
ALPHA UNIT

Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare (AHAW)

Minutes of the 81st plenary meeting

Held on 24 -25 03 2014, Dublin

(Agreed on 15 04 2014)

Participants

- **Panel Members:**

Edith Authié, Charlotte Berg, Anette Bøtner, Klaus Depner, Aline De Koeijer, Mariano Domingo, Sandra Edwards, Christine Fourichon, Frank Koenen, Simon More, Liisa Sihvonen, Hans Spoolder, Jan Arend Stegeman, Hans-Hermann Thulke, Ivar Vågsholm, Antonio Velarde, and Preben Willeberg

- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

- Marina Marini, Francesco Berlingieri, Nicolas Krieger, Terence Cassidy (DG SANCO).

- **EFSA:**

- ALPHA Unit: (Alessandro Broglia, Sofie Dhollander, Maria Ferrara, Andrea Gervelmeyer, Per Have, Frank Verdonck)
- AMU Unit: (Gabriele Zancanaro, Anna Zuilani)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from Howard Browman, Ilaria Capua, Mohan Raj and Stéphan Zientara.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of interest

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes¹ and the Decision of the Executive Director implementing this Policy regarding Declarations of Interests², EFSA screened the Annual Declaration of interest (ADoI) and the

¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules.pdf>

Specific Declaration of interest (SDoI) filled in by the experts invited for the present meeting. For further details on the outcome of the screening of the SDoI please refer to Annex I.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 80th Plenary meeting held on 04-05 02 2014.

The minutes were agreed by written procedure on 01 04 2014 and published on the EFSA website 02 04 2014.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

5.1 Request for an update of the 2010 scientific opinion on African Swine Fever ([M-2013-0302](#))

The draft opinion was presented for adoption. The few outstanding comments have been dealt with. The Panel agreed on the conclusions, and the opinion was adopted.

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion before adoption

6.1 Conceptual model for bovine tuberculosis (M-2013-0174)

The comments made by Panel members were discussed and agreed upon. The link between the description of the conceptual framework and the four examples will be strengthened by, for instance, introducing summary boxes, or by figures placing the example questions into the framework. The document looks at bTB infection, detection and control from a pure scientific point of view (biological and social science) and presents the current view of the Panel. Conclusions and recommendations will not be included in this Statement.

6.2 Scientific opinion on sheep pox and goat pox (M-2013-0333)

The preliminary draft opinion was presented and discussed. Some comments from the Panel were provided. It was suggested to include a section about methodology used for answering each ToR and to report case studies of Greece and Bulgaria under the “geographical distribution” section. Further, it was suggested to clarify the role of wildlife and identify any evidence available, to clarify the timeline of infection and incubation, to expand the section on epidemiology and ways of transmission and to define criteria for assessing control measures and refer to the opinion on vaccination of bTB for presentation of relevant parameters of vaccine performance. The diagnostic test section should be more structured and objective evaluations should be reported. For the control measures “movement of animals, biosecurity, zoning” the process applied to collect expert opinion should be stated. In the control measures section, case studies presenting information from recent incursions into the EU should be included, focusing on control measures employed, challenges faced, objective and subjective measures of impact. Finally, it was suggested to expand the section on pathway identification relating to epidemiological information.

The comments will be addressed at WG level. A new draft will be circulated by email before the Plenary to inform the Panel beforehand. The next WG meeting is foreseen in Barcelona on 9th April.

7. Scientific outputs submitted for update on progress

7.1 Request for a scientific opinion on Enzootic bovine leukosis ([M-2013-0180](#))

The outcome of the technical hearing on EBL was presented and discussed. It was agreed with SANCO to request an extension of the deadline as further work in relation to the impact, the control options and their proportionality (including risk-based surveillance), risk of introduction/spread in the EU is deemed necessary. Specifically, it was agreed to prepare a detailed and differentiated assessment of the impact of EBL in free and in non-free areas, taking into account recent EU data, and taking into account the age structure of current dairy herds; to assess the proportionality and appropriateness of the control measures; to assess the risk of introduction of EBL into free areas of the EU, potentially using modelling; and to provide a comprehensive presentation of the entire range of the scientific literature in the opinion, including an assessment of study findings’ validity (in particular in relation to the disease impact and the proportion of infected animals that develop the tumours). The new deadline of the mandate is February 2015.

