

Minutes of the eighth meeting of the Scientific Committee on Plants, Brussels, 2 October 1998

Attendance list

Members

Prof. H. V. DAVIES , Dr. M.-P. DELCOUR-FIRQUET, Dr. R. HANS, Prof. A. R. HARDY , Prof. S. O. KARENLAMPI, Dr. H. A. KUIPER, Dr. J. J. LEGUAY, Prof. M. MARONI (Vice-Chairman), Dr. H. G. NOLTING, Prof. F. OÁ' GARA (Vice-Chairman), Dr. E. RODRIGUEZ-CEREZO, Prof. A. M. S. SILVA FERNANDES (Chairman)

Invited

Dr. H. KOEPP, Dr. G. SPEIJERS

Commission

Mr W. MAIER (DG VI/A/1), Mr C. EDMUNDS (DG VI/B/2.1), Mr V. MATZEIT (DG XI/E/2), Mrs M. DE SOLA DG XXIV/B/2), Mr Ch. DECKART (DG XXIV/B/1), Mr G. VAN DEN EEDE (JCR)

Secretariat

Mr M. WALSH (DG XXIV/B/2), Ms S. VAN IMPE (DG XXIV/B/2)

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductory Remarks

The Chairman welcomed the members to the meeting.

He drew the meeting's attention to the letter of resignation from Prof. Führ who resigned from the Committee for personal reasons. The Committee requested the Secretariat to write to Prof. Führ, conveying thanks to him for his contribution to the work of the Committee.

M. Maroni questioned the sustainability of the informal arrangement between the Commission and Committee members given the heavy workload of the Committee. He suggested that the Commission services investigate the feasibility of a more formal agreement between members' institutions and the Commission.

M. Maroni also requested the Secretariat to review the Committee's method of working on plant protection products given the volume of work involved. The Secretariat undertook to study the possibilities and report back to the next Plenary Meeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted (Doc. SCP/AGENDA/008-Rev. 3)

3. Declaration of interests by Members

All members present confirmed that they had no conflict of interests to report relative to the items for discussion.

4. Adoption of the minutes of the Seventh Plenary Meeting and matters arising (14 July 1998)

4.1 Adoption of the minutes of the Seventh Plenary Meeting

The draft minutes were approved with some minor textual amendments. The report is available as Document No. SCP/REPT/007-Final of 6 October 1998.

4.2 Kresoxim-methyl

The Secretariat explained to the Committee that the derivation of the NOEL in the rat carcinogenicity study was unclear in the opinion as adopted at the seventh Plenary Meeting (Document SCP/KRESOX/008-Final). The Secretariat explained that it had recently received detailed historical control data from the notifier, which the Committee had not previously examined. Following an exchange of views, the Committee decided that the best approach was that the Commission should consider submitting a formal question to the Committee for opinion.

4.3 Comments of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) GMOs

The Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the document prepared by Professor Pascal entitled "Limits of the Tasks of the SSC: Links between Expertise and Political Decisions". Following an exchange of views, the Committee decided to invite Prof. Pascal to address the Committee so that it could be more fully informed of his views and those of the Scientific Steering Committee.

5. Exchange of views and possible adoption of Committee Rules and Procedures

Following an exchange of views the Committee adopted its Rules and Procedures

6. Plant Protection Products – Fenthion, aldicarb and isoxaflutole

6.1 Fenthion

The Committee considered the draft opinion that it had agreed in principle at the previous meeting. Following an exchange of views and agreement on some textual amendments, the opinion was adopted. The final opinion is available as Document SCP/FENTHI/007-Final.

6.2 Aldicarb

The Committee was informed of the residue WG meeting which met on 1 October where it examined the probabilistic risk assessment submitted by the notifier. It was reported that the WG sought a number of clarifications from the notifier which would be considered at its next meeting on October 13, 1998.

The Committee was also informed that the environmental WG met on 23 September to examine the questions referred to the Committee. The WG sought details of the 'output

files' on the fate modelling studies submitted to the Committee. The WG will meet again on November 5, 1998 when it will examine the draft opinion.

6.3 Isoxaflutole

The Committee was informed of the environmental WG which met on 23 September to examine the question relating to the relevance of metabolite RP 203328. The WG decided to review the field experiments on the leaching potential of the metabolite and sought further information from the notifier on the possible chronic effects of the metabolite. The WG will meet again on 5 November 1998 when it will examine the draft opinion.

