European Food Safety Authority

ALPHA UNIT

Network on Risk Assessment in Plant Health

Minutes of the 5th meeting

Held on 17-18 October 2013, Parma

(Agreed on 04 04 2014)

Participants

- **Network Representatives of Member States:**

Country	Name	Country	Name
AUSTRIA	Sylvia BLUEMEL	LATVIA	Liga GRISANE
CROATIA	Dario IVIC	LITHUANIA	Jolita KULBIENE
CZECH REPUBLIC	Vaclav STEJSKAL	MALTA	Marica GATT
DENMARK	Jorgen Sogaard HANSEN	NORWAY	Leif SUNDHEIM
ESTONIA	Mart KINKAR	NETHERLANDS	Dirk VAN DER GAAG
FINLAND	Matti PUOLIMATKA	POLAND	Witold KARNKOWSKI
FRANCE	Nathalie VIGUERIE	SLOVENIA	Katharina GROZNIK
HUNGARY	Gabor SZALKAI	SWEDEN	Lars BOLLMARK
IRELAND	Oliver MCEVOY	UK	Martin WARD

- **Panel Members**

  Michael John Jeger participated by web-conference for item 5.2.

- **EFSA:**

PLH Unit	Giuseppe STANCANELLI (Chair)
PLH Unit	Gabor HOLLO
PLH Unit	Svetla KOZELSKA
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- **Observers**

Country	Name
ALBANIA	Angjelina VUKSANI
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	Katica ARAR
FYR OF MACEDONIA	Ivica ANGELOVSKI
KOSOVO	Naim DELIJAJ
MONTENEGRO	Jelena LATINOVIĆ
SERBIA	Ivan TOMAŠEV
TURKEY	Hasenem ERTAŞ

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Slovakia, the European Commission and EPPO (European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation).

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 (DoIs)[1] and the Decision of the Executive Director implementing this Policy[2], 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 have submitted an ADoI.

[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 4th meeting of the Network on Risk Assessment in Plant Health held on 04 October 2012 in Helsinki.

The minutes were adopted.

5. Topics for discussion

5.1 Items suggested by Member States

No items were submitted for discussion prior to the meeting. During the meeting the United Kingdom tabled a proposal to present a progress report on the UK plant health risk register as part of agenda point 7.1.

5.2 Update on the 2013 activities of the EFSA Scientific Panel on Plant Health and plan for 2014-2015l

The 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, the current work of the Panel and the plan for 2014-2015.

Austria asked about guidance on denomination within the citrus canker draft opinion and was informed that the denomination guidance refers to the taxonomic status of *Xanthomonas citri* pv. *citri* and *Xanthomonas citri* pv. *aurantifolii* as the two species causing citrus canker. Malta reminded EFSA that they were not included in the study in the Citrus black spot draft opinion for public consultation and was advised that EFSA is now collecting data to include Malta in the modelling. Poland asked about the resistance of coniferous tree species to the pine wood nematode. EFSA explained the conclusions and recommendations of a recent scientific opinion of the EFSA PLH Panel[3].

5.3 Discussion on data collection for pest risk assessment

An update on the state of play of data exchange between EFSA and Member States was presented to the Network and shortly discussed.

The plenary session on data collection was followed up by group discussion on three subtopics: "pests", "hosts and environment" and "agricultural practices and impact" using the World Café facilitation method[4]. The results of the three group discussions were presented to and discussed by the Network participants. (See Annex I)

6. Summary of actions from the previous day and plan ahead

The results of the three group discussions and the plenary session were summarised. EFSA asked for inputs and viewpoints from Member States on data collection for the forthcoming Commission mandates on pest risk assessments of listed pests. The question discussed with the Network was what would be the most effective approach to deal with this task as it will require close cooperation between EFSA and MS regarding the data collection. The two approaches used in previous data collections from MS, i.e. a comprehensive Excel questionnaire and a simple questionnaire to confirm the pest status, were discussed. For the new batch of pest listed in Annexes of Directive 2000/29/EC it was agreed that the simple questionnaire to confirm the pest status was more fit for purpose for this type of request and could provide more rapid responses by MS (See Annex I for details).

