

Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare

Minutes of the 135th Plenary meeting

Held on 24-25 November 2021

EFSA, Parma, WEBMEETING¹

(Agreed on 3 December 2021)²

Participants

■ Panel Members:

ALVAREZ Julio, BICOUT Dominique, CALISTRI Paolo, CANALI Elisabetta, DREWE Julian, GARIN-BASTUJI Bruno, GONZALES ROJAS Jose Luis, HERSKIN Mette, MICHEL Virginie, MIRANDA Miguel Angel, NIELSEN Søren Saxmose (Chair), PADALINO Barbara, PASQUALI Paolo, ROBERTS Helen, SPOOLDER Hans, STAHL Karl, VELARDE Antonio, VILTROP Arvo (Day 1), WINCKLER Christoph (Day 2).

■ European Commission:

CAMARA Ewa (point 5.1 & 6.8); HOLMES Rebecca (Points 6.3 to 6.6); KUSTER Laszlo (Points 5.2, 6.1 & 6.2); LOGAR Barbara (Points 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.8, 6.9, 6.10, 6.11 & 6.12); ZAFEIROPOULOU Kornilia (Points 6.4 to 6.7).

■ EFSA:

ALPHA UNIT: ANTONIOU Sotiria-Eleni, ASHE Sean, AZNAR Inma, BALDINELLI Francesca, BROGLIA Alessandro, CANDIANI Denise, CAPELLI Martina, CHINCHIO Eleonora, DHOLLANDER Sofie, FABRIS Chiara, GEFFROY Mariana, GERVELMEYER Andrea, KOHNLE Lisa, KRIŽ Nik (HoU), LIMA Eliana, LOMBARDO Ludovico, MUR Lina, OSWALDI Verena, VAN DER STEDE Yves, VEGGELAND Maria, VITALI Marika, ZANCANARO Gabriele

AMU UNIT: MOSBACH-SCHULZ Olaf (Points 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 & 6.6)

■ Hearing experts³: not applicable

■ Observers: not applicable

¹ All meetings were rescheduled to web meetings due to Covid-19

² Minutes should be published within 15 working days of the final day of the relevant meeting.

³ As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director concerning the selection of members of the Scientific Committee, the Scientific Panels, and the selection of external experts to assist EFSA with its scientific work:
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/expertselection.pdf>.



1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the meeting participants. Apologies were received from Arvo VILTROP (Day 1), Christoph WINCKLER (Day 2), Christian GORTAZAR (Day 1 & Day 2)

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest Scientific Panel Members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence⁴ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management⁵, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled in by the Scientific Panel Members invited for the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting had 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 134th Plenary meeting held on 22-23 September 2021, WEB

The minutes of the 134th Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 11 October 2021.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

5.1. Art. 29 – Scientific Opinion on Equine Herpes Virus 1 (EHV-1) – Categorisation (EFSA-Q-2021-00183)

EFSA staff (Alessandro Broglia) presented the SO. The panel discussed thoroughly the comments and proposals made by the AHAW panel members in the version sent for adoption to AHAW panel members. The original methodology as published in 2017 was improved to better address the uncertainty. This update was included in the opinion. . The following issues and changes to the document were proposed: the definitions of the upper and lower bounds of the uncertainty range need to be specified better in the methodology section; the part about biosecurity measures (list of measures) stays in the text as it provided good arguments for the final decision on the judgement; the use of the selected colours in tables and figures was discussed and questioned if these should be changed according schemes readable for colour-blind people. An explanation what "listing" means will be added to the figures. In the conclusions, the presentation of the results of the uncertainty ranges was discussed and it was agreed to keep both in the text (numeric values and wording). The Panel adopted unanimously the Scientific Opinion. The opinion will be prepared for publication assuring that the agreed changes are implemented throughout the document.

⁴ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf

⁵ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf



5.2. Art. 29 – Scientific Opinion for listing and categorization of transmissible animal diseases caused by bacteria resistant to antimicrobials in the framework of the animal health law – Rabbits (EFSA-Q2021-00666)

The EFSA staff (Francesca Baldinelli) presented the SO. The panel discussed thoroughly the comments and proposals made by the AHAW panel members in the version sent for adoption to AHAW panel members. Data retrieved from the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie (IZSVE, online data) on several pathogens was included in the Scientific Opinion and discussed. A summarizing part that no pathogen was selected to be one of the most important AMR pathogens in the EU was added in the conclusion.

The Panel adopted unanimously the Scientific Opinion. The opinion will be prepared for publication assuring that the agreed changes are implemented throughout the document.

