Scientific Panel on Plant Health (PLH)

Minutes of the 74th Plenary meeting

20 June & 21 June; 2018, Parma, (Italy)

20 June 2018 from 09:00 to 17:00
21 June 2018 from 08:30 to 13:00
Meeting room: EFSA – MO7

(Agreed with written procedure, 02 July 2018)

Participants

- Panel Members
- Claude Bragard, David Caffier, Thierry Candresse, Elisavet Chatzivassiliou, Katharina Dehnen-Schmutz, Gianni Gilioli, Jean-Claude Gregoire, Josep Jaques Miret, Michael Jeger, Alan MacLeod, Maria Navajas, Björn Niere, , Roel Potting, Trond Rafoss, Vittorio Rossi, Gregor Urek, Ariena Van Bruggen, Wopke van der Werf, Jonathan West, & Stephan Winter
- European Commission representatives: Maria Kammenou, Maria Mirazchiyska, Pasquale Di Rubo,
- EFSA:
  ALPHA Unit: Elma Bali, Michela Chiumenti, Ramona Ciubotaru, Ewelina Czwienczek, Alice Delbianco, Franco Ferilli, Ciro Gardi, Tomasz Kaluski, Virag Kertesz, Svetla Kozelska, Andrea Maiorano, Maria Rosaria Mannino, Joshua Oyedele, Marco Pautasso, Giuseppe Stancanelli, Sara Tramontini, Sybren Vos

  SCER Unit: Bernard Bottex

  AMU Unit: Olaf Mosbach-Schulz

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Stephen Parnell.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Panel Members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Panel Members invited for the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process.

4. Report on written procedure since the 73[3d] Plenary meeting

4.1. Report on the agreement with written procedure of the minutes of the 73rd Plenary minutes

The minutes of the 73rd Plenary meeting was approved by written procedure on 8 June 2018 and published on the EFSA webpage on 8 June 2018. https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/180516

5. New Mandates

No new mandates were received

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and/or possible adoption/endorsement

6.1. Guidance on quantitative pest risk assessment methodologies and its (EFSA-Q-2014-00351)

This Guidance describes a two-phase approach for a fit-for-purpose method for the assessment of plant pest risk in the territory of the European Union (EU). Phase one consists of pest categorisation to determine whether the pest has the characteristics of a quarantine pest or those of a regulated non-quarantine pest for the area of the EU. Phase two consists of pest risk assessment, which may be requested by the risk managers following the pest categorisation results. This Guidance provides a template for pest categorisation and describes in detail the use of modelling and expert knowledge elicitation to conduct a pest risk assessment. The Guidance provides support and a framework for assessors to provide quantitative estimates, together with associated uncertainties, regarding the entry, establishment, spread and impact of plant pests in the EU. The Guidance allows the effectiveness of risk reducing options (RROs) to be quantitatively assessed as an integral part of the assessment framework. A list of RROs is provided. A two-tiered approach is proposed for the use of expert knowledge elicitation and modelling. Depending on data and resources available and the needs of risk managers, pest entry, establishment, spread and impact steps may be assessed directly, using weight of evidence and quantitative expert judgement (first tier), or they may be elaborated in sub-steps using quantitative models (second tier). Example of an application of the first tier approach is provided. Guidance is provided on how to derive models of appropriate complexity to conduct a second tier assessment. Each assessment is operationalised using Monte Carlo simulations which can compare scenarios for relevant factors, e.g. with and without RROs. This document provides guidance on how to compare scenarios to draw conclusions on the magnitude of pest risks and the effectiveness of RROs, and on how to communicate assessment results.

The Guidance was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.2. Technical report on public consultation of the Guidance on quantitative pest risk assessment methodologies (EFSA-Q-2018-00057)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) carried out a public consultation on draft Guidance of the EFSA Scientific Panel on Plant Health (PLH Panel) on quantitative pest risk assessment with the aim of collecting input from the scientific community and all interested parties. The draft Guidance was prepared by the dedicated Working Group of the PLH Panel. It provides guidance on the methodology to conduct quantitative pest risk assessment and the evaluation of risk reduction options. The methodology consists of a two-phase approach. Phase one consists of pest categorisation to determine whether the pest has the characteristics of a quarantine pest or those of a regulated non-quarantine pest for the area of the EU. Phase two consists of pest risk assessment and is a more detailed assessment to inform phytosanitary decision making. Following the endorsement of the draft Guidance by the PLH Panel, the public consultation was launched on 12 February 2018 and closed on 25 March 2018. EFSA received 178 comments on the draft Guidance from 11 interested parties. EFSA was committed to publish a technical report on the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Guidance. This technical report satisfies the commitment. It summarises the comments received through the public consultation and presents the responses of the PLH Panel to the comments. The PLH Panel prepared an updated version of the draft guidance taking into account the comments received, which were within the remit of EFSA to address.

