

**MINUTES OF THE 26TH PLENARY MEETING
OF THE EFSA SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON PLANT HEALTH
HELD IN ISPRA ON 11-12 MAY 2010
(ADOPTED ON 21 JULY 2010)**

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PARTICIPANTS

Members of the PLH Panel

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Alan CARROLL

Apologies

Gianni GILIOLI, Gritta SCHRADER, Stephan WINTER and Marina ZLOTINA (PLH Panel)

Dorothee ANDRE, Harry ARIJS, Jean-François MALJEAN and Michael WALSH (European Commission)

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Panel Chair welcomed the Panel members and the Commission observer. Apologies were received from Gianni GILIOLI, Gritta SCHRADER, Stephan WINTER and Marina ZLOTINA (PLH Panel), Dorothee ANDRE, Harry ARIJS, Jean-François MALJEAN and Michael WALSH (European Commission).

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interest, EFSA screened the Annual Declaration of Interest (ADoI) and Specific Declaration of Interest (SDoI) filled in by the experts invited to the meeting. For further details on the outcome of the declaration of interest please refer to Annex 1.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 25TH PLENARY MEETING

The minutes were adopted without changes. The list of actions from the previous meeting was reviewed.

5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT OPINION ON *GIBBERELLA CIRCINATA*

EFSA is requested to provide a pest risk assessment of *Gibberella circinata* Nirenberg & O'Donnell for the EU territory. The mandate requests that EFSA identifies risk management options and evaluates their efficiency in reducing the risk to plant health posed by this organism. The mandate is registered in the EFSA Register of Questions as EFSA-Q-2009-00678.

Amendments to the opinion since endorsement by the Panel in its 25th meeting were presented with emphasis on the ratings used in the opinion in accordance with panel requests.

Following clarifications from the Commission representative and a further discussion of the ratings issues the opinion was adopted.

6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT OPINION ON *DRYOCOSMUS KURIPHILUS*

EFSA is requested to provide a scientific opinion on the risk to plant health of *Dryocosmus kuriphilus* Yasumatsu, the oriental chestnut gall wasp, for the EU territory. The mandate requests that EFSA identifies risk management options and evaluates their efficiency in reducing the risk to plant health posed by this organism. The mandate is registered in the EFSA Register of Questions as EFSA-Q-2009-00677.

The amendments to the opinion since endorsement by the Panel in its 25th meeting were presented, including an additional Annex to outline the ratings given by the Panel.

The opinion was adopted.

7. NEW MANDATES FROM THE COMMISSION

- **Evaluation of PRA of *Phytophthora ramorum* (RAPRA)**

EFSA has been requested to produce a scientific opinion on the pest risk assessment for *Phytophthora ramorum* prepared by the FP6 project RAPRA.¹ In this request, EFSA is asked to take into account the comments on the RAPRA PRA submitted by some Member states, as well as additional relevant information since compilation of the PRA. In its opinion the Panel should explain any conclusions in the RAPRA pest risk assessment which it does not share, and identify what the Panel's new proposal would be. A presentation on the mandate was given with a description of the current situation, relating to ongoing research. It was highlighted that the resolution of the data issue is a critical aspect to consider.

The Panel discussed the new mandate and nominations were sought for the working group.

- **Environmental Risk Assessment of *Ambrosia* spp.**

EFSA was requested to provide a scientific opinion on the effect on public or animal health or on the environment of the further distribution of *Ambrosia* spp. in the European Union, on the importance of the pathway of bird feed and, in general, of feed materials (including seeds) for animal feeding in the distribution of *Ambrosia* spp. in the environment. The mandate is registered in the EFSA register of questions as M-2009-0144 and the PLH Panel was requested to produce a chapter in the opinion on the effect on the environment of the further distribution of *Ambrosia* spp. in the EU.

A draft opinion was presented to the Panel for adoption of the chapter on effects of *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* on the environment. The Panel proposed some modifications and a revised version will be sent to the PLH Panel members for adoption by written procedure by end of May 2010.

8. PRESENTATION ON THE MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE AND ITS ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS IN CANADA

With respect to the self-task on Environmental risk assessment in plant health the Panel was given a presentation on the mountain pine beetle, an organism which is having a devastating impact in North America. The insect's biology, the history of outbreaks and other effects were described to the Panel including ecological, economical and the estimated increase in carbon emissions. The Panel asked questions concerning the severity of outbreaks, defence responses in trees, likely invasiveness to the EU and the effect of climate on this organism.

9. UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE SELF-TASK ON GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT IN PLANT HEALTH

The Panel was informed on the planning process that the WG have identified.

The EFSA secretariat explained how part of the work could be outsourced through Article 36 grants, if necessary.

¹ <http://rapra.csl.gov.uk/>

During the discussion, the importance of referring to the ERA guidance prepared by the GMO Panel was highlighted in order to make use of their findings and avoid any repetition of the same work.

10. PRESENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE FOR GMOs (BY EFSA GMO UNIT (CANCELLED))

11. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT OPINION ON *TILLETIA INDICA*

EFSA was requested to provide a scientific opinion on the USDA APHIS quantitative pathway analysis on the likelihood of Karnal bunt introduction with the importation of US wheat for grain into EU and desert durum wheat for grain into Italy. EFSA was also requested to indicate whether the US bunted kernel standard would provide equivalent protection against introduction of *Tilletia indica* into the EU, compared to the existing EU import requirement. The mandate is registered in the EFSA Register of Questions as EFSA-Q-2009-00760.

A draft opinion was presented to the Panel for possible adoption. The Panel discussed the difficulties of expressing a quantitative evaluation of the pathway analysis in a style more understandable by the reader and agreed to include, at beginning of the main sections, more detailed explanations on strategy and content of the evaluation.

After discussion of the draft opinion and its conclusions, the opinion was adopted by the Panel. One Panel member who declared an interest with respect to this mandate was excluded from the discussion during all previous meetings when this mandate was addressed and also from the adoption procedure of this opinion (see Annex 1).

12. MISCELLANEOUS

Update on EmRisk PLH

Following discussion by the PLH and AHAW Panels, it has now been decided that the EFSA strategy on Emerging Risk, until now focused on contaminants in the food chain, will include also emerging risks in plant health and in animal health. EFSA AMU unit will work on developing a methodology for plant health which will be used in the second phase of the EFSA existing emerging risk framework.

The Panel requested clarifications on the timeframe and on its expected contribution to the identification of emerging risk in plant health.

Report from Scientific Committee

The chair provided a report from the last scientific committee meeting. There is now a general agreement between EFSA and the Commission on national data availability.

PLH panel member Gabor Lovei has agreed to be part of the WG on statistical significance vs. biological assumptions. A WG has been created on the use of default assumptions addressing what a Panel can do in instances of lack of information.

An update on the survey results was given from the systematic review workshop. Though Plant Health will not use the full tool kit, it will still be useful. AMU will try to devise individual workshops specific for each Panel. The Article 36 project Prima Phacie is using systematic review in application to risk assessment.

EFSA Scientific Network for Risk Assessment in Plant Health

The first meeting will take place on 14-15 October 2010 in Parma, and will be organised by PLH Secretariat. It represents a key interface between EFSA and Member States and a framework for cooperation and exchange of information in plant health.

The composition and designation system used for participants was described to the Panel. The Panel discussed the new network, in particular with respect to overlap with other organisations.

Update on EFSA action plan on COPHS guidelines

The Panel was reminded of the background to the development of this document and the forthcoming launch of the public consultation.

Status of Organisation of joint EFSA –Nordic countries workshop on pest risk assessment

A report from the Norwegian panel member on the status of the scientific conference organisation was given to the panel together with logistic details.

PLH Colloquium 2011

A presentation on the structure and objectives of EFSA Scientific Colloquia was given to the Panel. Participants will include the Panel, the Advisory Forum, EFSA PLH Network and some EFSA staff. Additionally there will be an open call on the EFSA website for participants. How an EFSA colloquium is structured was also described.

The Panel gave a range of suggestions and proposals for subject matter to be addressed for a PLH Scientific Colloquium to be included in the 2011 calendar. Any further proposals should be provided to the secretariat. The possibility of organising a scientific conference on the pest risk assessment methodologies used at EFSA and at USDA APHIS was also discussed.

Expert biographies

Panel members who had not yet provided their biographies were reminded to do so.

Update from PLH Secretariat

The EFSA secretariat attended, as an observer, a Commission WG addressing management option proposals in the activity of decision-making. The use of personal communication was identified a weak point in the evaluation of opinions. The Panel conclusion on the use of personal communication is that if it is unavoidable and for specific reasons it is considered unchallengeable when used with other information sources, it should be used. The following points were of interest to the Panel.

- That details are very important in our opinions (e.g. about size of buffer zones).

- That opinions should clarify where uncertainty comes from and that it would be useful to detail uncertainties and their influence on the level of risk

A conference was attended in Valencia on red palm weevil and this event provided a very good source of contacts and other information.

PLH plenary meetings calendar

Dates and locations for future plenary meetings were discussed with the Panel.

Next meeting confirmation

The 27th Plenary meeting will take place in Norway on **20 and 21st July 2010**

Annex 1

With regard to the mandate on *Tilletia indica* Dr. Marina Zlotina declared in a previous meeting (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/plh100120-m.pdf>) an interest with respect to this mandate. As part of her activities with her employer USDA APHIS she has an interest concerning documents on this subject produced by or with involvement of USDA APHIS. In accordance with EFSA's policy on Declarations of Interest and Implementing documents thereof, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a conflict (level B). Pursuant to EFSA's Procedure on Identifying and Handling Declarations of Interest, the said expert as per point C.III² was excluded from drafting the opinion and discussing and adopting the final Panel output.

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/doiconflicts.pdf>