6.2. Draft opinion on Scientific Opinion of Pest categorisation on *Lepidosaphes pineti* (EFSA-Q-2023-00317), *Lepidosaphes pini* (EFSA-Q-2023-00318) and *Lepidosaphes piniphila* (EFSA-Q-2023-00319) SO: Virag Kertesz

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorization of *Lepidosaphes pineti* Borchsenius the pine oyster scale, *Lepidosaphes pini* (Maskell) the Oriental pine scale, and *Lepidosaphes piniphila* Borchsenius (Hemiptera: Diaspididae) for the EU, following a commodity risk assessment of dwarfed *Pinus parviflora* grafted onto *P. thunbergii* from China in which the three *Lepidosaphes* species were identified as pests of possible concern to the EU. All three species are native to Asia. *L. pineti* is only known from China; *L. piniphila* occurs in China, Japan, and Malaysia; and *L. pini* is present in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and has been introduced to the USA. All three species feed primarily on *Pinus* spp., including several important forestry and ornamental trees, and *L. pineti* and *L. pini* have adapted to feed on North American species of pine. *L. pineti* also feeds on *Torreya grandis*; *L. pini* on *Abies* sp., *Cunninghamia lanceolata*, *Cycas* spp., *Podocarpus* spp., *Taxus* sp. and *Torreya* sp.; and *L. piniphila* on *Podocarpus* spp. and *T. grandis*. All developmental stages occur on the foliage. Host plants for planting and cut branches with foliage could provide pathways into the EU. However, prohibitions on the import of *Pinus* closes the main pathway. Certain dwarfed *Pinus* spp. from Japan are provided with a derogation for entry into the EU. The main hosts (*Pinus* spp.) occur throughout the EU in climate zones that match those where the three *Lepidosaphes* species occur in Asia. If any of the three *Lepidosaphes* species were to enter the EU, conditions in most of the EU are conducive to establishment. Following establishment, impacts on pines by *L. pineti* and *L. pini* would be expected. There are no published reports of *L. piniphila* causing damage to pine. *L. pineti* and *L. pini* satisfy the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for them to be regarded as potential Union quarantine pests. *L. piniphila* does not satisfy the criteria, as there is no evidence that it is harmful, however, there is a key uncertainty regarding whether it is synonymous with a closely related species, *L. pitysophila*, which is recorded as a pest of pine in China.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 26 October 2023.

6.3. Draft opinion on Scientific Opinion of Pest categorisation on *Pestalotiopsis microspora* (EFSA-Q-2023-00348) SO: Marco Pautasso

The Panel discussed the draft pest categorisation on *Pestalotiopsis microspora* but, for time reasons, postponed the finalisation of the discussion for possible adoption to the next plenary meeting.

VII. Feedback from EFSA, SC and EC

7.1 Feedback from EFSA

PLH Panel Coordinator informed observers that the next PLH Open Plenary will be at the end of January, three half days (morning period): 30 & 31 January and 1 February from 9:00 to 13:00, online.

7.2 Feedback from Scientific Committee Panel Chair: Claude Bragard

PLH Panel chair gave an update on the Scientific Committee (SC) activities: the draft guidance on protocol development was adopted, PLH panel will need to look into that for the future work. SC is working on a guidance document on appraising and integrating evidence from epidemiological studies. Next SC Plenary is scheduled for November 2023.

VIII. Q&A Session

PLH Panel chair opened the floor to the observers, but no specific questions were received in the chat or in the PLANTS functional mailbox. Comments were received from observers in the meeting chat on the usefulness of such open meetings to gain an understanding of how the Panel works. Since no specific questions were made, the observers were warmly thanked for their participation and the meeting was closed.