

# **COST ACTION CA 15223 - MODIFYING PLANTS TO PRODUCE INTERFERING RNA**

## **iPlanta COST Action - Working Group 3: Specific biosafety issues associated with RNAi**

### **Minutes of the sub-working group meeting for task preparation – Parma 22 January 2018**

As decided in the working group meeting held in Ghent last September, some members of the working group met to discuss possible outlines for a joint review. The meeting was attended by members of the working group from Italy (S. Arpaia), Belgium (O. Christiaens, G. Smagghe), UK (J. Sweet) and Bulgaria (K. Kostov, T. Djambazova).

Since the European Food Safety Authority is about to publish a report on the current status of research on baseline information on RNAi to support the environmental risk assessment of RNAi-based GM plants, EFSA was asked if the collected information could be shared and used for further review papers. It was learned that information will be available most likely in March, after the publication on the EFSA web site of the full approved report. The text will obviously then be in the public domain and therefore possible reviews will have to consider the text of the report as published literature.

The group discussed the possible topics that could still be of relevance after the publication of the EFSA report. Proposals were made regarding detailed results of systematic review, existing knowledge gaps in the area of RNAi biosafety, environmental fate of dsRNA, non-target and off target effects, specific available bioinformatics data and possible insurgence of resistance to RNAi in target species. Proposals for different specialized journals were made. In order to acquire a possibly larger audience for the reviews, open journals were also considered but in this case it will be necessary to ensure that funds are available. J. Sweet will check if publication expenses of this type are eligible within COST action activities, otherwise authors of the review should search for funding sources.

Since the next Working Group 3 meeting is scheduled for July, when more detailed proposals for writing reviews will be prepared, information will be spread to the working group members via email.