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1. Art. 29 – Scientific opinion for listing and categorisation of transmissible animal diseases caused by bacteria resistant to antimicrobials in the framework of the animal health law – Fish (EFSA-Q-2021-00664)

The EFSA staff (Francesca Baldinelli) presented the SO. It was highlighted that data for this Scientific Opinion was scarce, applying the extensive literature search criteria, and therefore data from additional literature that were known by the WG experts but not retrieved by the ELS were added. Because of the lack of data, it was anticipated to the Panel that the assessment of the most relevant AMR pathogens would identify large uncertainty and data gaps. It was agreed that the title of the Scientific Opinion should cover the scope of the Opinion (certain kept fish species). An explanation should be added to the abstract why the covered species were selected by WG and why, as an example, sea bass was not added.

This SO is planned for adoption in December 2021.

6.2. Art. 29 – Scientific opinion for listing and categorisation of transmissible animal diseases caused by bacteria resistant to antimicrobials in the framework of the animal health law – Results of the collective judgement: *Staph. Pseudintermedius* & *Rhodococcus equi*

The EFSA staff (Lisa Kohnle) presented the results of the collective judgements done by the AHAW panel members on the 19th of November for *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius* and *Rhodococcus equi*. All of the criteria of the first set (questions A) and at least one of the second set (questions B) have to be fulfilled for being eligible to be listed for EU intervention. For *S. pseudintermedius*, question A(v) remains uncertain. Also question B(i) is a non-consensus, as there was high uncertainty. It will be clarified for which species (dogs) the symptoms listed in the reasoning points apply. For categorisation, the same requirements have to be fulfilled. All criteria of the first set (questions 1 to 2.4) and at least one of the second set (questions 3 to 5d) have to be fulfilled for each of the categories. This was not the case for *S. pseudintermedius*, as not all questions of the first set are fulfilled, and none of the questions of the second set are fulfilled. The EC stated



that they do not see dogs as economically important in the EU and that the economic importance should be assessed by comparing with other species (e.g. cattle, pigs), and therefore, are not considered as important. There was a high uncertainty on transmissibility of *S. pseudintermedius* because data are scarce and infection does not necessarily leads to disease, thus complicating the assessment. The outcome of the assessment of listing *S. pseudintermedius* was uncertain. For categorisation, criteria were not fulfilled for A, B and D, while they remained uncertain for category C and E.

For *R. equi*, not all questions of set A were fulfilled (A(v), because of great uncertainty), questions of set B (B(ii)). B(i) and B(iii) were uncertain (not much information available). The outcome of the assessment of listing *R. equi* was uncertain. For categorisation, criteria were not fulfilled for category A and B, while they remained uncertain for category C, D and E.

It was agreed that the SO will be shared with the AHAW panel members for review of the wording for the reasoning points provided. It was discussed how the updated methodology should be published. Two options were considered: 1) publish as addendum to the methodology Scientific Opinion from 2017 2) refer to the EHV-1 SO in all following SOs. It was agreed that option 1 will be applied so that an updated SO of the methodology will be published in the EFSA Journal.

It was agreed that a paragraph should mention that the applied methodology (Animal Health Law, listing and categorisation) may not fit well for assessing the impact of the “disease” and assess the control measures for bacteria that are opportunistic pathogens but may also be found in healthy animals as commensal bacteria. In addition, monitoring of AMR in certain bacteria could help to assess their impact and therefore the fact that bacteria are not listed does not mean they should not be monitored (based on evidence available they should be monitored).

6.3. Animal Welfare: Protocol Development

The EFSA staff (Denise Candiani) presented the document welfare protocol which includes the protocol for the development of all welfare mandates in the F2F frame as well as a methodology for developing quantitative criteria for the related recommendations. The panel discussed thoroughly the comments and proposals made by the AHAW panel members in the version sent for discussion to the AHAW panel members. The following issues were commented for part I (common TORs): The wording of the mandates won't be changed, but will be copied from what has been received by the requester, the list of Welfare consequences will be used as a non-exhaustive list; only “highly relevant” consequences are described, as the mandate ask so and a differentiation has to be done. It was agreed that higher level welfare consequences (e.g. pain, fear, etc.) will be presented in the annex of the document. The following issues were discussed for part II (specific scenarios): the approach used for the transport mandates should be better explained as it slightly deviates from the protocol for the other mandates; The term ‘high level of an exposure (hazard)’ should be defined more specifically and the interpolations should be defined in the graph. It was agreed that the protocol will be published as a stand-alone document to be endorsed by the panel and will undergo a public consultation in 2022.

6.4. Protection of Calves (EFSA-Q-2020-00480) – Specific scenarios – Space allowance

The chair of the working group on the protection of calves (Christoph Winckler) presented an update on the results obtained from an EKE exercise on space allowance for individually and group housed calves. The conclusions and recommendations were presented and discussed with the AHAW panel and the European Commission representative. There was a discussion on the play behaviour needs as calves grow older and how this influences space allowance requirements. The



panel also discussed whether recommendations should be expressed as m² per calf or per kg live weight. Finally, the methodological approach to address the mandate ToR on the “the risks associated with feed restriction (such as deprivation of iron and fibres)” was discussed. With regard to deprivation of iron, the EC clarified that it would be useful to have recommendations from the working group on haemoglobin concentration levels for white veal calves.