The Guidance was adopted at the PLH Panel plenary meeting on 21 June 2018, and is published in the EFSA Journal. EFSA and its PLH Panel wish to thank all commentators for the interest shown in the Guidance and in the work of EFSA.

The technical report was endorsed by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.3. Protocol on the format required for dossiers to support third countries requests for derogation from Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 for export of high risk plants, plant products and other objects EFSA-Q-2018-00116

Following a request of the European Commission (EC), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has specified the information required and developed a format for the preparation and submission of dossiers to support requests for derogation of import prohibition of high risk plants, plant products and other objects as foreseen in Article 42.5 of regulation (EU) 2016/2031. The aim of the dossier is to enable the applicants (third countries) to provide the information required by EFSA to perform a Commodity Risk Assessment. The information required concerns: 1) the commodity; 2) the pests potentially associated with the commodity in the exporting country; 3) the data on phytosanitary mitigation measures and inspections.

The technical report was endorsed by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.4. Scientific Opinion on the pest risk assessment of *Spodoptera frugiperda* (EFSA-Q-2018-00068)

EFSA was asked for a pest risk assessment of *Spodoptera frugiperda* for the territory of the EU focussing on the main pathways for entry, factors affecting establishment, risk reduction options and pest management. As a polyphagous pest, five commodity pathways were examined in detail. Aggregating across these and other pathways, we estimate that tens of thousands to over a million individual immature pests could enter the EU annually with trade. Risk reduction options on sweetcorn, a principal host, is estimated to reduce entry on one of the pathways 100-fold. However, sweetcorn imports are a small proportion of all *S. frugiperda* host imports, several of which are already regulated and further regulation is estimated to reduce the number that enter of only about 10%. Low temperatures limit the area for establishment but small areas of Spain, Italy and Greece can provide conditions suitable for establishment. If infested imported commodities are distributed across the EU in proportion to consumer population, a few hundreds to a few thousands of individuals would reach NUTS 2 regions within which suitable conditions for establishment exist. Although *S. frugiperda* is a known migrant, entry directly into the EU from extant populations in sub-Saharan Africa is judged not feasible. However, were *S. frugiperda* to establish in North Africa, in the range of thousands to over two million adults could seasonally migrate into the southern EU. Entry into such areas via migration will be greater than via commercial trade but is contingent on the establishment of *S. frugiperda* in North Africa. The likelihood of entry of the pest via natural dispersal could only be mitigated via control of the pest in Africa. If *S. frugiperda* were to arrive and become a pest of maize in the EU, broad spectrum insecticides currently used against existing pests could be applied.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.5. Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Synchytrium endobioticum* (EFSA-Q-2018-00014)

The Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of the fungus *Synchytrium endobioticum*, the causal agent of potato wart disease, for the European Union (EU). The identity of the pest is well established and reliable methods exist for its detection and identification. *S. endobioticum* is present in most continents. The pest is listed in Annex IAII of Directive 2000/29/EC and is present with a restricted and fragmentary distribution in the EU. The major host is *Solanum tuberosum* (potato), but

in Mexico, the pest also affects wild *Solanum* spp. *Synchytrium endobioticum* could potentially enter the EU through multiple pathways associated with soil as substrate for non-host plants, contaminant or commodity. The presence of the pest in 16 EU Member States characterized by different climatic conditions suggests that it could establish in the rest of the EU. The disease induces the formation of warts on potato tubers, stolons and stem bases reducing plant growth and yield and making tubers unmarketable. Additional losses may occur during storage. The only available strategy to control the disease and prevent it from spreading is the application of strict phytosanitary measures and the cultivation of potato varieties resistant to the pathotype(s) present in the infested field(s). Specific phytosanitary measures exist (Council Directive 69/464/EEC) for the control of potato wart disease in the EU.. The main uncertainties refer to the distribution and host range of the pest, and the importance of some pathways of entry. *Synchytrium endobioticum* meets all the criteria assessed by EFSA for consideration as potential Union quarantine pest. The criteria for considering *S. endobioticum* as a potential Union regulated non-quarantine pest are not met since, in addition to potato seed tubers, soil (as commodity, substrate or contaminant) and ware potato tubers are major means of spread.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.6. Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Leucaspis japonica* (EFSA-Q-2018-00021)

