



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on the Review of the EU Plant Health Regime

*2906th ECONOMIC and FINANCIAL AFFAIRS/BUDGET
Brussels, 21 November 2008*

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECOGNISING

1. that the Community legislation relating to phytosanitary requirements for plants, plant products and other objects ensures the protection of the European Community territory and a phytosanitary secure trade of plants and plants products,
2. the necessity of taking into account the increase in international trade and the continuing enlargement of the European Union,
3. the necessity of updating, in the light of experience and of new requirements linked to sustainable development, the existing regime to develop a regime dealing with imports, movements within the Community, measures on the territory of the Community, global concepts for exports and the necessity of providing the means to implement the regime.

P R E S S

UNDERLINES

4. the importance of reasserting that the global aim of the Community plant health regime is to protect plant resources, food security, sustainable production, environment and to contribute to the protection of human health, taking into account trade concerns ;
5. the importance of defining priorities and of categorizing phytosanitary risks, by choosing management measures in accordance with defined priorities and adapting the level of control to phytosanitary risks ;
6. the importance of having global monitoring of the phytosanitary status of the EC territory, for example via plant health monitoring networks, phytosanitary precautionary surveillance,... ;
7. the importance of having a robust and effective network of scientific expertise and facilities to underpin phytosanitary activities ;
8. the importance of ensuring the efficacy of controls to prevent the entry of harmful organisms into the EC territory, for example via qualification of inspectors, facilities at points of entry, harmonized management of emerging risks, cooperation with the customs authorities,... ;
9. the importance of ensuring collective control to prevent the spread and establishment of harmful organisms within the EC territory, for example via Community phytosanitary control measures on the territory, effective measures against outbreaks, including emergency measures, phytosanitary risks covered by the International Plant Protection Convention which includes inter alia invasive alien species,... ;
10. the importance of putting prevention at the core of the Community plant health regime by involving professional stakeholders, for example via systems of prevention and management of phytosanitary risks within companies, phytosanitary security at different levels (approvals, phytosanitary documents),... ;
11. the importance of considering financial participation in risk management relating to outbreaks, taking into account the relevant outcomes of the current Health Check of the Common Agricultural Policy ;
12. the importance of continuously adapting phytosanitary legislation in order to reflect the real phytosanitary situation in the European Union, for example via harmonized monitoring analysis, alert systems, pest risk analyses,... ;

13. the importance of ensuring commonly accepted and effective control practices, for example via comparative inspection practices, training of inspectors, updated inspection reference, qualified and validated diagnostic protocols, research and development programmes,... ;
14. the importance of having a simple legislative framework by exploring the links with other Community regimes, such as that for marketing seeds and propagating material, elements from food law,... ;
15. the importance of having a Community strategy for involvement at international level ;
16. the importance of ensuring communication and transparency between authorities responsible for plant health, for example via Community performance indicators for critical points of activity and results, harmonization of phytosanitary documents, sharing of information within a Community IT network,... ;
17. the importance of communicating with the stakeholders, whether the citizens or the professionals, in order to prevent risky behaviour ;
18. the importance of ensuring phytosanitary protection while taking into account administrative burdens and costs involved ;
19. the importance of considering, in the implementation of the Community plant health regime, the roles and responsibilities of the Member States and of the European Community and its institutions and bodies, such as the European Commission (DG Sanco, FVO), the Standing Committee on Plant Health, EFSA and how they connect to and interact with non-Community organisations (e.g. IPPC, EPPO, CBD,...) ;

The Council therefore INVITES

20. the Commission to proceed to an evaluation of the current Community plant health regime and to consider possible modifications to the existing legal framework and the impact of such modifications, taking into account the issues underlined in paragraphs 4 to 19 ;
21. the Commission to present, based on the outcome of such evaluations, a proposal for a Community plant health strategy, putting prevention at the core of the Community plant health system ;
22. the Commission to inform the Council regularly of the progress achieved."