SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH
118th Panel Plenary meeting

15 December 2023
09:00-13:00
MINUTES - Agreed on 5 February 2024

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY

Location: Teleconference

Attendees:

- Panel Members:
Claude BRAGARD (Chair), Paula BAPTISTA, Elisavet CHATZIVASSILIOU, Francesco DI SERIO, Paolo GONTHIER, Josep JAQUES, Annemarie JUSTESEN, Alan MACLEOD, Christer MAGNUSSON, Panagiotis MILONAS, Juan NAVAS-CORTES, Roel POTTING, Philippe REIGNAULT, Emilio STEFANI, Hans-Hermann THULKE, Antonio VICENT CIVERA, Wopke VAN DER WERF, Jonathan YUEN, Lucia ZAPPALÀ
- Hearing Experts:
Oresteia SFYRA
- European Commission:
Maria Belen MARQUEZ GARCIA, Panagiota MYLONA, Wolfgang REINERT, Leonard SHUMBE
- EFSA:
Joao Filipe CAVALHEIRO, Ewelina CZWIENCZEK, Cristiana DO VALE CORREIA, Ciro GARDI, Alex GOBBI, Dejana GOLIC, Agata KACZMAREK, Virág KERTÉSZ, Andrea MAIORANO, Raghavendra Reddy MANDA, Marco PAUTASSO, Giuseppe STANCANELLI, Franz STREISSL, Emanuela TACCI, Anastasia TERZIDOU

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 Panel 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.

4. Scientific output(s) submitted for discussion/adoption

4.1 Draft on Scientific Opinion pest categorisation on *Malacosoma parallela* EFSA-Q-2023-00323

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Malacosoma parallela* (Staudinger) (Lepidoptera: Lasiocampidae) for the territory of the European Union following commodity risk assessments of *Berberis thunbergii, Malus domestica*, *Prunus persica* and *P. dulcis* plants for planting from Türkiye, in which *M. parallela* came to attention as of possible concern. *M. parallela* is commonly known as the mountain ring silk moth and is a polyphagous leaf-eating pest

[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

in west-central Asia, primarily feeding on deciduous trees and shrubs, and known to cause serious damage to *Malus, Prunus,* and *Quercus* species. It is found at a range of altitudes from 130 m to 3,000 m although most common above 1000 m. It is a univoltine species. Eggs are laid in masses on twigs and branches in the summer and larvae hatch the following spring to feed on buds and fresh leaves. Host plants can be completely defoliated. Plants for planting and cut branches provide pathways for entry, especially if infested with egg masses. Host availability and climate suitability suggest that parts of the EU would be suitable for establishment. Adults can fly and the pest could spread naturally within the EU although adults only live for a few days. Faster and more extensive spread is therefore more likely via egg masses moved on plants for planting. The introduction of *M. parallela* into the EU could lead to outbreaks causing damage to deciduous trees and shrubs in forests and orchards. Phytosanitary measures are available to inhibit the entry and spread of this species. *M. parallela* 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 15 Dec 2023.

4.2 Draft on scientific opinion of pest categorisation on *Pratylenchus loosi* EFSA-Q-2023-00347

Following the EFSA commodity risk assessment of *Malus domestica* plants imported from Türkiye into the EU, the EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Pratylenchus loosi* (Nematoda: Pratylenchidae) for the EU. *Pratylenchus loosi* belongs to the order Rhabditida, subfamily Pratylenchidae. This nematode is not known to be present in the EU. The species is not included in the EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. The pest occurs primarily in tropical, subtropical, and warm temperate areas. It is widely distributed in Asian countries, with tea plants (*Camellia sinensis*) as the main host. The pest was reported from more than 60 plant species, but reports from hosts other than *C. sinensis*, i.e. e.g. citrus (*Citrus* spp.) and banana (*Musa* spp.), are associated with high uncertainty due to doubtful pest identification. Morphological and molecular methods are available for the identification of the pest. Pathways of entry are host plants for planting except seeds, as well as soil attached to plants for planting, machinery, or footwear. Soil import to the EU is prohibited from third countries. The climatic preferences of *P. loosi* are compatible with the microclimatic conditions occurring in the areas of the EU where tea is grown outside. The impact of the nematode is best known for Asian countries, where it is a devastating pathogen on tea plants, but there is a key uncertainty on impacts on hosts other than tea. Considering the strong pathogenicity of the pest, its establishment in tea producing areas would have negative consequences for tea producers. Therefore, the Panel concludes that *P. loosi* 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 15 Dec 2023.

