



**MINUTES OF THE 3rd PLENARY MEETING
OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH
HELD IN PARMA ON 14-15 DECEMBER 2006**

(ADOPTED ON 21 FEBRUARY 2007)

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PARTICIPANTS

Members of the PLH Panel

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Ad hocs

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1. WELCOME

The Panel's Chair welcomed the participants and the external experts.

2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

With regard to the agenda it was decided to give priority to the discussion on the draft opinions and to postpone the other topics to the next plenary meeting.

Declarations of conflict of interest reported earlier by the Panel members with regard to the question on EPPO PRAs were sustained.

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF 2ND PLENARY MEETING

The minutes were adopted with minor amendments.

4. REPORT ON MEETING WITH COPHS

Postponed

5. REPORT ON MEETINGS WITH EPPO

6. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DRAFT OPINIONS ON:

In the introduction to the discussion on the draft opinions the Panel's Chair stressed that the panel's ambition is to produce opinions of high scientific value. He emphasised that the first opinions are products of a learning process and encouraged the Panel to constructively criticise the prepared documents. The Chair thanked the WGs and *ad hoc* experts for their contributions.

- **A PRA made by Spain on *Bactrocera zonata*, a fruit fly listed in the quarantine list of the Community plant health legislation**

The European Commission requested EFSA to provide a scientific opinion on this PRA, to consider the threats posed by *Bactrocera zonata* to the whole community, to identify the fruit species at risk and to determine whether the management measures proposed are appropriate.

Due to absence of the rapporteur the draft opinion was presented by the chair of the WG in charge. The Panel carefully discussed the draft opinion, requiring adjustments and clarifications. The Panel agreed on the conclusions and therefore the opinion was recommended for adoption by written procedure. The final draft will be made available to the Panel for their consideration by mid-January 2007.

- **Two PRAs made by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) for Invasive Alien Species (IAS) that pose a threat to plant health, environment and biodiversity in the EPPO region: *Lysichiton americanus* and *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides***

EFSA PLH Panel was requested by the European Commission DG SANCO to provide a scientific opinion on two PRAs made by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) on Invasive Alien Plants (IAS) *Lysichiton americanus* Hultén & St. John (American skunk cabbage or yellow skunk cabbage) and *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* (floating pennyworth). The Panel was in particular asked: (a) whether these organisms can be considered as harmful for the endangered area of the EC and (b) whether the identified management options are appropriate through an evaluation of their efficacy, feasibility and impact.

EPPO included *L. americanus* and *H. ranunculoides* in its A2 List of pests recommended for regulation as quarantine pests, considering as endangered area the entire EPPO region. The plants, identified as posing an important threat to plant health, environment and biodiversity in the EPPO region, have also been included in the EPPO List of invasive alien plants.

Two Panel members declared conflict of interest with regard to these questions due to their involvement in the preparation of the PRAs under scrutiny. They were excluded from the discussion and will refrain from voting.

The opinions presented by the rapporteurs were prepared in two different formats: one based on a table structure reflecting the EPPO scheme and the other one in manuscript format. It was decided to maintain these formats as rewriting would be time-consuming and was felt unnecessary. None the less for future opinions based on the EPPO scheme a common format should be considered. The Panel agreed that the draft opinions needed further amendment mainly with regard to the information classified as 'missing'. The Commission emphasised that the decision-making requires as much information as possible.

Pending the improvements, the Panel agreed to adopt the opinions by written procedure. The final drafts should be ready by mid-January 2007.

- **An evaluation made by the US Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on asymptomatic citrus fruit as a pathway for the introduction of citrus canker disease (*Xanthomonas axonopodis* pv. *citri*)**

The draft opinion was presented by the rapporteur. The document under evaluation relates to a USDA APHIS proposal to allow movement of asymptomatic citrus fruit from areas where citrus canker is present. In response to the Commission question the Panel thoroughly scrutinised the scientific evidence provided. Following suggestions for minor clarifications the Panel adopted the opinion unanimously. After final polishing, the opinion will be prepared for publishing by the end of January 2007.

- **Pest risk assessment made by Lithuania and Poland as regards *Ambrosia* spp.**

During the negotiations for their accession to the European Community, Poland and Lithuania requested the inclusion of *Ambrosia* spp., in particular *Ambrosia artemisiifolia*, *A. trifida* and *A. psilostachya*, as harmful organisms in point c of section II, Part A of Annex I to Council Directive 2000/29/EC. In support of their request, both countries presented a pest risk analysis (PRA) on the basis of information compiled in the format of the EPPO scheme. The Polish and Lithuanian PRAs both concluded that *Ambrosia* spp. are potential quarantine pests justifying the use of phytosanitary measures to exclude *Ambrosia* spp. from the PRA area (Poland and Lithuania respectively). The Standing Committee on Plant Health discussed the subject but could not make a conclusion on the question whether *Ambrosia* spp. meets the conditions to be classified as a harmful organism. As a consequence, the European Commission requested EFSA to provide a scientific opinion on the responses made by Poland and Lithuania respectively on the pest risk assessments made by both countries as regards *Ambrosia* spp.

The two draft opinions were presented by the rapporteurs. The Panel discussed the content in depth providing comments regarding further amendments and requesting the rapporteurs to prepare new draft opinions by mid-January 2007. As the Panel agreed on the conclusions made in the opinions, it was suggested to adopt the documents by written procedure. The Commission accepted that this might result in a minor delay in delivery of the opinions.

7. DISCUSSION ON PROCEDURE FOR PEER-REVIEW OF PRAS

Postponed

8. DISCUSSION ON EFSA PLH PANEL'S CONCEPT FOR PEST RISK ASSESSMENT

Postponed

9. EMERGING RISKS IN PLANT HEALTH

Postponed

10. NEW EFSANET

A new application for the exchange of information among EFSA experts called Science Extranet was presented by the EFSA IT services. The application is accessible from <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/afextranet>. The necessary access codes have been created and communicated by e-mail to the Panel members. Basic instructions on the access and functions were given. A user guide will be made available and helpdesk service provided. The application is under development. Comments on its functionality are welcome.

The Panel agreed to use the new workspace for communication and document exchange. The Sc. Coordinator will create projects for the new questions. For the projects under closure the documents will be imported from the previous application (EFSAnet) by the EFSA IT services.

11. MISCELLANEOUS

- Working groups for DOM PRAs were created for the groups of pest organisms concerned: Arthropods, Bacteria, Fungi and Viruses. Also chairs for each WG were selected. The rapporteurs will be agreed at the WG meetings. The first WG meetings were agreed to be held as follows: Arthropods – 11-12 January, Bacteria – 15-16 January and Fungi – 20 Feb. 2007. Suggestions for *ad hoc* experts in plant virology should be sent to the Sc. Coordinator.
- The **next plenary meeting** will be held in **Parma** on **21-22 February 2007**.