

**ALPHA UNIT****Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare****Minutes of the 88<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting****Held on 10-11 March 2015, Parma****(Agreed on 24 March 2015)****Participants****• Panel Members:**

Charlotte Berg, Anette Bøtner, Howard Browman, Klaus Depner, Christian Ducrot, Mariano Domingo, Sandra Edwards, Christine Fourichon, Frank Koenen, Simon More, Mohan Raj, Liisa Sihvonen, Hans Spoolder, Hans-Hermann Thulke, Ivar Vågsholm, Antonio Velarde

**• European Commission representatives:**

Marina Marini (DG SANTE, Unit 03); Francesco Berlingieri (DG SANTE, Unit G2), Pedro Rosado-Martin (DG SANTE, Unit G5) (by phone).

**• EFSA:**

ALPHA Unit: Franck Berthe Alessandro Broglia, Denise Candiani, Marianne Carson, Sofie Dhollander, Chiara Fabris, Andrea Gervelmeyer, Andrey Gogin, Renata Leuschner, Frank Verdonck, Matthew Watts

AMU Unit: Jose Cortinhas Abrahantes, Marios Georgiadis, Jane Richardson

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Aline De Koeijer, Jan Arend Stegeman and Preben Willeberg.

**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 Processes<sup>1</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest<sup>2</sup>, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Panel Members invited for the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process or at the Oral Declaration of Interest at the beginning of this meeting.

### **4. Agreement of the minutes of the 87<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting held on 03-04 02 2015.**

The minutes were agreed on 23 02 2015 and published on the EFSA website 23 02 2015.

### **5. New Mandates**

#### **5.1 Request for scientific and technical assistance on Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea (PED) (EFSA-Q-2015-00160)**

Jane Richardson presented the new request for scientific and technical assistance on PED and the proposed approach to the task. The panel discussed the proposed approach. It was highlighted that an important issue regarding the disease impact would be the question of why the impact differs between farms as currently observed. Potential effect modifiers should be identified. Anette Botner agreed to peer-review the draft reports that are scheduled for July and December 2015.

### **6. Opinions presented for adoption**

#### **6.1. Scientific opinion on Canine Leishmaniosis (EFSA-Q-2013-00835)**

The draft opinion was presented for adoption. Conclusions and recommendations were discussed and reviewed. The opinion was unanimously adopted.

### **7. Opinions submitted for discussion**

#### **7.1 Scientific opinion on perches for laying hens (EFSA-Q-2014-00242)**

The scientific opinion was discussed with the Panel. It was agreed that the conclusions and recommendations should be reduced in number and each recommendation should be backed up by conclusions and the underlying evidence in the text. The WG will meet in April and address these points.

#### **7.2 Scientific opinion on the welfare assessment of dairy cows in small scale farming systems (EFSA-Q-2014-00096)**

An update on the draft opinion was given to the Panel and the chapter on production diseases was discussed in depth. The deadline of the opinion is end of May 2015. Therefore it will be submitted for eventual adoption at the Plenary of May (alternatively, it will be submitted for discussion and then circulated for written adoption after the Plenary of May). It was not possible to discuss the whole opinion because the section on risk factors and Animal-based Measures had not been finalised, since the on-farm data had been submitted late. The opinion is divided into 3 major sections, 1) categorisation of small scale farms (already endorsed by

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

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

the Panel prior to public consultation); 2) risk factors and animal-based measures in small scale farms and 3) production diseases. It was agreed that the opinion will be sent to selected AHAW Panel members (Sandra Edwards, Antonio Velarde and Mohan Raj) by the end of March who would send their feedback to the working group by mid April.

It was suggested to shorten the chapter on the impact of production diseases on welfare and divide it by disease whereas the second chapter regarding risk factors should be focussed on those relevant for small scale dairy cow farming.

### **7.3 Update of a scientific opinion on increased mortality events in Pacific oysters, *Crassostrea gigas*, associated with ostreid herpes virus 1µvar and/or *Vibrio aestuarianus* (EFSA-Q-2014-00188)**

The draft opinion was presented and discussed with the panel. Issues that need to be developed further were identified.