4.3 Draft on Scientific Opinion of pest categorisation on *Phellinus noxius* EFSA-Q-2023-00349

The chair of the pathogen pest categorisation WG presented the draft of the pest categorisation on *Pyrrhoderma noxium*/*Phellinux noxius* to the Panel. The changes made to the draft in the light of the feedback provided by the Panel were endorsed. It was decided to postpone the possible adoption of the draft to a next plenary meeting, to make it possible for the WG to add a map of soil temperatures relevant to this pathogen and to clarify the areas of possible establishment of the pathogen in the EU.

4.4 Draft on Scientific Opinion of Commodity risk assessment on *Petunia Calibrachoa* from Guatemala EFSA-Q-2022-00238

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to evaluate the probability of entry of pests (likelihood of pest freedom at entry), including both regulated and non-regulated pests, associated with unrooted cuttings of the genera *Petunia* and *Calibrachoa* produced under physical isolation in Guatemala. The relevance of any pest for this opinion was based on evidence following defined criteria, based on the methodology used for High-Risk Plants adapted for the specificity of this assessment. Nineteen EU regulated pests (*Bemisia tabaci*, pepper golden mosaic virus, pepper huasteco yellow vein virus, tomato severe leaf curl virus , tomato yellow leaf curl virus, tomato spotted wilt virus, *Liriomyza huidobrensis*, *Liriomyza sativae*, *Liriomyza trifolii*, *Bactericera cockerelli, Eotetranichus lewisi*, *Epitrix subcrinita*, *Epitrix cucumeris, Helicoverpa zea*, *Chloridea virescens*, *Spodoptera ornithogalli*, *Ralstonia solanacearum*, *Ralstonia pseudosolanacearum*, *Xanthomonas vesicatoria*) and one EU non-regulated (*Phenacoccus solenopsis*) pest fulfilled all relevant criteria and were selected for further evaluation. For these pests, the risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Guatemala were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors, and 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 limited and partially conflicting information provided in the dossier contributes to the wide estimates of pest freedom. The estimated degree of pest freedom varies among the pests evaluated, with *Ralstonia* spp. (*Ralstonia solanacearum* or *Ralstonia pseudosolanacearum*) being the pest most frequently expected on the imported cuttings. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty, that between 9,916 and 10,000 bags containing unrooted cuttings per 10,000 would be free of *Ralstonia* spp.

The opinion was adopted on 15 Dec 2023.

5. Feedback from EFSA, SC and EC DG SANTE

5.1 Report from the 20th PLH RA Network

The outcomes of the recent network meeting were discussed. The three-day agenda included presentations on commodity risk assessment, pest categorisation, quantitative pest risk assessment, a new mandate for emergency authorization of plant protection products, and Horizon Scanning. The meeting also featured a visit to a Parmesan factory, sessions on One Health, including topics like PLANTIBIO project (anti-bacterial resistance in plant-derived bacteria), high throughput sequences (HTS) for viruses, and a session on data presenting EFSA work on Xylella database and apple pest database. The third day comprised workshops on innovative risk assessment approaches like artificial intelligence and citizen science, as well as discussions on the fit-for-purpose of conclusions in risk assessment and how to better interact with Member States. The meeting concluded with presentations on communication activities, the #PlantHealth4Life campaign, and EFSA's participation in international events. Detailed discussion on quantitative and commodity risk assessments in the next plenary meeting was proposed.

5.2 Feedback from EFSA Scientific Committee

The Panel Chair shared the ongoing work of the Scientific Committee:

- The future of Risk Assessment: holistic approaches, challenges, and possibilities – with brainstorming session.
- Draft guidance on risk-benefit assessment.
- Draft opinion on Bromide.
- Draft guidance on epidemiological studies – PLH to contribute to a short section, together with animal health – public consultation in March and furhter adoption in May or June.
- Open access platform on toxicokinetic and toxicodynamic modelling and chemicals.
- Joint meeting with VKM – Norway.
- Panel discussion on genetically modified organisms (GMO).
- Discussion on the evolution of the legislation.
- Panel on Plant protection products and their residues (PPR).

- Next SC plenary in February, April (in Parma) and May (in Iceland – to be confirmed).

6. Any other business

6.1 Open Plenary in January

Panel Members received explanation regarding the Open Plenary rules for observers. The 2024 calendar (up to June) was presented.

6.2 Editorial Correction to Commodity risk assessment of Malus domestica plants from Ukraine

An editorial correction was identified in a previously published opinion related to *Malus Domestica* from Ukraine, where a numerical error in the conclusion was acknowledged due to a copy and paste oversight. The correct values were presented, and the panel approved the correction.

7. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held online on 30-31 January and 1st February 2024 from 9:00 – 13:00 and it will be open to observers.