



ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH UNIT

Scientific Panel on Plant Health

Minutes of the 88th Plenary meeting,
OPEN Plenary

WEB conference, 8-10 July 2020
(Agreed on 31 July 2020)

Participants

■ **Panel Members**

Claude Bragard, Francesco Di Serio, Katharina Dehnen-Schmutz, Paolo Gonthier, Josep Jaques Miret, Sven Christer Magnusson, Juan A. Navas-Cortés, Roel Potting, Hans-Hermann Thulke, Wopke van der Werf, Antonio Vicent, Jonathan Yuen, Lucia Zappalà Marie-Agnès Jacques, Alan MacLeod and Stephen Parnell.

■ **Hearing Experts:**

Nico Horn, Françoise Petter and Camille Picard (EPPO);

Andrew Hart, Darren Kriticos and Miguel Bastos Araújo (on July 9);

Sladjana Lukic and Nursen Üstün (on July 10)

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

Di Rubbo Pasquale, Maria Belen Marquez Garcia and Panagiota Mylona (EC, DG SANTE, Unit Plant Health)

■ **EFSA:**

ALPHA Unit: Caterina Campese, Laura Carotti, Ewelina Czwieniczek, Eduardo De La Peña, Alice Delbianco, Ciro Gardi, Svetla Kozelska, Nikolaus Kriz, Andrea Maiorano, Maria Rosaria Mannino, Giulia Mattion, Alzbeta Mikulova, Marco Pautasso, Maria Chiara Rosace, Oresteia Sfyra; Giuseppe Stancanelli, Franz Streissl, Emanuela Tacci and Sara Tramontini.

AMU Unit: Olaf Mosbach Schulz

ENCO Team EU Cooperation: Drago Marojevic

OBSERVERS: Mizzotti Chiara, Babalola Bisola, Bayram Yunus, Bozkurt Vildan, Bubici Giovanni, Budak M. Nurseren, Cara Magdalena, Carluccio Anna vittoria, Cendoya Martina, Cetin Nadezda, Chiumenti Michela, Ciampitti Mariangela, Colakovic Nenad, Dautbasic Ajla, De Reviers Antoine, Delijaj Naim, Dipol Gabriella, Dzerkovska Nadica, Ertas Hasenem, Fanelli Elena, Finelli Franco, Galvañ Domenech, Garzelli Antonella, Gomez Pedro, Graziosi Ignazio, Hazir Adalet, Hess Bastian, Hongyu Sun, Juniper Kiss, Karaca Ismail, Karahan Aynur, Kriticos Darren, Larenaudie Magali, Loconsole Giuliana, López-quílez Antonio, Lukic Sladjana, Madalina Belous, Ördek Hülya, Prljević Zorka, Rashid Tavga, Richard Benjamin, Sahin Murat, Saoviero Giovanna, Saponari Maria, Saracoglu Mine, Schneider Kevin, Üstün Nursen, Wilstermann Anne, Yurtmen Melike and Zoellner Thomas

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants, apologies received from Annemarie Fejer Justesen and Panagiotis Milonas.

2. EFSA Guidelines for Observers, Instructions for using Teams for Panel, Instructions for using Teams for observers

The [EFSA guidelines for Observers](#) were presented. Instructions were provided for using TEAMS during the meeting.

3. Brief introduction by ALPHA Secretariat of the Panel members, EFSA PLH team, observers and other participants

A brief introduction of Panel members, EFSA staff, hearing experts and observers was provided.

4. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes

5. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Committee/Scientific Panel/ Members

Nothing to declare.

6. Report on written procedures since 87th PLH Plenary meeting

6.1 87th Plenary minutes, agreed by written procedure

Plenary minutes were agreed by written procedure on July 2nd and published on the same date.

7. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

7.1 Art. 29 Scientific opinion on Pest categorisation of *Haploxius crudus*

The EFSA Panel on Plant Health performed a pest categorisation of the planthopper *Haploxius crudus* (Hemiptera: Cixiidae) for the EU. This species occurs from southeastern USA to Northern Brazil and on many Caribbean islands. Adults oviposit on grasses, mostly Poaceae and Cyperaceae in the vicinity of palms (Arecaceae). The pest can also be found on plants of the