## **8. Scientific outputs submitted for update on progress**

### **8.1 Request for an update of the 2011 scientific opinion on hatchery waste as animal by-products (EFSA-Q-2014-00902)**

The BIOHAZ (leading Panel) and AHAW Panels received a request from the European Commission for an update of the 2011 scientific opinion on hatchery waste as animal by-products (EFSA-Q-2014-00902). The animal health-relevant sections of the opinion will be endorsed by the AHAW Panel in September 2015, the opinion will be adopted by the BIOHAZ Panel in October 2015. Mariano Domingo will represent the AHAW Panel in the ad-hoc working group established by BIOHAZ. A first virtual WG meeting is anticipated for 18 March.

### **8.2 Scientific and technical assistance concerning the risk of survival, establishment and spread of the small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) in the EU (EFSA-Q-2014-00876) and Scientific opinion concerning the risk of survival, establishment and spread of the small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) in the EU (EFSA-Q-2014-00938)**

The scientific report on small hive beetle diagnosis and risk mitigation measures was provided to the Panel and the working group for submission of final comments. The Panel was informed that contacts have been established with the Italian Ministry of Health to obtain data on the distribution of the apiaries in the south of Italy. Data on the outbreak investigation will be obtained from Franco Mutinelli. The structure of the scientific opinion will be discussed in the upcoming WG meeting and will be presented at the next Plenary meeting.

### **8.3 Scientific opinion on health of honey bee colonies (EFSA-Q-2015-00047)**

The Panel was informed that a working group has been established and that the kick off meeting will take place on Thursday and Friday following the Plenary meeting.

### **8.4 Scientific Opinion on *Echinococcus multilocularis* infection in animals (EFSA-Q-2014-00728)**

The kick off web meeting has taken place and the experts were introduced to the systematic literature reviews performed by the consortium. The structure of the scientific opinion will be discussed in the upcoming WG meeting and will be presented at the next Plenary meeting. The AHAW Network will be contacted around end March-early April to request (unpublished) data that might be available in the Member States. The working group is defining the questions at the moment. The Panel indicated that there are preliminary data available in

Sweden on the presence of *E. multilocularis* in intermediate hosts. In addition, data from Sweden will provide insights on the current design prevalence for surveillance systems providing evidence of the absence of the parasite. This will be checked with the Swedish expert of the WG.

### **8.5 Scientific opinion on African swine fever (ASF) (EFSA-Q-2014-00897)**

The Panel was updated on the activities of the working group and EFSA staff to prepare the opinion. Data has been collected on the populations of domestic pigs in affected countries including an indication of the level of biosecurity, on wild boar populations, on outbreaks of ASF (using data from ADNS, OIE, and metadata from MS). Temporal and spatial patterns of disease spread are being analysed. For ToR 2, a list of selected ASF-Genotype II strains/isolates transmission studies in wild boar and sero-surveillance surveys was compiled. Knowledge on this genotype from African experience is being considered in addition. For ToR 3, the relevant trends in wild boar population dynamics in the EU and its Eastern neighbouring territories were described, and an update on the distribution of competent ASF vectors (soft ticks) and their possible role in ASF epidemiology, with a special focus on Russia and the Baltic States, will be provided by the Vectornet contractor. For ToR 4, an extensive literature search on possible mitigation measures to prevent introduction and spread of African swine fever virus through wild boar is being carried out. The first round of an online EKE survey on the efficacy of wild boar management options has been summarised and sent for a second round to the stakeholders. This will be followed by a stakeholder meeting in April 2015, and a modelling of the efficacy of wild boar management options in view of controlling African swine fever including the outcomes the stakeholder meeting will be carried out. The model is a spatially explicit, stochastic, individual-based demographic model for wild boars (*Sus scrofa*) in a structured landscape of habitat area, which has already been used in the CSF and FMD opinions of the AHAW Panel.

### **8.6 Update of the report on Oral vaccination of foxes against rabies (EFSA-Q-2014-00864)**

The approach to the mandate and the structure of the opinion was presented. It is based on the 2002 report and will have new sections where relevant. Only new findings since the adoption of the 2002 opinion will be considered.

