



Minutes

**Meeting of the Expert Group on Official Controls (E00911)
Establishment of European Union Reference Laboratories for Plant Health
15 December 2017, 09H00 - 11H00**

Chair: European Commission (COM), DG SANTE (Unit G1 - Plant Health)

Present: Experts of the Member States

	Topic	Documents
	<p>Objectives of the meeting</p> <p>Presentation of the draft Delegated Act based on the new Regulation 2017/625 (Official Controls), for the establishment of European Reference Laboratories in Plant Health.</p>	
	<p>Discussion</p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the participants to the second meeting of the Expert Group and presented the agenda. The Commission noted that the Council and the Parliament were not present.</p>	Agenda
1.	<p>Presentation of the Draft Delegated Act by the Commission</p> <p>- The Commission presented the recitals and the articles of the draft Delegated Act, for the establishment of five EURLs for insects, nematodes, bacteria, fungi, virus, viroids</p>	Draft Delegated Act
2.	<p>Discussion and seeking assistance from the Experts</p>	
	<p>Structure of EURLs</p> <p>- The Experts agreed with the establishment of five EURLS. The Commission explained that a consortium structure is possible for EURL and provided the Experts with a letter of information (and its annex) from the Director of DG SANTE, in particular to the Chief Officers Plant Health on the modalities applicable in case of expression of interests by a consortium. The consortium structure will allow the EURLs to include the "combined harmful organism/commodity" dimension which was an option preferred by several Experts, by bringing specific expertise on matrices, for example on forestry. This structure could also help to handle the numerous pests requiring different scientific and technical expertise, especially for insects. The Commission noted that the consortium as part of the solution was an option supported by the Experts.</p> <p>- The Commission clarified that participating laboratories must be EN ISO/IEC 17025 accredited, although derogations are possible.</p> <p>- The Commission confirmed that the EURLs structured by harmful organisms is not necessarily the structure adopted by the MS at the national level for their laboratories.</p> <p>Scope of EURLs</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experts suggest mentioning explicitly in the title of the EURL on fungi that it will also cover the Oomycetes, which are not considered fungi anymore according to recent taxonomical reclassification. - Experts suggest mentioning explicitly in the title of the EURL on insects that it will also cover "mites" (in the meaning of acarians). - The Commission clarified that the snails will not be considered, since only one snail is regulated. - The Commission explained the intention to cover organisms under emergency measures and surveys, and a few other priority pests as a start. Furthermore, the Commission explained that the work programs will need to be able to include a flexible approach allowing the integration of new pests which could occur and present a risk for the EU, following discussion in the Committee of Member States in particular. The Commission noted that the experts were favorable with this stepwise approach. <p>Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Commission insisted that EURLs will have to monitor the evolution of new technologies, especially molecular methods. -The Commission clarified that subcontracting is accepted for non-core tasks only, such as shipments, websites. - The Commission clarified that the draft Delegated Act concerns the establishment of the EURLs and that the detailed tasks will be described in the calls. 	
	<p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Commission thanked the Experts for their assistance, and noted that they are favorable of establishing of EURLs on basis of the five pest categories proposed as modified thanks to the Experts. The mites and the Oomycetes will be cited explicitly in the titles of the EURL on insects and on fungi, respectively. - Some Experts had expressed their preference for the option based on a combination between pests and commodities. The Commission explained that the consortium is part of the solution, what was agreed by the Experts. - The Commission noted that the Experts agreed with a stepwise prioritization of pests based on the pest under emergency measures and surveys, including a flexible approach allowing the integration of new pests which could occur and present a risk for the EU. - After the feedback of stakeholders (8 January), the Commission will inform the Experts about a final draft before its adoption by the College at the beginning of 2018. 	