families Arecaceae, Heliconiaceae, Pandanaceae and Verbenaceae. Preimaginal development takes place on the roots of grasses, where nymphs feed. Upon emergence, adults move to palms for feeding and return to grasses for oviposition. *H. crudus* is regulated in Annex IIA of Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072 as *Myndus crudus*, a junior synonym. This species is a competent vector of *Candidatus* Phytoplasma palmae, the causal agent of coconut lethal yellowing, a disease also regulated in Annex IIA of the same regulation. Within this regulation, potential entry pathways for *H. crudus*, such as Arecaceae and Poaceae plants for planting with foliage and soil/growing medium, and soil/growing media by themselves can be considered as closed. However, plants for planting of the families Cyperaceae, Heliconiaceae, Pandanaceae and Verbenaceae are not specifically regulated. Should *H. crudus* arrive in the EU, climatic conditions and availability of susceptible hosts in a small area in southern EU (e.g. eastern Cyprus and southwestern Spain) may provide conditions for limited establishment, and further spread to neighbouring areas in the Mediterranean basin during summer months. Economic impact is anticipated only if *Candidatus* Phytoplasma palmae is also introduced into the EU. Phytosanitary measures are available to reduce the likelihood of entry. *H. crudus* satisfies the criteria that are within the remit of EFSA to assess for this species to be regarded as a potential Union quarantine pest. This species does not meet the criteria of being present in the EU and plants for planting being the main pathway for spread for it to be regarded as a potential non-quarantine pest.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 10 July 2020.

7.2 Art. 29 Scientific opinion on Commodity risk assessment of *Jasminum polyanthum* plants from Israel

The European Commission requested the EFSA Panel on Plant Health to prepare and deliver risk assessments for commodities listed in Commission Implementing Regulation EU/2018/2019 as "High risk plants, plant products and other objects". This Scientific Opinion covers all plant health risks posed by unrooted cuttings of *Jasminum polyanthum* produced in a protected environment (greenhouse) that are imported from Israel, taking into account the available scientific information, including the technical information provided by the NPPO of Israel by 15 March 2020. The relevance of an EU quarantine pest for this opinion was based on evidence that: (i) the pest is present in Israel; (ii) *Jasminum* is a host of the pest, and (iii) the pest can be associated with the commodity. The relevance of any other pest, not regulated in the EU, was based on evidence that: (i) the pest is present in Israel (ii) the pest is absent in the EU; (iii) *Jasminum* is a host of the pest; (iv) the pest can be associated with the commodity and (v) the pest may have an impact and can pose a potential risk for the EU territory. Six species, the EU-quarantine pest *Scirtothrips dorsalis*, and the EU non-regulated pests *Aonidiella orientalis*, *Milviscutulus mangiferae*, *Paracoccus marginatus*, *Pulvinaria psidii* and *Colletotrichum siamense* fulfilled all relevant criteria and were selected for further evaluation. For these pests, the risk mitigation measures proposed in the technical dossier

from Israel were evaluated taking into account the possible limiting factors. For these pests, 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 *S. dorsalis* being the pest most frequently expected on the imported plants. The Expert Knowledge Elicitation indicated, with 95% certainty, that between 9958 and 10000 bags per 10000 would be free of *S. dorsalis*.

The scientific opinion was adopted on 10 July 2020.

8. Feedback from Scientific Panel including their Working Groups, Scientific Committee, EFSA and European Commission

8.1 Update from Pest categorisation WGs: agricultural insects, plant viruses and plant bacteria, including methodological issues

Agricultural insects: The chair of the Agricultural insects WG presented the progress of the group. Pest categorisations were finalised for 39 pests. For four pests the work is still ongoing (39 out of 43 opinions were adopted up to July 2020). The WG has started to work on the new mandate received from the European Commission regarding the potential entry pathways for non-EU Tephritidae on *Musa* spp. (banana and plantain). The University of Thessaly (Greece) provides support to this work via an EFSA Art 36 tasking grant.

Plant viruses: The working plan for *Beet necrotic yellow vein virus* (BNYVV) pest categorisation was presented.

Plant bacteria: The Panel was updated about the progress of the WG with the categorisation of non-EU potato phytoplasmas, with an overview of the categorisation of 'Ca. *P. fragariae*'-related strains affected tuber-forming *Solanum* species.