6.5. Protection of Pigs (EFSA-Q-2020-00484): i) Specific scenario 3 – Space allowance - farrowing & lactating sows and piglets; ii) Feedback from public consultation

The chair of the working group on the protection of pigs (Hans Spoolder) presented an update on the results obtained from EKE exercises on farrowing and lactating sows and on piglets from farrowing to weaning, in relation to space allowance (Specific Scenario 3 of the mandate). ‘Space allowance’ has been differentiated between the space available to the sow and the total space of the farrowing facility, which includes also the space for the piglets. The exercises considered individual sow farrowing systems. The two ABMs assessed in detail were the average proportion of time a sow spends in locomotor behaviour, and piglet mortality from birth to weaning. Outcomes of the ABM assessments were complemented with data from the literature and experts’ assessment regarding behavioural elements an average sow can express when a given space is available to the saw. Preliminary conclusions and recommendations on Specific scenario 3, in relation to space allowance were also presented and discussed, suggestions will be further developed.

The EFSA staff (Marika Vitali) presented an overview on the public consultation of the draft SO on the protection of pigs on farm that was ran from 27 July to 13 October 2021. The aim of this Public Consultation, sections of the draft SO that were published and overview of the comments that were submitted by stakeholders were presented. More than 100 comments were received from different sectors (industries, NGOs, individuals on personal capacity, research or public body), belonging to nine European Countries. Most of the comments regarded the sections of the draft SO describing pig husbandry systems and pig categories. Questions were raised in relation to group suckling systems. It was agreed that in the common ToRs of the draft Scientific Opinion (SO), different group suckling systems will be described and the reasons why they will not be further assessed will be explained. Pertinent comments were addressed, by modifying the text of the draft SO. According to EFSA rules, all comments are published on the website and the report of the consultation will be published alongside the adoption of the SO, which is scheduled for June 2022.

6.6. Protection of animals during Transport (EFSA-Q-2020-00481 & EFSA-Q-2020-00482)

The EFSA staff (Sean Ashe and Maria Veggeland) provided an overview of the work performed so far related to the mandates on transport (free moving animals and animals transported in containers). Examples and results obtained so far in relation to three variables were presented: microclimatic conditions, space allowance and journey times.

For the free-moving species, draft conclusions for heat stress in adult sheep were presented and discussed. Critical points such as point C (the moment were the animals starts exhibiting physiological or behavioural changes due to the temperature) and point D (welfare state of the animal is severely affected) were explained in detail. Space allowance for sheep was also presented and it was explained what criteria were used to assess the space animals need to



stand up or fit into, to adjust their position depending on acceleration, and space available to thermoregulate, rest, eat and drink.

Several options are being looked at to recommend journey times depending on the condition the animals are traveling in: if animals are in the thermoneutral zone and they can stand and balance, lie and balance and if they can access food and water. These still need to be assessed and discussed within the working group.

In the animals in containers group, the approach taken is similar to that of the free-moving group. Draft conclusions and recommendations on the welfare consequence restriction of movement for rabbits was presented. Experts have agreed that rabbits need space to lay in a recumbent position at the same time and also to sit in a normal position with space to have their ears lifted. Recommendations of height for the containers are needed, and discussion on this is ongoing. The group is starting to assess journey times. It was discussed with the EC that animals in containers are not provided with feed or water until they arrive to their final destination, and there is no maximum journey time in the legislation. It was explained that the welfare consequences 'Prolonged hunger' and 'Prolonged thirst' possibly would be one of the variables to consider when deciding journey times.

The AHAW panel discussed that transport is always a stressful experience from an animal welfare point of view. Questions on livestock vessels with reference to data were received from the EC. The status of end of laying hens were discussed with AHAW panel members and the EC. End of laying hens is considered as a separate animal category in the scientific Opinion and efforts are made to provide recommendations.

6.7. SPIDO Theme on welfare

An EFSA staff member (Eliana Lima) presented the SPIDO (Science Studies and Project Identification and Development Office) initiative from EFSA. A theme on the development of standards and data collection for animal welfare will be proposed by the AHAW team for launch in spring/ summer 2022.