7.2 Request for a scientific opinion concerning a multifactorial approach on the use of animal-based measures to assess the welfare of pigs

The approach taken by the Working Group (WG) was presented to and agreed by the Panel members at the 80th plenary meeting. An extension of the deadline to 30 June 2014 has

been agreed with the Commission in order to carry out a more comprehensive data analysis. The draft opinion will be presented for possible adoption at the 82nd plenary meeting. Panel members were invited to provide comments on the draft opinion circulated prior the meeting. No major comments were received.

7.3 Scientific opinion on Canine Leishmaniosis (M-2013-0303)

An update was given to the panel on the systematic literature review process, looking into the efficacy of different measures dogs to prevent canine Leishmaniosis infections in dogs, as well as the sensitivity and specificity of available diagnostic tools, and the efficacy of pharmaceutical products for the treatments of canine Leishmaniosis infections in dogs. A more detailed discussion will be held during the May plenary meeting.

7.4 Scientific opinion on welfare risks related to the farming of sheep for wool, meat and milk production (M-2013-0197)

The chair of the WG updated the Panel on the state of development of the draft opinion and on the methodological approach being following.

In particular, the WG has identified and described the main management systems to be addressed in the mandate along with the identification/description of the main breed characteristics in relation to system and primary purpose production (milk, wool or meat). Further a conceptual model to identify main welfare consequences, animal-based indicators and factors, to be related to the specific management system, is being developed. Such a model is being built on the welfare principles and criteria developed by the Welfare Quality® project. Supported the development of a broad literature mapping, performed by an external contractor, areas suitable for a more targeted and systematic review, which will be carried out as next step will be identified. To move into the risk assessment process, the Panel discussed the best approach to gain information from experts on the most important welfare consequences and risk factors, among those identified by the WG, in the different management systems.

7.5 Scientific opinion concerning the electrical requirements for waterbath stunning equipment (M-2014-0029)

A WG was established with Howard Browman as WG chair. The first web-based meeting will take place on 7 April 2014. The deep readers for the opinion Lotta Berg and Sandra Edwards were confirmed.

8. New Mandates

8.1 Request for an updated scientific opinion on increased mortality events in Pacific oysters, *Crassostrea gigas*, associated with ostreid herpes virus 1 μ var and/or *Vibrio aestuarianus* ([M-2014-0080](#))

The Commission presented a new mandate requesting an update of a previous mandate on oyster mortality. Increased mortality events in Pacific oysters were detected in 2008 and 2009 in mollusc farming areas in France and Ireland. The cause for these events was attributed to a combination of factors: presence of the ostreid herpesvirus-1 (OsHV-1), the presence of *Vibrio* species and environmental factors. EFSA published a scientific opinion in 2010 where the relative importance of possible causes, including infectious agents and environmental factors were assessed.

Based on the conclusions and recommendations of the opinion and an evaluation of the status of the disease, the Commission amended the legislation as regards OsHV-1 μ Var (Commission Decision 2010/221/EC on surveillance programmes and the possibility of taking national measures to prevent the introduction of ostreid herpes virus-1. Given that there were many uncertainties regarding the mortality and its causes, the decision included a time limit of April 2014 after which the appropriateness and necessity of such measures should be re-evaluated.

The current mandate asks for an update of the previous opinion OsHV-1 μ Var on the basis of new scientific evidence. In addition, an assessment of the role of *Vibrio aestuarianus* should be included together with recommendations on control measures as appropriate. Further, an evaluation of the effectiveness of current methods of water treatment in shellfish depuration plants for inactivating OsHV-1 and *Vibrio aestuarianus* and, if appropriate, recommendations for other treatments should be given. The feasibility, availability and effectiveness of the disease prevention and control measures for OsHV-1 in the current legislation should be briefly reviewed.