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[3] EFSA PLH Panel (EFSA Panel on Plant Health), 2013. Scientific Opinion on comments provided by Portugal on the phytosanitary risk associated with Pinus pinea for the spread of pine wood nematode. EFSA Journal 2013;11(4):3163, 37 pp. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3163. Available online at http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/3163.pdf

[4] Participatory methods toolkit. A practitioner's manual. The World Café. Extract from the publication 'Participatory Methods Toolkit. A practitioner's manual', a joint publication of the King Baudouin Foundation and the Flemish Institute for Science and Technology Assessment (viWTA), Belgium. Available at http://www.kbs-frb.be/uploadedFiles/KBS-FRB/Files/EN/PUB_1540_Toolkit_13_WorldCafe.pdf

7. Topics for discussion

7.1 Presentation of risk assessment activities by Member States

The network representatives from the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden presented pest risk assessment activities in their countries. The presentations included profiles of the state phytosanitary services, methodologies used, type of pest risk assessments done, recent projects and how cooperation and communication is undertaken.

The Netherlands highlighted in his presentation that the advice from the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) to the Ministry are based on Pest Risk Analyses (PRA) (risk assessments, identification and evaluation of risk reductions options that may include cost-benefits) and the opinion of stakeholders. The Netherlands actively participates in international projects like EUPHRESCO II, Pratiques, Pepira, EFSA Prima phace, ISEFOR. Some of the recent PRA (such as that on pepper weevil, pathway analysis of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, update on blueberry scorch virus and inventory for other berry pests etc.) were introduced. The structure of the import database for plants for planting was also explained. The emerging risks and relevant pathways were shortly discussed.

Poland introduced the State Plant Health and Seed inspection Service specifying its tasks and structure. The important source of information necessary for performance of PRA is the Integrated Informatic System in Plant Health and Seed Inspection. Following the description of the past PRA activities, it has been highlighted that since no new serious harmful organisms neither have been intercepted in imported consignments nor found in the territory of Poland, it has not been necessary to prepare new PRAs.

Sweden presented the state of play of risk assessment in plant health. It has been pointed out that limited PRA has been performed in response to current needs such as EU proposals for regulation, national risk management measures (emergency measures), import inquiries and permits**.** The government tasks in 2013 to investigate needs for and to propose a solution for PRA in Sweden were introduced.

United Kingdom presented a progress report on the UK plant health risk register. It has been highlighted that in the last years several new and/or previously unrecognised plant pests and pathogens have emerged as significant risks. Threats to plant health have also increased with globalisation. The volume and diversity of plants and plant products entering the UK has increased. The aim of the plant health risk register is to capture risks to crops, trees, gardens and ecosystems from plant pests and to gather internal and external threats. The main task is to develop a prioritised UK Risk Register for tree health and plant biosecurity.

7.2 New EFSA communication strategy

A presentation on EFSA's risk communication related to the food chain was given.

The objective of EFSA is to be perceived as a leading global reference resource in the risk communications related to the food chain. To achieve this goal the most important is to communicate how EFSA's work contributes to protecting consumers, animals and the environment from food-related risks and provide target audiences with easier access to information in a format they can readily use. Key initiatives *(e.g. themes and storytelling, website redesign and best practice risk communications etc)*, the main challenges *(e.g. stakeholder and communication environment, internal capacity building etc.)* and the opportunities *(e.g. support creation of EU risk assessment community etc.)* have also been presented.

7.3 Summary of 3 years activity of the EFSA PLH network

EFSA briefly presented the objectives of the PLH Network such as building mutual understanding of RA principles in PLH sector; provision of increased transparency in the current process among MS and EFSA; facilitation of harmonisation of PRA practices and methodologies; enhancement of exchange of information and data and achievement of synergies in PRA activities. To show and document the achievement of the objectives, an overview of the five PLH Network meetings was provided. The main outcomes of the PLH Network meetings are the Minutes published on the EFSA webpage.

7.4 EFSA Review of scientific networks

The participants were informed that a review of the EFSA Scientific Networks was carried out in 2012 to identify areas of best practice and areas where improvements could be made to the operation of networks. One of the conclusions and recommendations of this review concerning the PLH network was that the Terms of Reference (TOR) should be reviewed regularly every 3 years. Beside this, it has been recommended that key areas of activities of the networks need to be identified on annual or multiannual basis starting in 2014. Representatives shall commit to liaise as appropriate at national level before and after each network meeting. Such commitments should be formalised by including this requirement in the TOR's of each Network.

