

22 February 2024

09:00-13:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 8 March 2024

**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

○ European Commission:

Panagiota MYLONA, 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<sup>[1]</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management,<sup>[2]</sup> 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.

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.

## 4. Agreement of the minutes of the 119th Panel plenary meeting held on 30-31 January and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

The Panel was informed that the minutes were published in time and were thanked for their contributions.

## 5. Scientific output(s) submitted for discussion/adoption

### 5.1 Draft scientific opinion of Pest categorisation of *Lepidosaphes malicola* EFSA-Q-2024-00038

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The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Lepidosaphes malicola* (Hemiptera: Diaspididae), the Armenian mussel scale, for the territory of the European Union, following commodity risk assessments of *Prunus persica* and *P. dulcis* plants for planting from Türkiye, in which *L. malicola* was identified as a pest of possible concern. *L. malicola* is a polyphagous insect of temperate and arid areas, feeding on more than 60 plant species belonging to 26 families. Important crops significantly affected by *L. malicola* in parts of Asia include stone fruits (*Prunus armeniaca*, *P. persica*), pome fruits (*Malus domestica*, *Pyrus communis*), grapes (*Vitis vinifera*), pomegranate (*Punica granatum*), walnuts (*Juglans regia*) and ornamental plants (*Berberis* spp., *Cornus* spp., *Jasminum* spp., *Ligustrum* spp.). *L. malicola* has two generations annually. The overwintered eggs hatch from late May to early June. First-instar nymphs crawl on the host plant for a short period, then settle to feed. Nymphs reach maturity in late summer or early autumn. Plants for planting, fruits and cut flowers provide potential pathways for entry into the EU. Host availability and climate suitability suggest that southern, central, and some parts of northern EU countries would be suitable for the establishment of *L. malicola*. Despite being a pest in Armenia, Iran and Tajikistan, there is no evidence of it being a pest in Türkiye. *L. malicola* was detected in Bulgaria and Greece over 30 years ago but there have been no records since, and its status is uncertain. Its ability to cause impact in the EU is also uncertain. It is not listed in Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. Phytosanitary measures are available to reduce the likelihood of entry. Except for the criterion of having an economic or environmental impact for which there is great uncertainty were the pest to spread or be introduced elsewhere in the EU, *L. malicola* satisfies all other criteria (with some uncertainty) 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 22 Feb 2024.

## **5.2 Draft scientific opinion of Pest categorisation of *Eulecanium giganteum* EFSA-Q-2023-00324**

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Eulecanium giganteum* (Hemiptera: Coccidae), the giant eulecanium scale, for the territory of the European Union, following the commodity risk assessment of *Acer palmatum* plants from China, in which *E. giganteum* came to attention as a pest of possible concern. The pest is only known to be present in Asia, where it has been reported from China, India, Iran, Japan and eastern Russia (Primorsky Krai). The pest has not been reported within the EU. It is not listed in Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. It is polyphagous, feeding on broad-leaf trees and shrubs assigned to 41 genera in 22 plant families. Host plant species commonly found in the EU include apricot (*Prunus armeniaca*), elm (*Ulmus* spp.), grapevine (*Vitis vinifera*), maple (*Acer* spp.), oak (*Quercus* spp.), oriental plane (*Platanus orientalis*), pomegranate (*Punica granatum*), quince (*Cydonia oblonga*), silkworm mulberry (*Morus alba*), walnut (*Juglans regia*), and several ornamentals. Climatic conditions and availability of host plants in southern EU countries would most probably allow this species to successfully establish and spread. However, EU native natural enemies are anticipated to provide biological control and therefore reduce potential impacts. Phytosanitary measures are available to reduce the likelihood of entry and spread. *E. giganteum* satisfies all the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for it to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest, other than the criterion on impact which is a key uncertainty.

The opinion was adopted on 22 Feb 2024.

## **5.3 Draft scientific opinion of pest categorisation on *Phellinus noxius* EFSA-Q-2024-00049**

Following the commodity risk assessment of bonsai plants (*Pinus parviflora* grafted on *Pinus thunbergii*) from China performed by EFSA, the EFSA Plant Health Panel performed a pest categorisation of *Pyrrhoderma noxium*, a clearly defined plant pathogenic basidiomycete fungus of the order Hymenochaetales and the family Hymenochaetaceae. The pathogen is considered as opportunistic and has been reported on a wide range of hosts, mainly broad-leaved and coniferous



woody plants, causing root rots. In addition, the fungus was reported to live saprophytically on woody substrates and was isolated as an endophyte from a few plant species. This pest categorisation focuses on the hosts that are relevant for the EU (e.g., *Citrus*, *Ficus*, *Pinus*, *Prunus*, *Pyrus*, *Quercus* and *Vitis vinifera*). *Pyrrhoderma noxium* is present in Africa, Central and South America, Asia, and Oceania. It has not been reported in the EU. *Pyrrhoderma noxium* is not included in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. Plants for planting (excluding seeds), bark and wood of host plants as well as soil and other growing media associated with plant debris are the main pathways for the entry of the pathogen into the EU. Host availability and climate suitability factors occurring in parts of the EU are favourable for the establishment and spread of the pathogen. The introduction and spread of the pathogen into the EU are expected to have an economic and environmental impact in parts of the territory where hosts are present. Phytosanitary measures are available to prevent the introduction and spread of the pathogen into the EU. *Pyrrhoderma noxium* satisfies all the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for this species to be regarded as potential Union quarantine pest.