Following a request from the European Commission, the EFSA Plant Health Panel performed a pest categorisation of *Lopholeucaspis japonica* (Hemiptera: Diaspididae), an armoured scale which preferentially feeds on smooth barked woody trees and shrubs. The pest occurs in Asia, North America, and non-EU Europe (Caucasus region and Ukraine). The pest is regulated in Council Directive 2000/29/EC as *Leucaspis japonica*, a junior synonym. Its introduction into the EU is banned on plants of *Citrus*, *Fortunella*, *Poncirus*, and their hybrids, other than fruit and seeds. Additional host plants comprise 60 species in 35 botanical families, including deciduous fruit trees, ornamental and forest plants. *Lopholeucaspis japonica* could enter the EU via host plants for planting (excluding seeds) and cut branches. It has been intercepted on plants for planting from China, including artificially dwarfed plants. Spread is most likely via plants for planting, rather than via natural spread as most diaspidid life stages are sessile. Impacts could occur in citrus, other fruit crops, ornamentals and forest trees. Sourcing plants from pest free areas, pest free places of production or pest free production sites would decrease the likelihood of introduction. Because suitable hosts occur across the EU in climatic areas matching those where the pest is known to occur, biotic and abiotic conditions are conducive to establishment. The main uncertainty concerns its current distribution in the EU. *L. japonica* was found in Greece in 1983 but there have been no other reports since then. *L japonica* satisfies the criteria assessed by EFSA that enable it to be considered a potential quarantine pest. *L. japonica* does not satisfy the criteria assessed by EFSA for it to be considered a potential regulated non-quarantine pest (RNQP).

The opinion was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.7. Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Aleurocanthus* spp. (EFSA-Q-2018-00022)

The draft opinion was presented to the Panel, highlighting the uncertainties related to species identification within the genus. The Panel proposed that the working group further analyses the uncertainties related to identification at species level and their impact on the conclusions of the pest categorisation. The draft opinion will be presented for adoption at the September plenary meeting.

6.8. Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Melampsora medusae* (EFSA-Q-2018-00040)

Following a request from the European Commission, the EFSA Plant Health Panel performed a pest categorisation of *Melampsora medusae*, a well-defined and distinguishable fungal species of the family Melampsoraceae. The pathogen is regulated

in Annex IAI of Council Directive 2000/29/EC as a harmful organism whose introduction into the EU is banned. M. medusae is a heteroecious rust fungus with Populus spp. as primary telial hosts and various conifers (*Larix, Pinus, Pseudotsuga, Abies, Picea and Tsuga* spp.) as secondary aecial hosts. *M. medusae* is native to North America and has spread to South America, Africa, Asia, Oceania, as well as the EU, where *M. medusae* f.sp. *deltoidae* has been reported with a restricted distribution and low impacts from Belgium, South-West France and Southern Portugal. The pest could spread to other EU countries, via dissemination of spores, movement of host plants for planting and cut branches. Climate is assumed not to be a limiting factor for the establishment of the pathogen in the EU. *M. medusae* is the most widespread and important *Melampsora* rust in North America. In western Canada, extensive damage has been reported to conifers and *Populus* spp. in nurseries and plantations as well as in woodlands. M. medusae is damaging in both Australia and New Zealand. The pest could have economic and environmental impacts in the EU if aggressive isolates of *M. medusae* were introduced into the EU. Import prohibition of host plants for planting is an available measure to reduce the risk of further introductions. Some resistant *Populus* cultivars are available. Moreover, increasing the genetic diversity of poplar plantations can prevent disease impacts. The main uncertainty concerns the factors explaining the low pathogenicity of the populations of *M. medusae* present in the EU. The criteria assessed by the Panel for consideration as a potential quarantine pest are met (the pest is present, but with a restricted distribution, and is officially under control). Given that plants for planting are not the main pathway of spread, not all criteria for consideration as a regulated non-quarantine pest are met.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.9. Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Chrysomyxa arctostaphyli* (EFSA-Q-2018-00034)