Howard Browman was appointed chair of the working group.

8.2 Request for a scientific opinion on entry routes into the EU of vector borne diseases

The terms of reference of the mandate were presented and clarified by the official from the EC.

ToR 1. Identify, rank and briefly characterise the vector borne diseases that present a risk for the EU. This work should cover both animal diseases and relevant zoonoses that present a risk for the EU because of their introduction, re-introduction or further spread.

There was a discussion on the exact scope of this mandate, and if all possible relevant VBD should be included. It was suggested that zoonotic diseases and animal diseases should be dealt with in the mandate. The mandate also includes diseases that are already present in EU (e.g. it should tackle also spread of BTV). There was a discussion on which weight should/could be given to rank the different risks (introduction, re-introduction or further spread)? It was suggested that from a managerial perspective, introduction or re-introduction or spread have the same weight (namely, loosing the disease free status of a given area, and trade impact).

ToR 2. For each disease identified in point 1, identify and rank possible pathways of introduction (or re-introduction) and further spread into the EU and assess the potential speed of propagation in the EU.

ToR 3. For each disease identified in point 1, detail the potential health consequences and other impacts to the EU in relation to the existence of suitable vectors and their interaction with local animal populations.

It was agreed that a stepwise approach could be taken to deal with ToR 2 and 3 (e.g. if the probability of entry, or spread is zero, then ToR 3 and 4 should not be answered for this given VBD. It was discussed that both animal and human health impact should be dealt with. The Phylum may be a good tool, however, it may not be detailed enough (the tool is not really designed for risk assessment, but more for prioritisation for risk managers)

ToR 4. Assess the risk of each disease becoming endemic in the animal population in the EU.

ToR 5. Briefly review the feasibility, availability and effectiveness of the main disease prevention and control measures (e.g. diagnostic tools, biosecurity measures, restrictions on the movement, culling, vaccination).

It was pointed out that endemicity is much dependent on the presence of vectors. The Commission is flexible to wait for the outcomes on the vector distribution from the VECTORNET project if needed for the completion of the opinion.

8.3 Scientific opinion concerning the use of carbon dioxide for stunning rabbits (M-2014-0078)

The Commission representative introduced a new request for a scientific opinion on the use of carbon dioxide for rabbits.

The Panel agreed to address the mandate applying the methodological approach outlined in the Guidance of the EFSA AHAW Panel on the assessment criteria for studies evaluating the effectiveness of stunning interventions regarding animal protection at the time of killing.

8.4 Scientific opinion concerning electrical parameters for the stunning of lambs and kid goats (M-2014-0041)

The Commission representative introduced a new request for a scientific opinion on electrical parameters for the stunning of lambs and kid goats.

The Panel agreed to address the mandate following the methodological approach outlined in the Guidance of the EFSA AHAW Panel on the assessment criteria for studies evaluating the effectiveness of stunning interventions regarding animal protection at the time of killing.

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

9.1 Draft report “Emerging risks identification in the domain of biological risks to animal and public health: a pilot study”

Ivar Vågsholm presented the draft report of the Scientific Committee working group on biological emerging risks. The panel discussed the report and agreed to submit further comments before the deadline.

9.2 Risk assessment framework for emerging vector-borne livestock diseases

Aline de Koeijer presented a risk assessment framework for emerging vector-borne livestock diseases that has been development under the MedVetNet project.

10. Any Other Business

It was discussed to move the September plenary meeting to 15-16 09 2014.

Annex I

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of Specific Declaration of Interests (SDoI)³

- a) **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** At the beginning of the present meeting, Dr. Klaus Depner declared orally the following interest: update of the 2010 scientific opinion on African swine fever. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes and the Decision of the Executive Director implementing this Policy regarding Declarations of Interests, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, the interest above was deemed to represent a conflict of Interest.

Therefore, the expert abstained from the adoption of Update of the 2010 scientific opinion on African swine fever.

³ The Annual Declarations of Interests have been screened and approved before inviting the experts to the meeting, in accordance with the Decision of the Executive Director implementing the Policy on Independence regarding Declarations of Interests.