

**MINUTES OF THE 8<sup>th</sup> PLENARY MEETING  
OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH  
HELD IN PARMA ON 17-18 OCTOBER 2007**

(ADOPTED ON 28 NOVEMBER 2007)

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## **PARTICIPANTS**

### ***Members of the PLH Panel***

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### ***Ad hoc experts***

Harm HUTTINGA, Maria KÖLBER, Stefan WINTER

### ***Apologies***

Richard BAKER, Thierry CANDRESSE, Bärbel GEROWITT, David MAKOWSKI, Robert STEFFEK, Johan Coert VAN LENTEREN

### ***European Commission (DG SANCO)***

Harry ARIJS

### ***EFSA***

Elzbieta CEGLARSKA, Sharon CHEEK, Giuseppe STANCANELLI, Sara TRAMONTINI, Anna CAMPANINI, Ann DE BLOCK

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## **1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Panel's Chair welcomed the panel members and the Commission observers. Apologies were received from Richard BAKER, Thierry CANDRESSE, Bärbel GEROWITT, David MAKOWSKI, Robert STEFFEK, Johan Coert VAN LENTEREN.

## **2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted without changes.

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No conflicts of interest were reported.

## **4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF 7<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING**

The minutes were adopted with minor amendments.

## 5. PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF DRAFT OPINIONS ON PRAS MADE BY FRANCE ON ORGANISMS WHICH ARE CONSIDERED BY FRANCE AS HARMFUL IN 4 FRENCH OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS, I.E. GUADELOUPE, FRENCH GUIANA, MARTINIQUE AND RÉUNION

EFSA was requested to provide a scientific opinion on 30 PRAs made by France on organisms which are considered by France as harmful in 4 French overseas departments, i.e. Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique and Réunion, and in particular whether these organisms can be considered as harmful organisms for the endangered area of the above departments in the meaning of the definition mentioned in Art. 2.1.(e) of the Directive 2000/29/EC and thus potentially eligible for addition to the list of harmful organisms in the Directive 2000/29/EC.

The question was accepted for opinion at the Panel's plenary meeting in October 2006. The Panel was given 18 months period for elaboration on the question.

Two types of PRAs were prepared by the French risk assessors<sup>1</sup>:

- Full based on the EPPO scheme [PM 5/3(1)] only for harmful organisms for which the probability of introduction into the DOMs is high with economically important crops and,
- Simplified for organisms for which the probability of introduction is extremely low.

The Rapporteurs presented the following draft opinions for the Panel's discussion:

- **Pest risk assessment on Banana bract mosaic virus BBrMV (full)**

The Panel thoroughly discussed the draft opinion and made suggestions to improve the document and clarify some aspects particularly the impacts (economic, social and environmental according to differences into the PRA area).

An important issue was highlighted, concerning the use of the quotations. It is recommended (supported by recent legal advice) that direct quotation from the PRA text should be avoided wherever possible, as the English version was a translation of the original French document. In addition the term "significant" should be avoided unless referring to statistical significance.

The Panel agreed on the general content of the opinion, subject to additional amendments and formatting to ensure the presentation is consistent with other opinions.

The opinion was proposed for presentation at the next plenary, following the inclusion of agreed amendments.

- **Pest risk assessment on Banana bunchy top virus BBTV (full)**

The Panel discussed the draft opinion presented. The quality of the PRA is considered low, and it required considerable updating. In spite of this, the Panel agreed with the conclusions of the PRA and confirmed that it represented a high risk to the DOMs.

The panel commented that the economic impact should be differentiated between the French Antilles (Martinique and Guadeloupe) and the other two departments (Guiana and Reunion).

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<sup>1</sup> As described in the Commission's background document

The Panel agreed on the general content of the opinion, subject to the additional amendments suggested and the opinion was proposed for presentation at the next plenary.

- **Pest risk assessment on *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* (full)**

The Panel discussed the draft opinion presented. As already pointed out in the previous discussion of this opinion, the main weaknesses of the French risk assessment laid in the characterization, diagnosis and identification of the pest. Regarding the pest identification the French risk assessors indicated *F. oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* as the subject of the pest risk assessment, regardless of the fact that races 1 and 2 are already present in the PRA. The risk assessment should then have focused only on races 4 and T4, which are absent and have the potential to enter, establish and cause damage to the PRA area. The conclusion of the opinion was that Races 4 and T4 should be considered for management options for the PRA area.

Identification of the pest, terminology and tests of pathogenicity for the races of *F. oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* were thoroughly discussed.

It was suggested to reformulate the conclusions and the text in order to clarify the identification and characterization of the Foc races 4 and T4 and to better highlight the uncertainties, as they contribute to the risk and affect the decision making.

The opinion was proposed for presentation, after the suggested amendments, at the next plenary meeting.

## **6. PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE PANEL'S PROPOSAL FOR PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF PEST RISK ASSESSMENTS**

The Secretariat presented the proposal for the Assessment part for the opinions on DOM PRAs. The Panel considered it generally helpful to give a common structure to the opinions, based on the ISPM 11 standard. Inclusion of further subheadings of ISPM 11 in the opinion was suggested to provide guidance on the aspects to consider, although the final opinions won't necessarily present all the parts listed on ISPM 11. In accordance with the decision of the 7th Plenary meeting, the Panel confirmed the decision of not having in the opinion an additional chapter on particular aspects of Part 1 for full PRA.

It was suggested that the opinions could be improved to distinguish between the two aspects included in the terms of reference (opinion on the document and opinion on the risk posed by the organism).

The guidelines for evaluation was also discussed, in terms of the information required and the criteria needed to make a judgement on whether the document was of sufficient quality for review by the Panel. It was suggested that procedural elements (including handling of initial request and completeness check) carried out by the Secretariat, and scientific evaluation of the documents could be more clearly separated. The Panel agreed on the need to develop separate documents:

- the template
- guidelines for scientific evaluation of pest risk assessments made by third parties for phytosanitary purposes
- guidance for submission of documents to the Panel

## **7. EFSA SCIENTIFIC COLLOQUIUM 10**

The announcement and programme of the EFSA Scientific Colloquium n. 10 were presented to the Panel. The topics of the four discussion groups were discussed and the Chairs and Rapporteurs were selected. Some of the Panel members presented their apologies for not being able to participate to the Scientific Colloquium.

## **8. MISCELLANEOUS**

The Chairs of Working Groups reported on the current work and on the planning of opinions to be presented at the next plenary meetings.

It was announced that the EFSA Executive Director would participate in the 10th Plenary meeting in January 2008 in Parma and that the 9th Plenary meeting on 28-29 November would be held in Budapest.

Concern was raised by a Panel member receiving a request for his personal opinion on an opinion published by the Panel. The Secretariat confirmed that questions should be transferred to EFSA Communication Department for information who co-ordinate responses to queries on published opinion. The Panel was reminded that it is a positive signal of the big and always increasing interest from the external world (media included) and a reminder of why their opinions needed to be based on sound scientific evidence, as the opinions themselves would be subject to further scientific scrutiny.

A proposal was made to draft a letter of thanks in reply to the EFSA Executive Director's letter of appreciation.