

**Summary Report of the  
Working Group meeting on Plant Health  
held in Brussels on 18-19 March 2019**

**Section A     Information and/or discussion**

**A.01     Evaluation of recent import interceptions with harmful organisms by Member States and the need for further actions**

The Commission presented an overview of the interceptions from 15 February to 15 March 2019, highlighting two interceptions of *Phyllosticta citricarpa* (citrus black spot), one in pomelos from China and one in lemons from Tunisia. The French authorities informed that the consignment intercepted from Tunisia presented clear symptoms of citrus black spot, confirmed by the official detection method by real time PCR.

During this period, there have been 11 interceptions of fruit flies, 22 of false codling moth, 20 of *Thrips* and 5 of fall armyworm in different plant material. Moreover, there have been 13 interceptions of live organisms in wood pallets from Belarus, all ISPM 15 marked, and 9 interceptions of live organisms in wood pallets and wood packaging material from China, also containing the ISPM 15 mark.

Furthermore, the Commission informed about the follow-up in relation to the interceptions of fruit flies from China and the letter sent to Suriname on 14 March due to the increased number of interceptions of harmful organisms in different commodities.

**A.02     Evaluation of recent outbreaks of harmful organisms notified by Member States and of the control actions taken.**

Spain informed that on 28 February 2019, a pine tree (*Pinus pinaster*) located in the municipality of Valverde del Fresno, along the Portuguese territory, in the Autonomous Region of Extremadura, was found infected with Pine Wood Nematode (PWN). The area has been demarcated and eradication measures are being taken as required by Decision 2012/535/EC. In the past, the same area was concerned by another outbreak of PWN that was declared as eradicated in 2017.

**A.03     EFSA newsletters on horizon scanning of media and literature for new and emerging plant health risks**

EFSA presented the 24th edition of the media monitoring newsletter. Highlights from the media were reported on 8 different pests, and the attention was drawn to the request from Spain and Portugal to import *Tamarixia dryi* as a biocontrol agent against *Trioza erytreae*.

The third pilot edition of the literature monitoring newsletter was presented. Member States were requested to provide feedback on the structure and the topics covered by the selected scientific articles by the next Committee meeting.

**A.04 Evaluation of the 2018 import controls for the compliance with the special requirements against the introduction of *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (false codling moth).**

The Commission presented an overview of the interceptions of *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* (false codling moth) until 12 March 2019, highlighting the continuation of the positive trend, compared with the same period of 2018, on the interceptions on cut flowers, but the situation of the interceptions on peppers, where no improvement seems to occur, is worrying.

The Commission informed that, since the last discussions in January, it has contacted the Embassies of Uganda, Kenya and Ghana to request a follow-up of the letters sent in 2018. Since then, Ghana submitted in February 2019 a report of their investigations and action plan to prevent interceptions during 2019. Member States expressed their concerns about the situation and the lack of response of third countries. The Commission is currently organising a bilateral meeting with Uganda, the country with the highest number of interceptions in 2018 and so far in 2019 and will inform Member States accordingly.

**A.05 Overview of the 2018 surveillance results for *Xylella fastidiosa*.**

The Commission presented the preliminary results of the survey activities carried out by Member States for *Xylella fastidiosa* during the course of 2018. The results confirmed the increased efforts put forward by Member States to confirm the status of *Xylella fastidiosa* in the Union territory. Figures from 2018 confirm the presence of the bacterium in a restricted part of the Union territory, where EU emergency measures are in place: Apulia (IT), PACA (FR), Corsica (FR), Madrid (ES), Alicante (ES), Balears (ES). The outbreak in Saxony (DE) was declared as eradicated in March 2018. Six positive findings were detected outside the current demarcated areas, one of which located in the north of Portugal (Porto), which finally triggered the establishment of a new demarcated area. Overall, more than 284.000 inspections have been carried out and 172.000 samples analysed during the course of 2018 in the entire Union territory, of which 164.000 inspections and 102.000 samples within the demarcated areas. Figures confirm increasing trends compared to previous years. Member States were invited to check the figures, before the publication of the results by the Commission.

**A.06 Overview of the Member States' 2019 surveillance plans for *Xylella fastidiosa*.**

The Commission provided an overview of the 2019 survey plans submitted by Member States. Data confirm that the majority of Member States intend to continue their survey activities in line with the 2018 approach, with some adjustments. Specified plants to be surveyed and number of samples and inspections to be carried out were prioritised according to the level of risk at national level.