7.5 Discussion on PLH network work plan in coming years and updated terms of reference

The draft terms of reference of the new PLH Network were presented to the Member States and discussed. Based on the discussion, changes of the new draft terms of reference were proposed, particularly to highlight the objectives concerning data collection and the preparation for the new plant health regime. The draft version updated according to the network discussion is attached in Annex 2. The participants were informed that it will be further proceeded according to the EFSA rules.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 The joint EFSA/EPPO data collection workshop and EFSA 2014 scientific events

EFSA informed the meeting participants that a scientific event will be organised together with EPPO in Parma on the 1-3 of April 2014. The objective of this joint workshop is to exchange experience and reflect together on how to collect, store and disseminate plant health information at national, regional and global level. Further details can be found on the following link: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/130401.htm

8.2 The 2013 EFSA outsourced projects, Art. 36 cooperation

EFSA provided an update on outsourcing projects, explaining the difference between cooperation projects that are Article 36 grants and those which are public procurements. A summary of ongoing and planned grants and procurements projects was also presented. The updated information regarding the current calls is regularly published on the EFSA website.

8.3 Update on the organisational changes in EFSA

EFSA informed the representatives concerning changes in its organisational structure, including the re-organisation of the RASA directorate. From the 1st of January 2014 the RASA Directorate will include four units: the Animal and plant health Unit supporting the AHAW Panel and PLH Panel and the Networks; the Biological hazards and contaminants Unit, including support to the BIOHAZ Panel

and CONTAM Panel and Networks; the Evidence management Unit and the Assessment and methodological support Unit. These structural changes nevertheless will not affect the activity of the plant health network.

9. Conclusions

Concerning the forthcoming mandate on 40 pests from the annexes of the Council Directive 2000/29/EC, it was proposed to follow the same data collection approach used in 2013 during the second batch of mandates. In light of this, EFSA would check the pest status on EPPO PQR first and then ask the MS for confirmation. There was a general agreement that fast and fit for purpose solutions are needed.

Based on the discussion, changes of the new draft terms of reference for the Network were proposed. The objective concerning data collection will be highlighted and the preparation for the new plant health regime will be included. The updated new draft terms of reference will be circulated to the Network representatives together with other documents.

EFSA tabled a proposal to continue the pattern of previous network meetings and to attach it to a scientific event. The date of the next Network meeting is on the 3-4 April 2014 in Parma attached to the EFSA/EPPO data collection workshop. This will provide the opportunity to finalise the discussion on data collection following inputs received during the workshop.

Closure of the meeting

The EFSA secretariat thanked the Network members for their active contribution to the discussions.

ANNEX I

REPORT OF GROUP DISCUSSION ON DATA COLLECTION AT THE 5TH EFSA PLH NETWORK MEETING

SUMMARY

The aim of this group discussion was to obtain a clearer picture about the potentialities for information and data exchange between EFSA and Member States (MS). The participants were all involved and discussed very actively the availability and quality of data required for pest risk assessment using the world café method[5]. It was important to exchange experiences and reflect together on how data and information on plant health are collected, stored and disseminated at national and regional level in the different countries.

The forthcoming mandate on 40 pests from the annexes expected from DG SANCO was presented and feedback on related data collection approach was requested from the participants. The participants proposed as the most suitable option for the forthcoming 40 organisms the same approach applied in 2013 using short questionnaires and e-mail requests. In light of this, EFSA would check the EPPO PQR first and then ask the MS for confirmation. There was a general agreement that fast and fit for purpose solutions are needed and to avoid duplication in the work is important.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the group discussion was to involve the participants into active exchange of information regarding the data collection. The collection of accurate and reliable data is the basis for risk assessment in support of risk management. The availability of quality data has been identified as a major challenge to pest risk assessment. Cooperation in data collection across the EU is very important in order to harmonise approaches and thereby facilitate information sharing among countries.

The aim of the world cafe approach was to provide the possibility for an effective brainstorming where all members could share their experiences.

The main aim of this discussion on data collection was to enhance exchange of information and data between EFSA and MS by:

discussing issues of availability and quality of data required for pest risk assessment

sharing information and experiences in data collection and surveillance

It was crucial to exchange experience and reflect together on how to collect, store and disseminate plant health information at national and regional level. In light of the expected mandate from the European Commission (DG SANCO) on ca. 40 harmful organisms currently listed in Council Directive 2000/29/EC, a common approach for data gathering and analysis is required. For that reason the main idea was to develop the approach for data collection in a cooperative manner based on EFSA data needs (experiences on data collection from MS) and data and information availability at MS level (NPPO).