Following a request from the European Commission, the EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of *Chrysomyxa arctostaphyli*, a well-defined and distinguishable fungal species of the family Coleosporiaceae. The pathogen is regulated in Council Directive 2000/29/EC (Annex IAI) as a harmful organism whose introduction into the EU is banned. *C. arctostaphyli* is native to North America and is the causal agent of spruce broom rust. *C. arctostaphyli* is a heteroecious rust with a two-year life cycle alternating between the aecial host *Picea* spp. and the telial host *Arctostaphylos* spp. The main reported aecial host is *P. engelmannii,* but also *P. abies, P. pungens, P. sitchensis, P. glauca, P. mariana* and *P. rubens* (as well as *Picea* as a genus) are reported as hosts. The fungus is not known to occur in the EU but could enter via host plants for planting and cut branches. It could establish in the EU, as hosts are present and climatic conditions are favourable. The extent of overlap between the ranges of the telial and aecial hosts is greater in the EU than in North America. The pathogen would be able to spread following establishment by dissemination of spores and human movement of infected host plants. Should the pathogen be introduced in the EU, impacts can be expected in spruce woodland, plantations and on ornamental spruce trees, leading to reduced tree growth and associated ecosystem service provision. The main uncertainty concerns the level of susceptibility of *P. abies* and *P. sitchensis* under European conditions. The criteria assessed by the Panel for consideration as a potential quarantine pest are met. As the pest is not present in the EU, not all criteria for consideration as a regulated non-quarantine pest are met.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.10. Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Erwinia stewartii* (EFSA-Q-2017-00427)

Following a request from the European Commission, the EFSA Plant Health Panel performed a pest categorisation of *Pantoea stewartii* subsp. *stewartii* (hereafter *P. s.* subsp*. stewartii*). *P. s.* subsp*. stewartii* is a Gram-negative bacterium that causes

Stewart's vascular wilt and leaf blight of sweet corn and maize, a disease responsible for serious crop losses throughout the world. The bacterium is endemic to the USA and is now present in Africa, North, Central and South America, Asia and Ukraine. In the EU, it is reported from Italy with a restricted distribution and under eradication. The bacterium is regulated according to Council Directive 2000/29/EC (Annex IIAI) as a harmful organism whose introduction and spread in the EU is banned on seeds of *Zea mays*. Other reported potential host plants include various species of the family Poaceae, including weeds, rice (*Oryza sativa*), oat (*Avena sativa*) and common wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), as well as jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*), the ornamental *Dracaena sanderiana* and the palm *Bactris gasipaes*, but there is uncertainty about whether these are hosts of *P. s.* subsp. *stewartii* or of the other subspecies. The pest could enter the EU via host plants for planting (including seed) and via insect vectors from neighbouring countries. Host plants are widely distributed and climatic conditions are conducive in the EU. *P. s.* subsp. *stewartii* could spread by movement of host plants for planting (including seeds) and insect vectors. Impacts could occur on maize and rice. Methods to certify pest freedom of maize seeds are available. The main knowledge gaps concern the availability of vectors in the EU, the level of susceptibility of the maize cultivars grown in the EU, the virulence of strains in recent outbreaks, and the host range of the bacterium. The criteria assessed by the Panel for consideration as a potential quarantine pest are met.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

6.11. Scientific Opinion on pest categorisation of *Xylella fastidiosa* (EFSA-Q-2017-00351)

Following a request from the European Commission, the EFSA Plant Health Panel updated its pest categorisation of *Xylella fastidiosa*, previously delivered as part of the pest risk assessment published in 2015. X. fastidiosa is a Gram-negative bacterium, responsible for various plant diseases, including Pierce's disease, phony peach disease, citrus variegated chlorosis, olive quick decline syndrome, almond leaf scorch and various other leaf scorch diseases. The pathogen is endemic in the Americas and is present in Iran. In the EU, it is reported in southern Apulia in Italy, on the island of Corsica and in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region in France, as well as in the Autonomous region of Madrid, the province of Alicante and the Balearic Islands in Spain. The reported status is 'transient, under eradication', except for the Balearic Islands, Corsica and southern of Apulia, where the status is 'present with a restricted distribution, under containment'. The pathogen is regulated under Council Directive 2000/29/EC and through emergency measures under Decision (EU) 2015/789 (as amended Decision (EU) 2017/2352). The pest could enter the EU via host plants for planting and via infectious insect vectors. The host range includes more than 400 host species listed in the EFSA host plant database. In the EU host plants are widely distributed and climatic conditions are favourable for its establishment. *X. fastidiosa* can spread by movement of host plants for planting and infectious insect vectors. *X. fastidiosa* is known to cause severe direct damage to major crops including almonds, citrus, grapevines, olives, stone fruits and also forest trees, landscape and ornamental trees, with high impacts. The criteria assessed by the Panel for consideration as a potential Union quarantine pest are met (the pathogen is present in the EU, but it has a restricted distribution and is under official control). *X. fastidiosa* is not considered as a RNQP as the pathogen may spread also via insect vector transmission.