The opinion was adopted on 22 Feb 2024.

## 6. Feedback from EFSA, SC and EC DG SANTE

### 6.1 Feedback from EFSA Scientific Committee

The Panel Chair updated the Panel with the progress of the Scientific committee during their plenary held on 5 and 6 February. The Panel worked on the Guidance on Risk Benefit assessment which was endorsed for public consultation; were updated on biomarker of effect. BIOHAZ and CONTAM panels presented their activities. The existing cross-cutting guidances, nano, default values, margin of exposure, uncertainty were revised. The Guidance on epidemiology was endorsed for public consultation. The Microbiome grant lot 1 and 2 was presented. The discussion on the strategic advisory role of the SC is foreseen in April; any feedback is welcomed.

The PLH panel coordinator informed the Panel that PLH Panel feedback on the draft Guidance on Risk Benefit assessment and on the draft guidance on Epidemiology will be collected through a dedicated form, that would be circulated after the Plenary.

### 6.2 Feedback from EFSA Art.36 Grants

#### 6.2.1 Art.36 Grant Project on *Colletotrichum* species

The Panel was informed about the grant project on *Colletotrichum* species. Background: the EFSA Plant Health Panel published in 2021/2022 some pest categorisations of *Colletotrichum* spp., where a key uncertainty on the geographical distribution of these fungi emerged.

- 1) *C. plurivorum* (QP criteria met, but with key uncertainty),
- 2) *C. fructicola* (no conclusion, due to the key uncertainty), and
- 3) *Colletotrichum aenigma*, *C. alienum*, *C. perseae*, *C. siamense* and *C. theobromicola* (QP criteria met, but with key uncertainty)

The aim of this project is to reduce such uncertainty. The Panel was informed about the project participants, the specific objectives, the duration (3 years), kick-off meeting (19 Dec 2023) and first steps.

#### 6.2.2 Art.36 Grant Project on *Draeculocephala robinsoni*

A brief update was given about the recently started EFSA art. 36 grant project called 'Biodrob: Investigating the biology and capacity to transmit *Xylella fastidiosa* of the sharpshooter *Draeculocephala robinsoni*, recently introduced into the EU'. The background of the project, consortium and main objectives were presented to the Panel. Main objectives include systematic



literature about *Draeculocephala* sp., data collection and research on the biology of this insect in Catalonia, and experiments inferring the transmission dynamics (acquisition and inoculation) with the electrical penetration graph technique (EPG).

### **6.2.3 Art.36 Grant Project on Climate suitability for CBS in Mediterranean citrus growing areas**

An update on the EFSA art. 36 Grant Project on the Climate Suitability of Mediterranean citrus growing areas for Citrus Black Spot (CBS) fungus *Phyllosticta citricarpa*. The project, conducted in Tunisia, started in 2019 and it will end in May 2024 with some delay due to the pandemic. The grant has (i) improved the knowledge on citrus black spot epidemiology in non-EU citrus growing areas in the Mediterranean Basin by collection of epidemiological data, (ii) collected data on weather and cropping practices in citrus orchards in non EU citrus growing areas in the Mediterranean Basin, (iii) improved the overall understanding of CBS climate suitability in non-EU citrus growing areas in the Mediterranean Basin.

### **6.3 European Commission**

DG SANTE thanked the Panel and the working groups for the work on the large number of pest categorisations. They are currently analysing the content of approximately 100 pest categorisations and the phase two scientific opinions already published. As a follow-up specific questions/mandates might be sent to EFSA. Furthermore, exchanges on a new revision of the Annexes to Regulation (EU)2019/2072, are ongoing for few months. As part of the procedures the Commission draft legal text will be published for consultations. EFSA and the Panel would be informed about these procedures. The work on the High Risk Plants dossiers is ongoing, the dossiers are analysed and the relevant legal acts are amended when this is required. Currently there are internal discussions/reflections regarding more mandates to be sent to EFSA, including pest categorisations. The submission of High risk plants dossiers continues so the Panel's work on this mandate would continue as well for some time.

### **6.4 PLH Plenary Calendar**

The 2024 PLH plenary meeting calendar was presented to the panel members.  
Next Plenary is on site in Parma 13-14 March 2024.

## **7. Any other business**

None.



## Annex I

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

With regard to this meeting, **Dr. Panagiotis Milonas** declared the following interest with regard to the two draft Scientific opinions on:

- ◆ **5.1 Draft scientific opinion of Pest categorisation of *Lepidosaphes malicola* EFSA-Q-2024-00038**
- ◆ **5.2 Draft scientific opinion of Pest categorisation of *Eulecanium giganteum* EFSA-Q-2023-00324**

He informed the Panel 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<sup>[1]</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management<sup>[2]</sup>, 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 6.3, 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.