DISCUSSION

An update on the state of the art on data exchange between EFSA and MS was presented to the PLH Network. The UK confirmed the problems and difficulties of gathering data and information (e.g. trade figures for plants for planting) and proposed the use of TRACES (Trade Control and Expert System) as a new future approach, as well as an update of the EPPO PQR. Poland commented the questionnaire on Tospoviruses submitted to MS as challenging to complete due to lack of data and knowledge and requested that in future EFSA adopts a simplified approach in its questionnaires. Austria asked about the validation of data and information received from individuals or institutions/companies and about the

exclusion criteria. EFSA explained its approach to validation and use of this type of data and information through the application of the transparency principle and scientific knowledge comparison performed by the EFSA Working group experts. It was also proposed to refer to ISPM 8 for data validation. The Netherlands suggested the organisation of a technical hearing to access the information on the presence of pests from the annexes of the 2000/29/EC Council Directive that will be needed for the future EFSA opinions.

The plenary discussion on data collection was followed by group discussions on the following three key questions using the World Café facilitation method:

1. How should EFSA organize the exchange of **information on "PEST"** data (*interceptions, pathways of entry, inspections/detection, presence of pests/surveys, phytosanitary measures etc.)*?
2. How should EFSA organize the exchange of **information on "HOST AND ENVIRONMENT"** data (*distribution of hosts, EU internal movement, pathways of spread, meteorological data, biodiversity and environment etc.*)?
3. How should EFSA organize the exchange of **information on "AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE and IMPACT"** data (*cropping practices, yield and/or quality loss, control measures/crop protection, environmental impact, forestry practices etc.*)?

The World Café exercise consisted of 3 tables with a facilitator and a rapporteur, with up to 8 "guests" turning at each round and 3 sessions with short introduction on the question, presentation of the already collected replies and 20 minutes of discussion. This platform for discussion was based on a dynamic exchange of information among participants.

The outcome of the discussion is summarised below:

1. Discussion round on "PEST" data

The information on pests needed by EFSA for its risk assessment and its availability in the MS were discussed following the types of these data:

Pest biology/occurrence/status/distribution/surveys

The Network members acknowledged the availability of data on pest biology, occurrence, status, distribution and surveys in the member states specifically by mentioning the information about the distribution and status of the pests, information about specific conditions in open field and protected cultivations and regarding new and unknown organisms. It was pointed out that the information on non-regulated pests or plants could be found in national or international databases on specific topics or at the research institution or expert level. The specific information on regulated pest is available within the NPPOs.

Phytosanitary measures/pathways/ means /points of entry

In general the availability of information on effectiveness of phytosanitary measures was confirmed. The Network members would welcome sharing specific data regarding host plants distribution and specific trade data including new and emerging pathways, internet commerce (e.g. seeds trade, common post delivery), forests products and wood packaging material. Information regarding new plant health regulation on plants for planting specifying which pest species (quarantine vs. quality) are connected to which category of plants for planting were also identified as important for sharing.

Interception data/inspection/sampling /detection/diagnostic methods

In general the availability of information on diagnostic protocols at the MS level was confirmed. Regarding interceptions, the national or international databases were identified as possible source of data. The Network members would welcome sharing specific data

regarding interceptions on non-regulated and re-emerging pests with confirmed specification if the data refer to punctual findings or establishment of the pests.

Gathering and sharing of the information

To gather information, the possibility to send questionnaires to growers associations /practitioners (with the involvement of the NPPOs) was considered and it was recommended to use not only pre-defined fields but also free-text boxes.

The participants stressed also the importance of the specific explanations of the relevance and use of the information when submitting requests for data. To enhance the common understanding by gathering and sharing the data and information the use of the ISPM was proposed.

In conclusion the participants of this discussion round agreed that when requesting data for regulated pests the NPPOs should be contacted, whereas requesting data for non-regulated pests the NPPOs and/or other institutions can be contacted. The participants acknowledged also the possibility of contacting national experts and the use of the expert judgements. In general no duplication of efforts and better coordination among institutions were requested.

2. Discussion round on "HOST AND ENVIRONMENT" data

The following questions were discussed with the 3 groups.

Which information is available in the MS?

