



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

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**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANT HEALTH HELD ON
14-15 DECEMBER 2009**

Chair: Harry Arijs.

All Member States present, except Greece (15/12), Luxembourg (14-15/12) and Sweden (14/12). All absent Member States were represented at the time of vote. Switzerland was present as observer.

1. MISCELLANEOUS.

Cyprus reported the first finding in a tomato production area of *Tuta absoluta*, as well as the finding of *Anoplophora chinensis* in a consignment of *Cercis chinensis* plants originating from China. Cyprus also reported the interception of *Seiridium cardinale* in *Cupressus sp.* trees from Italy and informed the Committee that it is carrying out surveys for the presence of this organism in its territory to decide on requesting a Protected Zone status. Cyprus informed the Committee of the initialisation of a protocol with China for the export of citrus fruits.

The Czech Republic reported the testing of a new diagnostic protocol for *Monilinia fructicola* which results in less false positives. The re-testing of samples collected for the 2008 survey showed that none of them was positive. The Czech Republic will share its experience with this diagnostic protocol with the other Member States and with the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO).

Germany reported the detection of *Tuta absoluta* for the first time in its territory.

The Netherlands reported the first finding of one larvae of *Apriona japonica* (mulberry borer) in a greenhouse on an *Enkianthus* tree imported from Japan.

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2. DEBRIEFING BY THE COMMISSION FROM THE 2ND EU-EGYPT SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES – CAIRO, EGYPT, 23-24 NOVEMBER 2009, ISSUE RELATED TO POTATO TRADE.

The Commission provided an update on the discussions with Egypt concerning the requirements for import of Egyptian ware potatoes into the EU, which had taken place in the framework of the 2nd EU-Egypt Subcommittee on Agriculture and Fisheries on 23-24 November 2009. Egypt had announced a new system for composing potato consignments for export to the EU, in which all potatoes originating in the same basin (pivot) will be sent under the same lot number.

3. UPDATE BY PORTUGAL OF THE PWN SITUATION IN ITS TERRITORY AND THE CONTROL ACTIONS IN PLACE.

Portugal provided the Committee with an update on the controls of movements of susceptible materials from the demarcated area of continental Portugal and on the evolution of the pine wood nematode (PWN) outbreaks on its continental territory. The Commission requested Portugal to submit the relevant data in writing, together with updates of the map of PWN outbreaks and the progress made in the surveillance and sampling in the buffer zone at the border with Spain. It also requested to intensify the road controls in specific regions where the number of infringements had increased in the past period. Portugal informed the Committee on the recent PWN outbreak on Madeira and the measures taken. An action plan for this second demarcated area would be submitted by 31 December 2009, for discussion in a forthcoming Committee.

4. PRESENTATION BY SPAIN OF THE UPDATED PEST RISK ASSESSMENT (PRA) ON *RHYNCHOPHORUS FERRUGINEUS*, FOLLOWED BY A DISCUSSION.

Spain presented an updated PRA on *Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*, which was finalized in November 2009. The Committee discussed various elements and conclusions of the PRA, and agreed to use it as one of the inputs in the forthcoming meeting of the Commission's Expert Working Group (7-8 January 2010) on a revision of the emergency measures (Decision 2007/365/EC).

5. PRESENTATION BY DR. H. EVANS (FOREST RESEARCH WALES – UK) AND DR. A. ORLINSKI (EPPO) OF UPDATED PRA ON *BURSAPHELENCHUS XYLOPHILUS*, FOLLOWED BY A DISCUSSION.

The updated Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) for PWN prepared by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) was presented by Dr. Hugh Evans (UK) and Dr. Andrei Orlinski (EPPO). The Committee agreed to use the updated PRA for revising the emergency measures (Decision 2006/133/EC) so as to accommodate the latest scientific insights.

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6. APPROVAL OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND THE RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR UPDATING THE TECHNICAL ANNEXES OF DIRECTIVE 2000/29/EC AND DISCUSSION ON THE PRIORITIES.

The Committee approved the terms of reference for the expert Working Group for updating the technical Annexes of Directive 2000/29/EC (Annexes Working Group). A discussion took place to define the priority list of organisms the Annexes Working Group should concentrate on during 2010.

7. CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON THE RELEASE OF A NON-NATIVE BIOCONTROL AGENT FOR THE CONTROL OF JAPANESE KNOTWEED (*FALLOPIA JAPONICA*).

The Committee agreed that the voluntary release of a non-native organism to be used as a biocontrol agent of a plant falls within the scope of Council Directive 2000/29/EC. Therefore, a discussion at this Committee of such voluntary release was considered to be an appropriate procedure. With respect to the concrete case proposed by the UK, the voluntary release of the non-native insect *Aphalara itadori* as a biocontrol agent of the invasive alien species *Fallopia japonica* (Japanese Knotweed), the Committee concluded that, based on the available scientific knowledge, there is no broad justification to oppose to this release. Still, the Committee requested to receive, in advance of the release, detailed information from the UK on the release plan, the post-release monitoring programme as well as the contingency plan. The Committee also requested to be kept regularly updated by the UK on the evolution of the release. A summary report of the data collected will be provided to the Committee before the end of 2010.

8. PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION OF REGULATORY PLANT HEALTH ACTIONS IN CASE OF FINDINGS OF HARMFUL ORGANISMS IN IMPORTED CONSIGNMENTS, FOLLOWED BY A DISCUSSION.

Discussion postponed.

9. OVERVIEW BY THE COMMISSION ON THE MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE IN 2009 AND DISCUSSION ON THE MAIN CHALLENGES FOR 2010.

A short overview of the 2009 activities and the expectations for 2010 was presented and discussed.

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10. DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION ON A UNION'S FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO A PROGRAMME FOR THE CONTROL OF ORGANISMS HARMFUL TO PLANTS AND PLANT PRODUCTS IN THE FRENCH OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS FOR 2010 (SANCO/10689/2009).

This Decision would establish a Union's financial contribution to cover expenditure incurred by France for programmes set up in the French overseas departments (DOMs) for 2010, covering an inter-DOM sub-programme and 3 sub-programmes, respectively for the department of Martinique, for the department of Guyane and a sub-programme for the department of Guadeloupe.

Vote: favourable opinion by unanimity.