8.2 Update from High Risk Plants WGs section I, II and III and Momordica WG, including methodological issues

An update on High Risk Plants WGs section I, II and III and Momordica WG, was presented by EFSA representative. The High Risk Plants WG Section I is currently evaluating dossiers from Turkey on *Nerium oleander*, *Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Lonicera caprifolium*, *Berberis crataegina*, *Berberis cretica*, *Berberis integerrima*, *Berberis thunbergii* and *Berberis vulgaris*. The High Risk Plants WG Section II is currently focusing on the dossier from Israel on *Ficus carica* and in parallel evaluating (i) the dossiers from Ukraine on *Juglans regia*, *Corylus avellana*, *Populus* and *Tilia* and (ii) a dossier from Serbia on *Corylus avellana*. For the dossier on *Acer palmatum* from China the clock is stopped until EFSA will receive the requested additional

information. The High-Risk Plants WG Section III has reassumed the assessment of the received dossier from Israel on *Persea americana* as additional information has been submitted by the NPPO. The group is also evaluating dossiers from Ukraine on *Malus domestica* and *Prunus domestica*, and *Prunus dulcis* and *Prunus persica* from Turkey. For the dossier on *Ullucus tuberosus* from Peru, EFSA has just received additional information and will proceed with the assessment of the dossier. The progress on the assessment of the five dossiers of *Momordica* (from Sri Lanka, Thailand, Mexico, Suriname and Honduras) was presented in detail. Additional information has been requested to all five applicants; the clock is now stopped until EFSA receives additional information.

8.3 Overview of the EFSA horizon scanning activities for identification of new and emerging plant health threats

An outline of the Horizon scanning project was presented, focusing on its main objective, which is to bring to the attention of risk managers information on pests that may be of concern to the EU.

The MEDISYS platform used to monitor the media and scientific literature was presented, as well as the process of drafting EFSA's Plant Health newsletters. In the period February 2017 – December 2019, EFSA found and reported in the newsletters 302 not regulated pests (81 in media newsletters and 221 in scientific newsletters).

Following the request of the European Commission, a methodology to screen the new pests found through the monitoring was defined by EFSA in collaboration with ANSES (the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety) in the period 2018-2020. The updated methodology (PeMoScoring) was presented to the Panel. The exercise was carried out in two steps. In the first step, a preliminary screening of the pests found in the horizon scanning was undertaken based on exclusion criteria. This was done in order to focus the scoring efforts on the pests for which such an exercise is necessary for the decision of the risk managers. As a result of this first screening, the number of pests to be scored went from 302 to 63, 39 of which from media monitoring and 24 from scientific literature monitoring.

The perspectives of the project in terms of improving the ontology and the plan for future publications of reports were presented.

8.4 Criteria used for screening new plant pests identified by the EFSA horizon scanning

EFSA presented the criteria used for scoring the new pests identified by the Horizon scanning project. They were developed after a review of existing ranking systems, based on pest characteristics and the steps of pest risk assessment (entry, establishment, spread and impact). In the updated methodology, EFSA pest categorisations conducted from 2017 onwards were consulted with the objective of identifying pests that could have

constituted the set of positive and negative reference pests. Positive reference pests were considered those recommended by EFSA as candidates to the quarantine regulation in the EU. Negative reference pests were considered those not fulfilling all the criteria to be recommended as candidates to the quarantine regulation in the EU. In addition, regulated pests proposed by EFSA as candidates to the category of priority pests were added as positive reference pests. 33 positive and 10 negative reference pests were considered in the exercise.

The 15 criteria for scoring were presented showing the score's distribution for the reference pests. After analysis of the results, 13 criteria were retained to score the 63 new pests for the EU found through the horizon scanning.

8.4 The PeMoScoring system to support decision making for new plant health threats

The PROMETHEE method, outranking method based on pairwise comparisons, was used to screen the reference pests. Its main features were presented as well as its use to define the threshold that better separates positive and negative reference pests. The risks of false positive and false negative errors were discussed. The PeMoScoring tool makes possible the comparison of new pests found through the horizon scanning with the reference pests in order to identify those requiring attention. In the proposed process, a matrix is used to collect scores attributed to the new pests for each criterion. The scores are inserted in the PeMoScoring tool that calculates the final scores and classifies each new pest as positive or negative regarding the defined threshold. Examples of use of the scoring matrix and PeMoScoring tool were also presented. The methodology and the results were presented at the June 2020 meeting of the PAFF Plant Health section.

Questions and comments raised on the data sources used to score pests, the frequency of new pests found in media and in scientific literature, the way to increase the dataset of negative reference pests, the next steps of the project after feedback from EC and Member States.