**A.07 Overview of the 2018 surveillance results for *Pomaceae* sp.**

The Commission presented the results of Member States' surveys from 2018 regarding *Pomaceae*. In 2018 there were 20 outbreaks in rice plots, all in Spain, and one outbreak in a lake in France. Moreover 8 outbreaks were notified in rivers and

irrigation networks, all in the demarcated area in the Ebro delta in Spain. In 2018, the number of visual inspections was slightly smaller than in 2017.

The presence of the pest is limited to 3 demarcated areas: 2 in Catalonia, Spain, and 1 demarcated area in Province Alpes Cote d'Azur (PACA), France.

**A.08 Report of the Commission audit in the USA of 10-21 September 2018 in order to evaluate the system of official controls for the export of plants for planting and seeds to the European Union.**

The Commission presented the outcome of the audit carried out in USA in September 2018 to evaluate the system of official controls for the export of plants for planting and seeds to the EU, including controls on specified plants for *Xylella fastidiosa* exported to the EU. The EU export-related inspections both at the places of production and of the export consignments are well organised. The Committee was informed that the shortcomings identified during the audit were addressed by US with corrective actions. Member States expressed concerns as regards the export of specified plants to the EU by some production sites and areas declared by US as free from *Xylella fastidiosa*. The Commission informed that, among the corrective actions introduced by US, there is a revised list of Pest Free Areas and Pest Free Production Sites authorised to export specified plants to the EU. The overall situation will be closely monitored and further actions considered if appropriate.

**A.09 Overview of the 2017 dossiers for EU co-financing of eradication / containment campaigns.**

The Commission presented an overview of the plant health emergency measures dossiers for measures implemented by Member States in the year 2017. These dossiers have been successfully evaluated and the outcome was communicated during the meeting. Grant decisions will be signed in 2019 specifying the co-funded amounts. The Member States welcomed the presentation.

**A.10 Exchange of views on draft technical Annexes for an Implementing Regulation ('Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation'), including the lists of quarantine pests, RNQPs, regulated commodities and import and movement requirements, under the basic Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.**

The Commission presented an update of the work on the draft Regulation, its main normative provisions and the Annexes listing Union quarantine pests, protected zone quarantine pests and measures against those pests. The members of the group commented on the lists and measures. The Commission explained that it is currently working with the other services of the Commission in preparing the draft, but this would require some time due to its size.

**A.11 Exchange of views on the elements for the draft Implementing Regulation in relation to the issuance of plant passports for protected zones and the use of a traceability code under the Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.**

The Commission presented the revised elements for the draft Implementing Regulation, and in particular the revised draft text in its Annex II for taxons of plants for planting for which the exemption referred to in Article 83(2) of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 shall not apply. The presentation was followed by a discussion, in which Member States commented on several elements of the draft text. The Commission will reflect on the comments made and will proceed with the preparation of the formal proposal to the Committee in one of its next meetings.

**A.12 Exchange of views on the revision of Commission Decision 2007/433/EC on provisional emergency measures against *Gibberella circinata*.**

Provisional emergency measures concerning *Gibberella circinata* are currently in place, but should be reviewed in order to better address the risk of its introduction and spread. The Commission outlined possible measures and a first draft will be prepared. Member States were invited to submit comments by the next meeting.

**A.13 Exchange of views on the elements for the draft Implementing Regulation in relation to specific rules for the release of plants from quarantine stations and confinement facilities under the Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.**

Member States were invited to comment on the final structure of the draft Implementing Regulation. As regards to the lists of quarantine pests and plants provided in Article 5 and Annexes I to IV, Member States agreed to provide general requirements only, and to delete Article 5 and technical Annexes. As regards the need for an additional labelling for material released or moved from quarantine stations or confinement facilities, Member States agreed that no additional label was necessary other than the Plant passport or the Letter of Authority referred to in Article 6 of the Commission Delegated Regulation on temporary derogations in view of official testing, scientific or educational purposes, trials, varietal selections, or breeding. The Commission will proceed with the preparation of the formal proposal to the Committee in one of its next meetings

**A.14 Exchange of views on the US request for a derogation from the EU import requirements for US hardwood ammunition boxes.**

APHIS has sent to the Commission a request for a derogation for shipping ammunition boxes not compliant with the ISPM 15 requirements, made from hardwood. Commission Decision (EU) 2015/179 already allows wood packaging material (WPM) ammunition boxes of soft wood to be introduced without the ISPM 15 mark but under specific requirements. In support to their recent request, APHIS provided a risk analysis document that was discussed with Member States in order to evaluate the phytosanitary risk of hard wood packaging material. Some Member States requested a clarification on where they will carry out controls of such WPM: at the European port of entry or at the place of destination. Some other expressed general concerns on derogating from the ISPM 15 requirements. Overall, the phytosanitary risk linked with such WPM seems to be low. Member States comments to the Commission are expected by the end of the month.