One of the main objectives of the network is to exchange information between MS and EFSA and to develop the personal contacts. The Network members agreed that data on host and environment including the production volumes are available from national statistical institutes, extension services, growers associations, and from other experts. To facilitate the access to these data, considering that each MS has a different institutional organisation, these information sources were discussed.

In case of information on industrial use/end-use, experts need to be contacted as the NPPO cannot always provide this type of information. It has also been highlighted that figures on trade volumes (internal) and consignments are not always available at EUROSTAT and TRACES. Industry information is very important. Experiences on the technical hearings were discussed. Concerning suitable hosts (e.g. Distribution), hosts distribution maps based on inventories or on satellite image analysis can be available. On environment and biodiversity, there are various biodiversity information centres, universities, research institutes, online databases and environmental monitoring network from where data can be captured. Concerning meteorological data, mmeteorological networks and institutes for meteorology were suggested.

What data MS needs from EFSA?

Members States want access to data and information collected from MS. They are also keen in consolidating and maintaining EU projects/databases. Besides the updating of epidemiological data, to facilitate development of EU host distribution maps and data on environmental value for risk assessment (impact) could be very useful for their work.

What is the role of the network?

The participants agreed that sharing information and facilitate contacts are the most important tasks of the network. Nevertheless it was highlighted that the Network members for this type of information (host and environment) should not be the direct contact point but they could be the facilitators. The Network agreed to provide EFSA with the appropriate contacts for the specific data needs that might arise in the risk assessments.

3. Discussion round on "AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES AND IMPACT" data

The information on agricultural practices and impact needed by EFSA for its risk assessment and its availability in the MS were discussed following the types of these data:

Cropping / Forestry practices

The Network members were quite confident to acknowledge that a lot of data on cropping and forestry practices is available in the member states. However, this information is not centralised and is scattered in various institutions in different databases and at experts level.

In order to facilitate the access to this data, considering that each MS has a different institutional organisation, the possibility to ask the MS to map the information sources was discussed. It was also mentioned that the resulting database of information sources per MS would need to be updated on regular basis.

Yield and quality loss

Different sources of information were discussed: the National Statistics reports are accessible to the public but are not always updated for all commodities; the subsidy registers related to the Common Agricultural Policy funds that compiled data on crops at farm level; the farm diaries; private sector and industry data that may contrast with the official data. The main limitation is the restricted access to the three last ones.

Agricultural control measures/practices

This information is mainly available at the level of the plant health inspection service and in the personal networks of the inspectors. To access this information involvement of the inspection services should be considered in the data collection process (questionnaires, meetings etc.).

Sharing of the information

An important objective of the network is to exchange information between MS, between MS and EFSA and to develop the personal contacts. The Network agreed to provide EFSA with the appropriate contacts for the specific data needs that might arise in the risk assessments and the mapping of the relevant information sources in the 28 MS could be envisaged in the future. The Network members agreed that the sharing of the information with EFSA using procurement procedures should be enforced. Apart from the use of harmonised questionnaires sent to the NPPOs to gather data, the direct contact via email, telephone and letters between EFSA and the Network members is encouraged.

In conclusion, it was agreed that a thorough analysis of the specific data needs and problems will enhance the networking activities in data collection. Moreover, the resolution of the data required, in terms of level of details and geographical scale, has to be clearly assessed before initiating the data collection process involving the appropriate data sources. In general terms the data needed by EFSA for assessing agricultural practices and impact on a crop are available in the Member States and the major obstacle to gather these data is their restricted access.

4. Plenary discussion

The results of the three discussion groups were then summarized to the participants during the plenary. The UK appreciated the group exercise and results obtained and commented on the general lack of data and information in MS (e.g. the data gaps regarding third countries imports). The MS also pointed out the issue of priority on gathering data, including data sensitivity and accuracy. EFSA proposed that the priorities and cooperation in data collection could be a topic for the next Network meeting. Croatia highlighted that the quality of available data could vary among countries due to the different capacity of each MS in handling data. EFSA acknowledged this comment as important within data harmonisation and

standardisation at the EU level. EFSA reminded the Network about the other important players in data provision (e.g. the Food and Veterinary Office, FVO, and the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation, the EPPO). Sweden agreed with the comments made by the UK in relation to the difficulties in obtaining data and proposed that EFSA formulates arguments in support to their requests for data and information provision. Sweden also asked about the EFSA horizon scanning and emerging risks monitoring. EFSA explained its approach and agreed that there is a need to explore further the strategies to monitor for emerging risks in relation to new plant pests. Finland appreciated the discussion and indicated that private companies and industry can represent a relevant source of data and information, suggesting that private companies could help to gather the data, as often the official MS bodies are facing difficulties in data collection. EFSA confirmed that technical hearings with industry have been successful and that industry was very responsive to EFSA's data needs in plant health. Finland also mentioned possible future perspectives and the importance of involving future research programmes. Poland highlighted the importance of publishing the outcomes of this discussion on the EFSA Science Net.

