

13 & 14 March 2024

9:00-17:00 / 9:00-13:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 8 April 2024

Location: Teleconference

Attendees:

- 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, Roel POTTING, Philippe REIGNAULT, Emilio STEFANI, Hans-Hermann THULKE, Antonio VICENT CIVERA, Wopke VAN DER WERF, Jonathan YUEN, Lucia ZAPPALÀ
- European Commission:
Panagiota MYLONA, Wolfgang REINERT, Françoise MUNAUT
- EFSA:
João Filipe CAVALHEIRO, Matteo CROTTA, 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, RIBAYA MUNOZ Maria, Emanuela TACCI, Anastasia TERZIDOU
- JRC:
Ana Cristina CARDOSO & Eugenio GERVASINI
- Hearing Experts:
Camille PICARD (EPPO), Massimo FACCOLI and Matteo MARCHIORO (University of Padova, Italy - EFSA art. 36 Tasking Grant), Eveline VAN WOENSEL (Wageningen University, The Netherlands - EFSA art. 36 Grant), Oresteia SFYRA (Benaki Phytopathological Institute, Greece - EFSA art. 36 Tasking Grant), Richard Mally (expert from EFSA WG on Quantitative Pest Risk Assessment section 1)
- EU Reference Laboratory (EURL) Insects and mites:
Helga REISENZEIN (AGES, Austria), Philippe REYNAUD (ANSES, France), Raphaëlle MOUTTET (ANSES, France), Pascal ROUSSE (ANSES, France), Christa LETHMAYER (AGES, Austria)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants, Annemarie Juesten sent her apology.

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 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.



4. Agreement of the minutes of the 120th Panel plenary meeting held on 22nd 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 Scientific opinion on Quantitative Pest Risk Assessment on *Leucinodes* species from Africa EFSA-Q-2023-00070

Following a request from the European Commission, the EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a quantitative risk assessment for the EU of African *Leucinodes* species (Lepidoptera: Crambidae), which are fruit and shoot borers, especially of eggplant type fruit. The assessment focused on (i) potential pathways for entry, (ii) distribution of infested imports within EU, (iii) climatic conditions favouring establishment, (iv) spread and (v) impact. Options for risk reduction are discussed but their effectiveness was not quantified. *Leucinodes* spp. are widely distributed across sub-Saharan Africa but are little studied and they could be much more widespread in Africa than reported. Much African literature erroneously reports them as *Leucinodes orbonalis* which is largely restricted to Asia. The import of eggplant type fruit from sub-Saharan Africa consists of special fruit types and caters mostly to niche markets in the EU. The main pathway for entry is fruit of *Solanum aethiopicum* and exotic varieties of eggplant (*Solanum melongena*). CLIMEX modelling was used with two possible thresholds of ecoclimatic index (EI) to assess establishment potential. Climates favouring establishment occur mostly in southern Europe, where, based on human population 14% of the imported produce is distributed across NUTS2 regions where $EI \geq 30$; or where 23% of the produce is distributed where $EI \geq 15$. Over the next five years, an annual median estimate of approximately 8,600 fruits, originating from Africa, and infested with African *Leucinodes* spp. are expected to enter EU NUTS2 regions where $EI \geq 15$ (90% CR approximately 570 to 52,700); this drops to approximately 5,200 (90% CR approximately 350 to 32,100) in NUTS2 regions where $EI \geq 30$. Escape of adult moths occurs mostly from consumer waste; considering uncertainties in pathway transfer, such as adult emergence, mate finding and survival of progeny, the annual median probability of a mated female establishing a founder population in NUTS regions where $EI \geq 15$ was estimated to be 0.0078 (90% CR 0.00023 to 0.12125). This equates to a median estimate of one founder population approximately every 128 years (90% CR approximately one every 8 to 4,280 years). Using an $EI \geq 30$, the median number of founder populations establishing in the EU annually is 0.0048 (90% CR 0.0001 to 0.0739), equating to a median estimate of one founder population approximately every 210 years (90% CR approximately one every 14 to 7,020 years). Under climate change for the period 2040–2059, the percent of infested produce going to suitable areas would be increased to 33% for $EI \geq 15$ and to 21% for $EI \geq 30$. Accordingly, the waiting time until the next founder population would be reduced to median estimates of 89 years for $EI \geq 15$ (90% CR approximately 6–2,980 years) and 139 years for $EI \geq 30$ (90% CR 9–4655 years). If a founder population were to establish, it is estimated to spread at a rate of 0.65–7.0 km per year after a lag phase of 5–92 years. *Leucinodes* spp. are estimated to reduce eggplant yield by a median value of 4.5% (90% CR 0.67 to 13%) if growers take no specific action, or 0.54% (90% CR between 0.13 and 1.9%) if they do take targeted action, matching previous estimates made during a risk assessment of *L. orbonalis* from Asia.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 14 March 2024.