6.8. Art. 29 – Disease control measures category A diseases AHL – Glanders (EFSA-Q-2020-00802)

The update on the mandate was presented by EFSA staff (Inma Aznar) and the appointed chair of the working group (Helen Roberts). The following issues were discussed in detail: i) the effectiveness of the protection and surveillance zone at establishment level. It was agreed to suggest to keep it at the establishment level because of the nature of the pathogen; ii) the wording latency and chronic was discussed. The general term 'latent' was used in this SO to indicate inapparent forms of infection. It will be added that those animals can shed the bacterium (potentially infectious) and a definition of 'latency' will be added in the narrative text; iii) the test sensitivity of CFT is different in endemic areas, as described in the literature, the wording has been adapted accordingly iv) it was clarified that the German case of Glanders was confirmed by the German authorities as a real case; v) the derogation from killing of a glanders positive animal is possible. It was agreed that when the animal is of high cultural or economical value, it is possible to derogate. The EC said that specific for glanders there is a derogation from killing for non-effected animals, but not for infected animals (ANNEX 3). It has to be discussed and assessed if a derogation can also be made for recovered animals and vi) the role of mechanical vectors in the transmission of the disease. It was agreed that these do not play a role which supports the decision that protection and surveillance zone at establishment level is sufficient for prevent spreading of this disease. Further discussion and finalisation of the Scientific opinion



is required in the upcoming working group. The Scientific Opinion is planned for adoption in December 2021.

6.9. Art. 29 – Disease control measures category A diseases AHL – CBPP (EFSA-Q-2020-00803)

The update on the mandate was presented by EFSA (Sotiria-Eleni Antoniou). The following issues were discussed in detail: i) some comments on technical aspects of the laboratory tests were not addressed since the competent expert was not available; ii) for scenario 1 it was requested (EC) what would be the procedure (killing and sampling) in case an animal is tested with LAT and negative, a process that was already included in the document; and iii) the cost benefit and the frequency of visits for clinical examination and sampling in affected establishments derogated from killing. Further discussion on how the comments will be addressed and finalisation of the Scientific opinion will be carried out in the upcoming working group. The Scientific Opinion is planned for adoption in December 2021.

6.10. Art. 29 – Disease control measures category A diseases AHL – CCPP (EFSA-Q-2020-00804)

The update on the mandate was presented by EFSA (Sotiria-Eleni Antoniou). The following issues were discussed in detail: i) In CCPP for the first scenario it was argued that the suspicion cannot be raised in goat herds with clinical signs, when all the tests for other mycoplasmas are negative, if the establishment is not epidemiologically linked with an affected one; ii) for all the scenarios (EC) the sampling procedures in mixed flocks with sheep and goats should be discussed with the WG; iii) the practicality of allowing animal movements to pastures only when the results of the initial laboratory test in the establishments of the protection zone are negative given the duration of the monitoring period; v) the use of the term carriers, subclinical and infectious; vi) The sensitivity of clinical examination is assumed 90% and the specificity 80% and are considered as high. Further discussion and finalisation of the Scientific opinion will be carried out in the upcoming working group. The Scientific Opinion is planned for adoption in December 2021.

6.11. Art. 29 – Disease control measures category A diseases AHL – Rift Valley Fever (EFSA-Q-2020-00801)

The update on the mandate was presented by EFSA staff (Alessandro Broglia). Comments have been implemented and/or clarified and presented to the Panel. No points needed further discussion. Conclusions and recommendations will be added in the next days. Further discussion and finalisation of the Scientific opinion is required in the upcoming working group. The Scientific Opinion is planned for adoption in December 2021.

6.12. Art. 29 – Disease control measures category A diseases AHL – Rinderpest (EFSA-Q-2020-00805)

The update on the mandate was presented by EFSA staff (Andrea Gervelmeyer) and the appointed chair of the working group (Helen Roberts). Comments have been implemented and/or clarified and presented to the Panel. Specific points discussed: i) "mild strain" changed with "less virulent strain" ii) the use of whole genome sequencing for rinderpest; iii) suggestion



by the EC to highlight in the document that no derogations would be applied in case of outbreak of rinderpest; iv) suggestion by EFSA to highlight whether if any of the derogations should be recommended or not for each disease assessed; vi) to specify somewhere that the assessment for rinderpest is limited to AHL in the EU but Rinderpest is a global threat would it re-emerge. A reference to the global Rinderpest Action Plan (GRAP) would be useful and v) preventive culling of susceptible species could be considered if the classical form of RP should be identified in a limited area. Further discussion and finalisation of the Scientific opinion is required in the upcoming working group. The Scientific Opinion is planned for adoption in December 2021.

7. New mandates (no new mandates)

No new mandates

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission-Activities from other Panels

Not applicable

9. Any other business

9.1. Wrap up and scheduling of next Panel meetings in 2022. Proposal for physical meetings AHAW panel 2022

AHAW Panel Coordinator summarised achievements of the plenary meeting and next steps for Plenary meeting of December 2021. A proposal for 2 physical meetings (June & September) as well as an additional AHAW panel meeting (beginning of June) in 2022 was discussed. The AHAW panel agreed with the proposal.