Denmark emphasised that only EFSA can decide what data can be considered in pest risk assessment and inform the EU about what quality of data is required. The preparation of an inventory of current data needs concerning the future mandates to be circulated to the NPPOs was also proposed. Austria highlighted that one of EFSA's major task is sharing the available information. The creation of a harmonised and shared database where EFSA and the MS can also have access should be considered as a priority. Close collaboration with regional plant protection organizations (e.g. EPPO) is also important.

EFSA also remarked that databases on inventories of pest risk assessment data sources have been developed by EFSA (Art 36 Prassis project[5]) and by the Pratique[6] project some years ago and are currently maintained respectively by EFSA and EPPO, but they need to be updated.

The avoidance of duplication is important and it was suggested to have only one pest reporting system. Referring to a common database presents however difficulties as, for example, from EUROPHYT it is possible to obtain the number of interceptions but not the total number of inspected consignments. UK pointed out the importance of keeping updated the current databases.

The importance of environmental data was also noted. Based on the previous day discussions, EFSA has been informed about existing biodiversity centres and environmental monitoring points etc. in the MS. More information is needed about the key players in this topic.

The role of the Network representatives was raised by Croatia and Austria. EFSA confirmed that the MS representatives act as facilitators.

EFSA asked MS inputs and viewpoints on the forthcoming mandate concerning the pests listed in the annexes of Directive 2000/29/EC, most of which are already present in Europe. The corresponding 40 pest risk assessments are in fact expected to be provided to the European Commission between 2014 and 2015 and the most effective approach has to be identified by EFSA.

Austria, Denmark, The Netherlands, and United Kingdom supported the approach used by EFSA in 2013 during the second batch of mandates. According to this, EFSA would check

[5] Rossi V, Giosuè S and Bernazzani R, 2009. Pest risk assessment in the European Community: inventory of data sources. SCIENTIFIC REPORT submitted to EFSA. Available at http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/doc/29e.pdf

[6] Pratique: enhancements of pest risk analysis techniques. Workpackage 1. PD No. 1.2. Inventory and description of all datasets needed for PRA in the EU that are currently available provided as tables and accessed via hyperlinks in structured project webpages and PD No. 1.3. Key datasets in a variety of formats accessible via hyperlinks in structured project web pages with a trend analysis and available for integration into the PRA scheme developed in WP6. Available at https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/pratique/publications.cfm#fldr_D1

the EPPO PQR first and then ask the MS for confirmation. It has also been highlighted that specific national interests regarding a pest could be different among MS. The relevance of conducting a full PRA should always be justified. The opinions of the industry are also very important as they help to focus on the 'real' problems and to prioritise. Fit for purpose and more specific terms of references as well as risk assessment solutions are needed.
EFSA concluded that based on the discussion a draft report of the discussion on data collection will be prepared and circulated attached to the minutes and further input, comments and suggestions from MS are welcome.

The main observations following the discussions were:

- Most of the data required for risk assessment exist;
- Data sources are numerous (e.g. *National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPO), official plant protection institutions, universities, expert knowledge, industry, EPPO PQR, CABI, scientific literatures, technical documentation*);
- Data quality is variable and systematic checking of it is necessary;
- The accessibility of data can be difficult and depending on individual cases
- The first level contact for data should be the NPPO and/or PLH network depending on the topic, which would then direct to the appropriate source for the specific information;
- Outsourcing for data collection/extraction to support pest risk assessment is encouraged by several MS;
- The means for sharing data with the MS are not yet well defined, further specifications are needed;
- Closer EFSA – EPPO collaboration is encouraged, as it would facilitate accessible, harmonized and updated data on pests for pest risk assessors and risk managers.