5.2 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation on the non-EU Scolytinae of broadleaved trees EFSA-Q-2021-00710

The working group chair gave an update on the current status of the categorisation of non-EU Scolytinae of non-coniferous hosts. Following the data collection completed by the Tasking Grant contractor (University of Padova), the working group dedicated its time to finalise the pest list and develop the draft opinion on the pest categorisation. The list of pests that may be candidates for



potential EU quarantine pest status was presented. The document will be finalised in the coming weeks and a consultation is planned with the EU Reference Laboratory for Insects and Mites, before possible adoption at the Plenary meeting in June 2024.

5.3 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Crisicoccus matsumotoi* EFSA-Q-2024-00039

Following the commodity risk assessments of *Acer palmatum* plants grafted on *A. davidii* from China, in which *Crisicoccus matsumotoi* (Hemiptera: Pseudococcidae) was identified as a pest of possible concern, the European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to conduct a pest categorisation of *C. matsumotoi* for the territory of the European Union. Recent taxonomic revision of the genus *Crisicoccus* concluded that *C. matsumotoi* is a synonym of *C. seruratus*, therefore the categorisation will use the current valid name *C. seruratus*. It is an insect pest native to Japan, feeding on species in 13 plant families. There are reports of its presence also in China and South Korea, but there is great uncertainty about the identity of the species for these records. Therefore, there is uncertainty about the species referred to as *C. matsumotoi* in the commodity risk assessments of *A. palmatum*. *C. seruratus* is a multivoltine species. It has three generations per year and overwinters as a nymph. The most important crops that may be affected by *C. seruratus* are figs (*Ficus carica*), grapes (*Vitis* spp.), nashi pears (*Pyrus pyrifolia* var. *culta*), persimmons (*Diospyros kaki*), and walnuts (*Juglans regia*). Plants for planting and fruits provide potential pathways for entry into the EU. Host availability and climate suitability suggest that the central, northern and some areas of southern EU countries would be suitable for the establishment of *C. seruratus*. The introduction of this mealybug would likely have an economic impact in the EU through yield reduction and fruit downgrading because of honeydew deposition and the consequent growth of sooty moulds. This insect is not listed in Annex II of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2072. Phytosanitary measures are available to reduce the likelihood of entry and spread of this species into the EU. *C. seruratus* 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 14 March 2024.

5.4 Scientific opinion on Quantitative Pest Risk Assessment on *Retithrips syriacus* EFSA-Q-2023-00071

Following a request from the European Commission, the EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a quantitative risk assessment for the EU of *Retithrips syriacus* (Mayet) (Thysanoptera: Thripidae), a polyphagous thrips, regarded as a tropical/sub-tropical pest occurring in several countries of Africa, South America, Asia and in the EU in Cyprus. The current risk assessment focused on potential pathways for entry, the climatic conditions allowing establishment, the expected spread capacity, and the impact considering a time horizon of 10 years (2023-2032). The Panel identified the import of cut roses, persimmons, table grapes, as well as plants for planting of the genera *Acalypha* and *Terminalia* from third countries and those of *Persea americana* (avocado) from Israel as the most relevant entry pathways to consider. Over the next ten years, an annual median estimate of 95 (90% Certainty Range, CR, ranging from 13 to 1832) potential *R. syriacus* founder populations per year are expected to successfully transfer to a suitable host in the EU NUTS2 regions where the climatic conditions are predicted as suitable for establishment; this value drops to a median of 4.6 founder populations per year (90% CR: 1 every 1.7 years – 85.6 per year) after considering the actual probability of establishment of a potential founder population. The estimated number of founder population per year is mostly driven by the import of cut roses and plants for planting. If such founder populations were to establish, *R. syriacus* is estimated to spread at a median rate of 0.05 km/year (90% CR 0.02–2.30 km/year) after a median lag phase of 1.1 years (90% CR 0.3–3.3 years). The overall impact on yield (expressed as % of the total agricultural production) directly attributable to *R. syriacus* when considering: (i) the main *R. syriacus* hosts in the EU, (ii) the areas of the EU where establishment is possible, (iii) the current agricultural practices and (iv) the evidence of impact from the countries where the pest is established for a



long time, was estimated at 0.065% as the median value of the uncertainty distribution (90% CR 0.001% to 0.571%). Options for risk reduction are discussed but the effectiveness was not quantified.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 14 March 2024.

