

PLH UNIT

Network on Risk Assessment in Plant Health

Minutes of the 4th meeting

Held on 04 10 2012, Helsinki

(Agreed on 18 10 2013)

Participants

- **Network Representatives of Member States:**

Country	Name	Country	Name
Austria	Sylvia Bluemel	Latvia	Astra Garkaje
Belgium	Kristien Braeken	Lithuania	Silvija Pupeliene
Bulgaria	Rositsa Dimitrova	Malta	Marica Gatt
Czech Republic	Vaclav Stejskal	Netherlands	Dirk Jan Van Der Gaag
Denmark	Jorgen Hansen	Norway	Elin Thingnaes
Estonia	Mart Kinkar	Poland	Witold Karnkowski
Finland	Matti Puolimatika	Portugal	Paula Carvalho
France	Nathalie Franquet	Slovenia	Vlasta Knapic
Germany	Georg Jens Unger	Sweden	Kristof Capieau
Hungary	Gabor Szalkai	United Kingdom	Richard Harris
Ireland	James William Choiseuil		

- **Panel Members**

- Michael John Jeger, David Makowski

- **Hearing Experts**

- Sarah Brunel (EPPO) for item 5.4

- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

- Guillermo Cardon (DG SANCO); Nandor Pete (DG SANCO FVO) for item 5.2; Brian Doherty, Erik van der Goot and Jens Linge (JRC) for item 5.5

- **EFSA:**

- PLH Unit: Elzbieta Ceglarska (Chair), Gabor Hollo, Virag Kertesz, Doreen Russell, Giuseppe Stancanelli and Joanna Swarcewicz

- SAS Unit: Olaf Mosbach-Schulz
- EmRisk Unit: Agnes Rortais
- **Observers**
 - Albania (Aniela Vuksani), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Vojislav Trkulja), Croatia (Sanja Milos), Kosovo (Valdet Gjinovci), Montenegro (Jelena Latinovic), Serbia (Sladjana Lukic) and Turkey (Aynur Karahan)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from Cyprus, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Switzerland

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of interest

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes regarding Declarations of Interests (Dols)¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director implementing this Policy², members of networks, peer review meetings, networking meetings and their alternates shall be invited to complete and submit an Annual Declaration of interest (ADoI).

EFSA screened the ADoI filled in by the experts invited for the present meeting. No conflicts of interests related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process or at the Oral Declaration of interest (ODOI) at the beginning of this meeting.

The Chair thanked the representative(s) that has/have submitted an ADoI and/or has/have declared some interest at the beginning of this meeting in the ODOI.

¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules.pdf>

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Network on Risk Assessment in Plant held on 19 03 2012, Parma.

The minutes were adopted.

5. Topics for discussion

5.1 Member States suggestions

No items were submitted for discussion

5.2 Exchange of Information and Data at EU level

Mike Jeger (Chair of the PLH Panel) updated the Network representatives on the activities of the Panel, particularly in relation to the Panel's recently completed and adopted opinions and the current work of the Panel.

Austria asked about risk reduction options and resistance in relation to potato cyst nematodes. Poland sought information concerning the *Bemisia tabaci* complex and was informed that this would be clarified in an ongoing EFSA risk assessment to be published in 2013. Germany expressed the view that the recommendations regarding *Pomacea* could be relevant to other opinions and also stated that data collection regarding the new request for the 13 organisms listed in Annex IIAll of Directive 2000/29/EC should be reflected on during the meeting. Sweden requested information about the soil and growing media request and was advised that the mandate would be sent to EFSA in the near future. Czech Republic asked if *Impatiens necrotic spot virus* (INSV) was considered as part of *Tomato spotted wilt virus* (TSWV) and was informed that INSV is a different virus and therefore, although this virus was partially covered in the published opinion on pest categorisation of tospoviruses³, a complete risk assessment for INSV could be done once a new mandate would be submitted on this. Ireland noted that EFSA is currently engaged more in the development of pest risk assessments rather than undertaking peer reviews of pest risk assessments as in the past.

EFSA provided an update on outsourcing projects and explained the difference between EFSA Article 36 grants/cooperation projects compared to procurement projects. A summary of planned procurements was presented.

EFSA presented the results from the analysis of the data questionnaires on pest status provided by the Member States. The reasoning behind the questionnaires and their formats was explained and how the data collected from the questionnaires have been used in EFSA's opinions. The feedback from Member States concerning the difficulties encountered was acknowledged and the meeting participants were asked to present their experiences in using the questionnaire.

Germany reported the difficulty of consolidating all the information received from different regions in a single file. Denmark liked the format but had the impression that completion could be easier from a small Member State while the Netherlands said that some information received was not very scientific. Slovenia raised an issue about the reliability of the data as data is often only collected when an outbreak occurs and

³ EFSA Panel on Plant Health (PLH) Scientific Opinion on the pest categorisation of the tospoviruses. EFSA Journal 2012;10(7):2772. [101 pp.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2012.2772. Available online: www.efsa.europa.eu/efsajournal

also advised the development of standardised questions to enable plant health inspectors to understand them; this last point was supported by Malta.