5. Conclusions/Recommendations

It has been already recognised by previous network meetings that the collection of accurate and reliable data is the basis for pest risk assessment. The availability of and access to quality data has been identified as a major challenge.

From the discussion it was concluded that most of the data needed by EFSA are available in the Member States and the major obstacle to gather these data is usually their restricted access.

Cooperation in data collection across the EU is very important in order to harmonise approaches and thereby facilitate information sharing among countries and to avoid duplication. It was also recognised that the identification of the specific data needs and problems will enhance the networking activities in data collection.

It was agreed that when requesting pest data for regulated organisms the NPPOs should be contacted, whereas the provision of data on non-regulated pests is generally outside the NPPOs remit and for this purpose the network members and other institutions should be contacted. When the information and data requested regard topics not dealt by their institutions, the Network members could act as facilitators to gather this information and/or to suggest the direct contact points.

Concerning the forthcoming mandate on pest risk assessment of 40 pests listed in the annexes of the Council Directive 2000/29/EC, it was proposed to follow the approach used in 2013 during the second batch of mandates. In light of this, EFSA would check the EPPO PQR first and then ask the MS for confirmation of pest status. There was a general agreement that fit for purpose solutions are needed.

Annex II.

DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC NETWORK FOR RISK ASSESSMENT IN PLANT HEALTH

Objectives

The overall objective of the scientific network for risk assessment in plant health is to build mutual understanding of risk assessment principles in plant health sector and to provide increased transparency in the current process among Member States and EFSA.

The scientific network for risk assessment in plant health will contribute to strengthening of scientific cooperation on plant health issues in the European Union. It will anticipate and reduce the duplication of activities in the field of risk assessment. The network will be a privileged environment in which to share data and methodologies, thus facilitating harmonisation of the pest risk assessment practices. It will also allow anticipating emerging risks in the EU and enhance the understanding of the current pest risk assessment priorities that may need to be addressed through EFSA. This platform for cooperation in the field of plant health will be based on a dynamic exchange of information among all participants.

The specific objectives of the scientific network for risk assessment in plant health are:

- **To facilitate harmonisation of pest risk assessment practices and methodologies by:**
  - Sharing best practices in pest risk assessment between EFSA and the EU member states.
  - Discussing ongoing issues of pest risk assessment such as new guidance developed or new opinions adopted.
  - Discussing new scientific developments in pest risk assessment and their implications on risk assessment practice.
  - Focusing attention on and streamlining common research needs that support progress in plant health risk assessment.
  - Analysing risk assessment needs and planning ahead for the implementation by EFSA and member states of the new Plant health legislation expected in 2015
- **To enhance exchange of information and data between EFSA and MS by:**
  - Discussing issues of availability and quality of data required for pest risk assessment purposes.
  - Enhancing cooperation in data collection and sharing for pest risk assessment.
  - Identifying and mapping expertise in specific areas and on specific issues.
- **To achieve synergies in pest risk assessment activities by:**
  - Identifying common themes and areas for mutual collaboration.
  - Sharing and discussing on-going pest risk assessment activities.
  - Sharing and discussing priorities for pest risk assessment at national and EU level.
  - Sharing of PRAs through common information exchange platform.
  - Identifying emerging risks.

EFSA may entrust to the network certain tasks, in particular preparatory work for scientific opinions, scientific and technical assistance, and collection of data.

Members of the scientific network

Members of networks shall be appointed in accordance with Articles 2 and 3 of the Decision of the Management Board of EFSA on the establishment and operations of networks[7].

The desirable profile of the scientists includes the following:

- Experience in pest risk assessment, research or diagnosis at the national level.
- Knowledge of the national plant health status and of the European and/or international context of pest risk assessment.
- Acting as a communication point for relevant organisations and stakeholders within the member state, ensuring the exchange of scientific information between these national organisations and the EFSA Animal and Plant Health unit.

Working language

English will be the working language of the network.

Working methods

The network shall meet at least once a year.

In addition it will use other means of collaboration:

- Exchanges of MS risk assessments and other information through information exchange platform.
- Emails on specific questions or issues.

Timeline

The terms of reference will be renewed after 3 years in 2016.

Expected deliverables

Minutes of the meeting(s).

Publication plan

Following approval the minutes will be published on the EFSA's website.

[7] Decision concerning the establishment and operation of European Networks of scientific organisations operating in the fields within the Authority's mission, EFSA 2010.