5.5 Scientific Opinion on Commodity Risk assessment of Petunia and Calibrachoa from Kenya EFSA-Q-2022-00772

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 Kenya. 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. Fourteen EU regulated pests [*Bemisia tabaci*, cowpea mild mottle virus, *Liriomyza huidobrensis*, *Liriomyza sativae*, *Liriomyza trifolii*, potato leafroll virus, potato spindle tuber viroid, *Ralstonia pseudosolanacearum*, *R. solanacearum*, *Scirtothrips dorsalis*, tomato mild mottle virus, tomato spotted wilt virus, tomato yellow leaf curl virus, and *Xanthomonas vesicatoria*] and six EU non-regulated pests (*Aleurodicus dispersus*, pepper veinal mottle virus, *Nipaecoccus viridis*, *Phenacoccus solenopsis*, *Tetranychus neocaledonicus*, and tomato yellow ring virus) fulfilled all relevant criteria and were selected for further evaluation. For these pests, the risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier from Kenya were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. Additionally, 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 *T. neocaledonicus* being the pest most frequently expected on the imported cuttings. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty, that between 9942 and 10,000 bags containing unrooted cuttings of *Petunia* spp. and *Calibrachoa* spp. per 10,000 would be free of *T. neocaledonicus*.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 14 March 2024.

6. Feedback from EFSA, SC and EC DG SANTE

6.1 Final results of the EFSA Art. 36 project on Citizen science for Plant Health Surveillance

Eveline van Woensel from Wageningen University (NL) presented the final outputs of the EFSA funded art. 36 project on citizen science in plant pest surveillance. An approach was presented to calculate the detection probability of insect pests from citizen science data and use citizen science data to complement official surveys. This was done by constructing proxies for sampling effort by citizen science and subsequently estimating the probability of detection for locations at which a pest was known to occur. The methodology is illustrated with an invasive plant pest in Europe, *Popillia japonica*, that was first observed in the Italian region of Lombardia in 2014. The conclusions of this project are that citizen science can help to make usable statements on pest freedom and as such can contribute to the substantiation of pest freedom.

The members of the Panel discussed the possibility of using citizen science (CS) data for diseases, which likely requires extra training due to the difficulty of spotting disease symptoms compared to insects. Correcting efforts for CS data were also discussed. Questions about GBIF and insect appearance, emphasizing the need for a library of possible *r* values and observation biases between citizens and official observers, suggesting incentives for growers to report findings were raised. It was summarised that CS isn't meant to replace official surveys but to complement it.



6.2 Feedback from EFSA

The PLH Panel coordinator updated the panel on ongoing EFSA grants. He also reminded the panel about the ongoing work on protocol development for which the first reading is foreseen for 22-23 May and the second reading with possible adoption is on 18-19 June 2024. The last plenary dates and agendas of the current mandate were shown to the Panel.

6.3 Feedback from SC

The PLH panel chair informed the panel that the SC panel chair is preparing documents on the role of the SC, if you any panel members have any ideas of feedback, please inform the PLH panel chair.

6.4 Feedback from EC DG SANTE

Wolfgang Reinert from EC SANTE G1 Unit informed the Panel that the Commission's proposal, with an amendment to the plant health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031, was accepted by the Council. Consequently, the Council has requested the Parliament's agreement in the first reading. This indicates that the amendment to the plant health Regulation is likely to be adopted before summer.

7. Feedback from JRC

7.1 EASIN European Alien Species Information Network

Eugenio Gervasini from EC JRC presented the European Alien Species Information Network (EASIN) developed by JRC. The mission of EASIN is to assist the European Commission and EU Member States in the accomplishment of biodiversity and sectoral policies, and in the implementation of the IAS Regulation, of which is the official information system (art. 25); to facilitate transnational cooperation, to support research on Invasive Alien Species (IAS). EASIN provides support to Member states through special catalogue, geodatabase, NOTSYS -early warning and dynamic maps. It also focuses its attention to Citizen Science: aimed at increasing people's awareness, literacy and engagement on biodiversity and Invasive Alien Species, through: structured communication strategy, including Social Media, open online courses, development of an educational board game, webpage on Citizen Science (hosting a repository on CS projects in Europe), articles in children science magazines, and App and web app "Invasive Alien Species in Europe"

Any other business

Next PLH plenary is April 18 from 9-13 online.



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:

7.3 Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Crisicoccus matsumotoi* EFSA-Q-2024-00039

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^[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 6.3, 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.