Nandor Pete (Food and Veterinary Office of the European Commission, FVO) gave an overview of the database for pest notifications using examples from different Member States. The new plant health regime will maintain notifications but detailed rules on pest reporting are needed. The structure of the new template was outlined and the timetable for its introduction outlined.

Poland highlighted the importance of the template for pest reporting but also asked for advice on how it should be completed. Finland noted the importance of electronic systems and asked about the systems used in other Member States. Austria advised that their working tools work in parallel with other reporting tools. Other contributors asked about the EPPO reporting systems and data collection in general.

The FVO speaker advised that a decision on the type of the reporting system is still under discussion.

The Network representatives from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta presented pest risk assessment activities in their respective Member States. The presentations included profiles of the state phytosanitary services, methodologies used, type of pest risk assessments done and how cooperation and communication is undertaken.

5.4 Synergies in pest risk assessment activities and harmonisation of PRA methodologies

Presentations and demonstrations were given to the Network on risk assessment schemes and early warning systems by EPPO, EFSA and JRC.

Sarah Brunel (EPPO) presented the EPPO alert list⁴, the EPPO reporting service⁵ and a new EPPO's scheme for an express pest risk assessment⁶. Norway asked if EPPO will use the new express scheme or if the full pest risk assessment will also be used. EPPO replied that this will be dependant on the aim and the type of request. Sweden asked about the differences between the CABI databases and the EPPO PQR database⁷ and Poland requested further information about the decision support scheme.

David Makowski (Member of the EFSA PLH Panel) presented the guidance document on methodology for evaluation of the effectiveness of options for reducing the risk of introduction and spread of organisms harmful to plant health in the EU territory⁸ and showed its application using a quantitative approach for one of the Panel's opinions. Germany was appreciative of the approach but added that it would be complicated to use. EFSA indicated that the requests for scientific advice on effectiveness of risk reduction options generally require the level of detail contained in the guidance document.

The representatives from the JRC gave a presentation on the Medical Information System (MediSys)⁹ and the Europe Media Monitor (EMM) tools at JRC, while Agnes Rortais from EFSA explained how EFSA employs such system for monitoring plant

⁴ http://www.eppo.int/QUARANTINE/Alert_List/alert_list.htm

⁵ http://www.eppo.int/PUBLICATIONS/reporting/reporting_service.htm

⁶ http://www.eppo.int/QUARANTINE/Pest_Risk_Analysis/PRA_intro.htm

⁷ <http://www.eppo.int/DATABASES/pqr/pqr.htm>

⁸ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/2755.pdf>

⁹ <http://medusa.jrc.it/medisys/homeedition/it/home.html>

health issues and how the information obtained has been used in recent Panel opinions.

The Czech representative asked whether the low number of reports from specific countries could indicate nervousness about publishing. The speakers answered that this is an issue which is difficult to quantify. Malta suggested increasing the number of languages which are monitored, such as Arabic. Denmark remarked the need for filtering and horizontal scanning when carrying out searches to refine the information collected, which the speakers acknowledged to be a favoured approach but noting that it is very time consuming. Slovenia stressed the importance of new risks knowledge – so the tool is advantageous in this respect.

The Netherlands and Germany acknowledged the potential of the system and also asked about Scoop which is used by EPPO to go through websites. EFSA said that as interest in the media monitoring project is high it could be used as a platform for joint working with EPPO and Member States and informed about an upcoming conference with FAO on this topic. Sweden emphasised the potential of this tool and asked if it could be used to identify plants and plant products sold over the internet which may present a risk. The JRC replied that other tools can be used for this rather than MedISys and that a different project should be used to access trade data.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Miscellaneous

The EFSA secretariat thanked the Network for the completion of the questionnaire. A suggested way forward is to create a small working group composed of Member States to look at the questionnaire.

6.2 Horizon 2020

A report from EFSA on Horizon 2020 was given: a working group has developed the topics that have subsequently been presented to the EFSA Scientific Committee and then sent to DG Research and DG Agri. The new framework is expected to be agreed in 2013/2014.

6.3 Network meeting connected to a scientific event

EFSA tabled a proposal to continue this pattern, as in both this and the previous Network meetings, and to attach Network meetings to a scientific event. The Member State representatives indicated that once a year is probably too much but that every 2-3 years would be the preferred option. EFSA informed the Network that a scientific event on data collection will be organised with EPPO to coincide with the completion of the EFSA Article 36 project Perseus.

7. Next meeting

The dates of the next Network meeting are 17 October 2013 (p.m.) and 18 October 2013 (a.m.)