8.5 Feedback from European Commission

European Commission representatives congratulated to the PLH Panel and EFSA|PLH team on the good quality and high quantity of work done so far. Following the previous mandate on 133 pest categorisations, all relevant plant health legislative annexes have been updated or are now being worked on.

8.6 New Plant Health mandates

The PLH team leader/Panel coordinator Giuseppe Stancanelli, updated the panel with the new mandates received so far by EFSA.

8.7 -Update on Quantitative pest risk assessment and uncertainty guidances, including:

- ❖ Calendar of planned plenary discussion items and uncertainty training and Brief introduction to this discussion session on climate suitability for establishment of plant pests

The Panel was updated about the calendar of plenary discussion sessions on the quantitative pest risk assessment methodology.

This session was dedicated to the presentation to the Panel of four different approaches to analysis the climate suitability of plant pests. All presentations followed in general the same agreed structure which included: introduction on the approach, biological bases, assumptions and limitations, issues when working with limited information, uncertainty analysis, available tools, example case studies, final recommendations. In addition, Andrea Maiorano presented an ongoing work for the development of a workflow and a tool (based on R) to support the PLH working groups in the development and analysis of Köppen–Geiger climate suitability maps. The tool at the moment is being piloted by the Pest Categorisation working group.

The following presentations were given on the four different approaches selected for this session:

- ❖ Climate suitability for the establishment of plant pests: the Köppen–Geiger approach (Alan MacLeod, EFSA Plant Health Panel; Andrea Maiorano, EFSA)
- ❖ Climate suitability for the establishment of plant pests: the CLIMEX approach (Darren Kriticos, CSIRO, Australia)
- ❖ Climate suitability for the establishment of plant pests: the Species Distribution Modelling (SDM) approach (Miguel B. Araújo, CSIC, Spain)
- ❖ Climate suitability for the establishment of plant pests: application of the SDM approach in the EFSA PLH Panel (2019) updated Pest Risk assessment for *Xylella fastidiosa* (Juan Antonio Navas-Cortés, EFSA Plant Health Panel)
- ❖ Climate suitability for the establishment of plant pests: a process-based approach based on Magarey et al. 2005 (Antonio Vicent, EFSA Plant Health Panel)

A final discussion was introduced by a presentation by Andrea Maiorano summarizing the main elements of the different approaches and main issues when working at the analysis of quarantine plant pests.

8.8 Overview of EFSA Pest survey activities

- ❖ EFSA pest survey toolkit. Updated on the progress of the Pest Survey mandate project was presented by Sybren Vos.
- ❖ Story maps: access and functionalities were presented by Maria Chiara Rosace from Horta in a dedicated introductory video session.
- ❖ Survey guidelines: examples for Guidelines of statistically sound and risk-based surveys of *Xylella fastidiosa* and *Phyllosticta citricarpa* were presented by Stephen Parnell.

The three presentations were very well received by the Panel and some specific questions were addressed by the presenters, in particular related to the risk factors and the convenience sampling.

8.9 Feedback from Scientific Committee ongoing activities

PLH Panel chair presented the ongoing activities of the Scientific Committee.

9 International Year of Plant health

9.1 EFSA activities for International Year of Plant health

PLH team leader/Panel coordinator gave a presentation of the many activities that EFSA has prepared for the International Year of Plant Health, some of them had to be postponed to 2021 due to covid-19

9.2 EPPO activities for the International Year of Plant Health (Nico Horn, EPPO)

EPPO DIRECTOR Nico Horn presented the EPPO activities for the International Year of Plant Health, he also informed that due to the covid-19 pandemic the IYPL is going to be extended to 2021.

9.3 Plant health activities in Pre-Accession countries: overview of Plant health Risk assessment in Serbia (Sladjana Lukic, Department for Plant Health & Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Serbia)

Sladjana Lukic, representative of the Department for Plant Health & Plant Quarantine, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Serbia presented the overview of the Plant Health Risk assessment in her country.

9.4 Plant health activities in Pre-Accession countries: overview of Plant health Risk assessment in Turkey (Nursen ÜSTÜN, Bornova Plant Protection Research Institute, Turkey)

Nursen ÜSTÜN, representative of Bornova Plant Protection Research Institute, Turkey gave an overview of Plant Health risk assessment in her country.

10 Replies to questions from Observers

10 questions in totals were received before and during the plenary. Please go to **Annex 1** to read them.