### **8.7 Scientific opinion on enzootic bovine leukosis (EFSA-Q-2013-00546)**

The work plan to provide a more detailed description of the methodological approach, for the addition of data on sensitivity and specificity of the diagnostic methods described in the opinion, the clear separation of the different types of scientific evidence used to derive the impact of the disease to provide robust quantitative measures for impact, and a more detailed description of the feasibility, availability, proportionality, effectiveness and impact of available disease prevention and control measures was presented. The new version of the draft opinion will be presented for discussion at the May plenary and for adoption at the June plenary meeting.

### **8.8 Ebola - drivers for spillover (EFSA-Q-2014-00706)**

Examples of spidergrams representing the drivers' network were shown to the panel and discussed. At the next meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> April the following items will be addressed: presentation of diagrams for visualisation of driver network for spill-over event of Ebola, discussion and validation of diagrams by WG of experts, and recommendations for refinement of diagrams.

## 9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

### 9.1 Presentation of EFSA internal project on the use of animal-based measures to assess animal welfare in the EU – state of art of the last 10 years of activities and analysis of the gaps.

An update of the project has been presented mainly with regard to the approach and the road map. An *ad-hoc* EFSA's working group will be established for supporting the project development. The mapping and analysis of the gaps on the ABMs activities of the last 10 years will be outsourced to an external contractor. The results will be presented to a workshop where additional hearing experts will be invited together with the WG experts in order to assess the identified gaps, analyse what has been achieved and identify relevant activities that are needed to fill the gaps. The workshop will be moderated by a facilitator. Feedback from the Panel has been requested on: i) the proposed approach; ii) the importance of involving an "outsider" facilitator to stimulate a fruitful discussion during the workshop; iii) the expertise of the hearing experts to be invited to the workshop. The workshop will take place from July 8<sup>th</sup> (pm) to July 10<sup>th</sup> (am) 2015, in Palazzo Ducale, Parma.

### 9.2 EFSA information workshop on the Guidance on the assessment criteria for studies evaluating the effectiveness of stunning interventions regarding animal protection at the time of killing

Following discussion at the AHAW Plenary meeting in February, it was proposed to organise an information session for stakeholders in which the AHAW guidance (EFSA Journal 2013;11(12):3486) is explained and information regarding reporting requirements is provided. An EFSA self-task mandate (EFSA-Q-2015-00165) dealing with this recommendation was accepted. The info session is scheduled to take place on 9 June 2015 in Brussels.

### 9.3 Scientific Committee and Scientific Committee Working

Simon More informed the panel that he had received positive feedback from the Scientific Committee on his presentation on the work of the AHAW panel. The presentation is available on the EFSA DMS at this link:

<https://dms.efsa.europa.eu/otcs/cs.exe/properties/13966484>

### 9.4 Discussion on potential emerging issues

Ivar Vågsholm presented a brief summary of a recent publication on a new influenza virus, genus D that has been isolated in US pigs and cattle and also been circulating in cattle in France. The panel discussed that the importance of this virus is currently not clear, as the clinical impact is not known. It was considered that it is difficult to conclude if it is an emerging issue as no comprehensive surveillance/testing for influenza viruses in cattle has been carried out in Europe. It was discussed that archived samples could be checked for this virus to identify its geographic spread and host range. In addition, evolutionary studies of this strain in comparison with some of the earlier influenza strains were considered useful. In general, the panel suggested, the OIE definition of emerging risks could be used in addition to the definitions of FAO and EFSA, as it has the additional criterion on "significant impact".

### 9.5 Nociception and Pain

Simon More suggested to the panel to not go further at this stage with the planned self-task on nociception and pain as the imperative of the why and the why now had not been clarified. Considering the discussions at the PAFF meeting in February 2015, a mandate for an assessment of welfare during transport and slaughter of pregnant animals might be submitted to EFSA by MS, which could be a good case study to establish which questions need to be

assessed regarding the competence of different development stages and species to experience pain. The panel agreed with this proposal.