7. Exchange of views and possible adoption of preliminary opinion on the data requirements for plant protection product active substances consisting of microorganisms, including viruses.

The Committee adopted the draft opinion following an exchange of views and the inclusion of some minor amendments to the final text. The final opinion is available as Document SCP/MICR/006-Final.

8. Requests for opinion of the Committee on three new active substances: azimsulfuron, flurtamone and spiroxamine

Mr C Edmunds from DG VI introduced the above-mentioned three new active substances in the context of possible inclusion in Annex 1 to Council Directive 91/414/EEC. The Secretariat drew the Committee's attention to the following questions addressed to the Committee for response.

Azimsulfuron:

1. Are the male reproductive effects seen in the 2nd-generation rat study of relevance for health and the environment?
2. Having regard to the intrinsic aquatic ecotoxicological properties of azimsulfuron, the Committee is requested to evaluate the risk to the environment.

Flurtamone

1. Do the soil metabolites of flurtamone, particularly TFMBA, represent a risk for contamination of groundwater?
2. Is the available data adequate to assess the effects on beneficial non-target arthropods?

Spiroxamine

1. Does the data submitted allow an appropriate risk assessments for operators?
2. Having regard to the intrinsic aquatic ecotoxicological properties of spiroxamine, the Committee is requested to evaluate the risk to the environment.

9. Genetically Modified Organisms – Plants

9.1. Potato with a change in starch composition notified by AVEBE and forwarded by the Netherlands (C/NL/96/10)

The Committee was informed of the detailed discussions, which had taken place in the WG on the 1 October when additional data from the notifier was discussed. Following an exchange of views, the Committee adopted its opinion, which is available as Document SCP/GMO/044-Final.

9.2. Male sterile chicory notified by Bejo-Zaden and forwarded by the Netherlands (Notification C/NL/94/25-A)

The Committee received the report of the meeting of the previous day when the response from the notifier was considered. The Committee decided to seek further clarifications from the notifier as it felt from the response received that the question was possibly misinterpreted. In the circumstances a decision on a final opinion was deferred.

9.3. Progress report from the Working Group on the plant GMO guideline document

The objective of this opinion is to communicate the Committee's experience obtained during the evaluation of thirteen plant GMO dossiers. It is the intention that the opinion would contribute to an improvement in the dossiers referred to the Committee, thereby facilitating the evaluation process.

The Committee was informed of the outcome of the WG meeting which had taken place on 1 October and reviewed the various contributions from members. The Secretariat was requested to assemble the draft final document for consideration at the next meeting.

9.4. Progress report of views on the draft protocol for the monitoring of European corn borer resistance to Bt

The Committee was informed of the report by A. Hardy to the GMO WG which had met on 1 October when he introduced his draft opinion. He had commented on the US experience of the necessity for high Bt dose expression in modified plants in order to minimise the risk of resistance development, the necessity for refuge area of up to 40% of crop area, the necessity of intensive crop surveying for indications of resistance and very sensitive monitoring programme.

Members of the WG were requested to review the draft opinion and forward comments to the Rapporteur.

9.5. Introduction of two new GMO dossiers

The Committee's attention was drawn to the following two new plant GMO dossiers and their associated questions for opinion:

a) AMYLOGENE genetically modified starch potato clone (EH92-527-1) with altered starch composition (Notification C/SE/96/3501). The question addressed to the Committee for opinion was 'Is there any reason to believe that the placing on the market of the starch

potato clone (EH92-527-1), for use as any other starch potato excluding further breeding with other potato varieties, is likely to cause any adverse effects on human health and the environment.Â’

b) DEKALB maize line DBT418 tolerant to glufosinate ammonium and resistant to feeding by the European corn borer (Notification C/NL/97/17). The question addressed to the Committee for opinion was Â’Is there any reason to believe that the placing on the market of genetically modified maize line DBT 418 and progeny thereof, with the purpose to be used as any other maize, is likely to cause any adverse effects on human health and the environment.Â’

The Committee noted the questions and invited the Commission to ensure that the necessary dossier was circulated to members. The Committee will review progress with the circulation of dossiers and appoint rapporteurs at its next meeting in November.

10. Other Business

Next Plenary Meeting Â– 10 November 1998

The Chairman of the SCP informed the Committee that he was resigning as Chairman, for personal reasons, as and from the end of the current meeting although he would continue as an ordinary member of the Committee. He thanked the members and the secretariat for their co-operation during his chairmanship.