11 AOB wrap up & next Panel meeting 2020 and preparation of 2021 Plenary calendar

Panel members were reminded that all the 2020 PLH plenaries are going to be done by teleconference, the onsite meeting of 2021 dates were shown again, they will receive at the end of the Plenary an email with the dates. PLH team leader/Panel coordinator, Giuseppe Stancanelli, also informed them that following the new mandates expected, additional web PLH Plenaries of maximum 4 hrs would be added starting from 2021 in the month between the onsite plenaries. The approach was agreed by the Panel. Precise dates for such additional short web-plenaries to be agreed by mail soon.

Annex 1. Questions and replies to observers

Question: If hosts are essential for the lifecycle of an organism, why is information on host presence not included in any of the presented approaches? I can imagine that in some cases relying only on climatic factors could create the expectation that an organism could potentially invade large parts of Europe when in practice no hosts are present in the climatically suitable territory and consequently no establishment would be possible. I understand that spatially explicit data on host presence might be missing quite often, but NUTS2/3 information on the area of production could still inform the actual area under risk

- **Answer:** questions like this are about decision-making and legislation in the EU, and are outside the remit of EFSA as they fall into the risk management domain. EFSA was created to establish an institutional separation between risk assessment and risk management and to provide its advice to EU decision makers in an independent manner. We will send by mail links to the relevant legislation and risk assessment documents.

Question: what is the objective of EFSA?

- **Answer:** main objective of EFSA is to provide independent scientific and technical advice and risk communication on Food and Feed Safety, Animal Health and Welfare and Plant Health for the European Union

Question: I wonder what theory are the practical management of invasive species. For example, clear cutting zone of eradicating pine wood nematode is 500 m according to the regulation of European Union, so what is the scientific support behind this measure? How did they derive the conclusion of 500 m?

- **Answer:** questions like this are about decision-making and legislation in the EU, and are outside the remit of EFSA as they fall into the risk management domain. EFSA was created to establish an institutional separation between risk assessment and risk management and to provide its advice to EU decision makers in an independent manner. We will send by mail links to the relevant legislation and risk assessment documents.

Questions:

- 1. How would you recommend going about the recognition of these types of new systems (*i.e. production of plant products in controlled environment agriculture systems*) within the regulation for plant health in food production?
- 2. How would we find entry into the considerations of how would alternative types of pest control measures (beneficial organic organism and mechanical control measures) be established in the regulations to contain the potential of pests establishment?

- **Answer 1) and 2):** the EFSA Plant Health Panel is not working on the registration of Plant Protection Products, Biocontrol agents or on Plant Production Systems. For these questions please refer to EU Commission or Member States and for the risk assessment of regulated products to other EFSA Panels. The EFSA Plant Health Panel, however, always consider such aspects including available biological control in its assessment of the risk of exotic plant pests.

Question: during preparation of the (*High Risk Plants HRP*) risk assessment report we saw that there was few insect species which was determined with the faunistic taxonomic studies. There was no information resource about their damage and economically importance. How can we assess their prevalence in local area?

- **Answer:** when a Third Country NPPO is preparing a dossier, it is important that it provides detailed information on plant pests that are present in the country and can be potentially associated with the commodity. The dossier needs to be supported with all information regarding each specific pest (e.g. scientific publications, reports, survey results etc.). It is possible that for a certain species there is very limited (or no) information, i.e. on the prevalence (or pest pressure) in the country or in the area of production. This can be stated in the dossier. EFSA will then assess the provided information for all species reported and if there is indeed little evidence of association with a commodity and/or prevalence and/or impact on agricultural production, this will be taken into account.

Question: I realise that in the PRA sector, there are many activities or tools in order to better evaluate a pest. Unfortunately, sometimes PRAs are conducted when a pest is already present within the EU. The Mediterranean area is more at risk due to climatic conditions, crops grown outdoor, maybe NPPOs less effective, eradication less feasible. How to combine scientific approach and the need to conclude an evaluation asap? Has EFSA taken into consideration also a way to have a quick tool, but scientifically reliable?

- **Answer:** we agree with this need: EFSA PLH Panel already provides rapid and urgent advice in the form of Pest categorisations. This was done for example for the Fall armyworm. We are also developing rapid one-tier quantitative approaches that were used for example for the EU priority pests and are currently applied for pest-freedom assessments in High Risk Plants commodity risk assessment. Also more rapid assessments will be required with the identification of new pests by horizon scanning or by commodity risk assessments.