The opinion was adopted by the Panel on 21 June 2018.

7. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA

7.1. PLH Scientific Panel including its Working Groups

7.1.1. Update of the working group on the pest risk assessment of *Xylella fastidiosa* (EFSA-Q-2018-00069)

The Panel was updated about the progress and remaining work of the WG

7.1.2. Update of the working group on guidances for dossier submission and commodity risk assessment for high-risk plants, plant products or other objects (EFSA-Q-2018-00117, EFSA-Q-2018-00116)

7.1.3. Update of the working group on Bonsai Plant derogations (EFSA-Q-2017-00715, EFSA-Q-2018-00277)

Firstly, the Panel was updated regarding the mandate dealing with the request from Japan regarding export of black pine (*Pinus thunbergii* L.) bonsai to the EU. EFSA submitted a letter with a request for additional information to the Japanese competent Authority. The WG will continue with its work on the opinion when the additional information will be available.

Secondly, the Panel was updated regarding the mandate dealing with the request from China regarding export of Japanese white pine (*Pinus parviflora* L.) bonsai to the EU. The WG analysed in detail the technical information provided by Chinese competent Authority and formulated a specific a request for additional information focusing on the commodity, compilation of pest lists and on pest management measures. EFSA submitted an information request together with a request for clarification of the confidentiality of the China dossier to the Commission. The Commission acknowledged receipt of the requests. The WG will continue with its work on the opinion when the additional information will be available.

7.1.4. Update on work progress from the PLH Panel Working Groups on pest categorisations (M-2017-0055)

- ✓ Agricultural fungi

The Panel was updated about the progress and remaining work of the WG.

- ✓ Agricultural insects

The Panel was updated about the progress and remaining work of the WG.

- ✓ Bacteria

The Panel was updated about the progress and remaining work of the WG, with two pest categorisations (on *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp*. sepedonicus* and on *Ralstonia solanacearum*) still to be dealt with.

- ✓ Forest fungi

The Panel was updated about the progress and remaining work of the WG. At the July plenary, the WG plans to present for possible adoption the pest categorisation on *Arceuthobium* spp. (non-EU).

- ✓ Forest insects

The WG is currently working on the *Monochamus* spp. group categorisation. Due to the complexity of such large group, the original delivery deadline of June 2018 of this opinion will be requested to be postponed to September 2018.

- ✓ Viruses

The Panel was updated about the progress of the WG. The results of consultations with COPHS on the draft List of non-EU viruses and viroids of Cydonia Mill., *Fragaria* L., *Malus* Mill, *Prunus* L., *Pyrus* L., *Ribes* L., *Rubus* L. and *Vitis* were presented. The opinion will be sent for possible adoption at the September plenary.

7.2. EFSA including its Working Groups/Task Forces

7.2.1. Presentation on the request to provide technical support to the JRC with regard to climate suitability and impact

assessment for candidate Union priority pests (EFSA-Q-2017-00558)

This point of the agenda was postponed to another plenary

7.2.2. Update on the request from the European Commission to provide scientific and technical assistance on a horizon scanning exercise in view to crisis preparedness on plant health for the EU territory (M-2017-0012)

An update on the Horizon Scanning was provided to the Panel Members.

7.3. Scientific Committee and its Working Groups

The Panel chair provided a short information on the two topics with relevance to plant health recently discussed in the Scientific Committee, i.e. (i) commodity risk assessment and (ii) horizon scanning.

8. Feedback from the European Commission

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1. PLH panel achievements 2015-2018

The PLH Team leader presented the PLH Panel achievement 2015-2018. In the follow-up discussion the PLH Panel members provided their view on several aspects of the work done and on future developments.

10. Any other business

EFSA thanked the Panel Chair and the Panel members for their commitment, hard work, high quality scientific deliverables and the progress achieved in plant health risk assessment in the last three years.

The next meeting will be the Inaugural plenary on 3-5 July 2018 of the new Plant Health Panel 2018-2021[1].

[1] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/panels/plh