



Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare

Minutes of the 138th Plenary meeting

Held on 16th February 2022

EFSA, Parma, WEBMEETING¹

(Agreed on 24th February 2022)

Participants

■ Panel Members:

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

■ European Commission:

HOLMES Rebecca (Point 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) KUSTER Laszlo (Points 5.1 and 5.2), LOGAR Barbara (Points 5.1, 5.2, & 6.1), KLEMM Moritz and BERLINGIERI Francesco (Points 7.1, 7.2, 9.1 and 9.2)

■ EFSA:

BIOHAW Unit: ANTONIOU Sotiria-Eleni, ASHE Sean, AZNAR Inma, BALDINELLI Francesca, BROGLIA Alessandro, CANDIANI Denise, CHINCHIO Eleonora, DHOLLANDER Sofie, FABRIS Chiara, GEFFROY Mariana, GERVELMEYER Andrea, KOHNLE Lisa, LIMA Eliana, LIEBANA Ernesto, LOMBARDO Ludovico, MUR Lina, ROJO GIMENO Cristina, OSWALDI Verena, VAN DER STEDE Yves, VEGGELAND Maria, VITALI Marika, ZANCANARO Gabriele

■ Hearing experts²: not applicable

■ Observers: not applicable

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

² 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. No apologies were received.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence³ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management⁴, 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 137th Plenary meeting held on 19 January 2022, WEB

The minutes of the 137th Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 2 February 2022.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for possible adoption and endorsement

5.1. Listing and categorisation of transmissible animal diseases caused by bacteria resistant to antimicrobials in the framework of the Animal Health Law: *B. hyodysenteriae*

The EFSA staff presented the Scientific Opinion. Minor changes in the main text were discussed and implemented. It was clarified that *B. hyodysenteriae* has been eradicated in some farms, but the rate of success at national or Union level is unclear. Further explanations regarding criteria fulfilled by default were added. Since the role of cockroaches and flies as susceptible animal species, reservoirs or vectors has not been demonstrated, they were not included in the table of animal species to be listed as such, but as a footnote.

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

³ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf

⁴ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf



6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1. The protection of animals transported in containers: Sections of draft opinion for discussion

The Chair Antonio Velarde presented the structure and draft sections of the Scientific Opinion, addressing comments from Panel members and from the EC. It was agreed to make the End of Lay (EoL) hens more visible, preferably by treating them as a separate transport scenario in a separate chapter. The description of the stage of arrival was changed to separate lairage at the slaughterhouse from waiting time on a farm. The possibility for obtaining more data on the transport of day-old chicks from hatcheries and on EoL hens was discussed.

6.2. First reading of the protection of sheep during transport (the common Terms of References)

The discussion on the previous point 6.1 on the protection of animals transported in containers was also relevant for free moving animals.

The selection of welfare consequences (WC) is not yet very well described and will be worked out in common by all F2F mandates. There are difficulties in getting data on animal movements within Member States. The EC suggested to describe the common practices and move on from there.

There is no definition for fitness for transport. There is a short list of conditions which preclude transport in the regulation. There are other lists available, such as those found in the final report from the Transport Guides project, but these are not science-based. The EC would very much appreciate such a list. Also, the current list of “derogations” in the regulation should be commented upon. This will be covered at the next Task Force (TF) meeting for both transport mandates together.

There is less information on goats in the opinion due to lack of availability of relevant WG experts. This will be addressed in the next draft Opinion where relevant. The Panel acknowledged that the focus is on sheep, due to their higher numbers being transported.

Four Opinions will be produced to address the mandate, for cattle, sheep & goats, horses and pigs. Livestock vessels will be dealt with in the cattle and sheep & goat opinions.

Heat thresholds, space and maximum journey time are aspects of particular importance. The proposed structure is to avoid repetition and improve readability. It was suggested to move the summary remarks in the discussion. This can then be copied to the conclusions partially or in full as appropriate.

It was suggested to describe the WC selection process better with emphasis on the mental model aspect. Based on severity, prevalence and duration. This will be done at TF-level.

A description is needed about the feasibility of the ABMs for inspectors. Like the Opinion on transport in containers, only feasible ABMs will be mentioned and clearly explained. The sections on legislation are useful but should be reduced and mainly used as background information.

Depending on the outcome of the next TF meeting, fitness for transport will likely be dealt with as a hazard. The EC needs criteria for fitness for transport or a list that precludes transport. The importance of heat, space and journey times should be emphasised early in the document. It was suggested to draw a flow diagram to explain the flow of the work and information.



The ABMs connected to the three important cut-offs in temperature, space and duration should be discussed in the common Terms of References (ToR) section and not in the section on space allowance. When possible, k -values should be added for different studies.

Regarding the heat-threshold, the approach should be highlighted better and earlier in the text. The graph regarding the beginning of the WC should be adjusted because it is only an example as different ABMs will likely show different patterns. The WG will be referring to wet-bulb temperature as one method of coping with both temperature and humidity. Some technical issues, such as ventilation rates, structure of the roof are beyond the knowledge of welfare experts and will not be covered.

The structure of the section on Journey times does not really follow the 3 scenarios presented at the beginning of this section. These were mainly there to make it easier for the WG experts to follow the chosen approach, and will be removed from the final SO.

6.3. Welfare of calves – Recommendations on amount of fibre to be provided to calves (Specific scenario 1)

The mandate on welfare of calves requests an assessment of the risks associated with fibre restriction in calves reared for white veal. To address the mandate, the most relevant welfare consequences resulting from fibre restriction were identified (e.g., inability to chew and ruminate and gastro-enteric disorders). Additionally, the relationship between amount of fibre provided to calves (measured in NDF/kg/day) and percentage of rumination (measured in % rumination time per day) were estimated via literature review and expert knowledge elicitation. The results allowed to estimate the degree of rumination restriction experienced by a calf provided with limited amounts of fibre. Following discussion of recommendations on amounts and types of fibre to be provided to veal calves, minor edits were added to the text for clarity and consistency. The working group was asked to also provide, if possible, recommendations on fibre provision for dairy calves younger than three weeks old.

7. Other topics for information and/or discussion

7.1 Assessment of control measures Category A diseases – ToR 4: update on progress

An update was given on the progress made since the last plenary meeting. The assessment of the risk mitigation treatments has been carried out, and before the next plenary meeting, the prohibitions of movements of animals will be assessed. The results of both assessments will be submitted to the Panel before the March plenary meeting for review and commenting, prior to their in-depths discussion at the March plenary meeting.

7.2 SARS CoV 2 in mink, mustelids, raccoon dogs

The approach proposed to address the ToRs has been presented. The need of a WG to address this mandate has been agreed between BIOHAW HoU and the AHAW Panel Chair. There was agreement to assign the mandate to the pre-existing WG on SARS CoV-2 with additional experts to be selected as required, and the WG composition and timeline were agreed upon. A question about whether wildlife monitoring should be assessed has been raised. The EC replied that this is welcome as much as this represent a health risk for humans or other animals, which is the driver for the mandate.



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

8.1. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission

Relevant presentations in the remit of the AHAW Panel during the last scientific committee meeting were briefed such as the work by the BIOHAZ Panel on chronic wasting disease and transmission of antimicrobial resistance during transport. E. Liebana will ask the coordinator on the CWD surveillance to prepare a presentation on CWD for AHAW.

9. New mandates

9.1. One-Health surveillance

The Panel was informed about a draft mandate regarding surveillance of zoonotic diseases in animals to improve the EU's preparedness for emerging and re-emerging threats to human and animal health. EFSA will be in charge of the project, which will entail close collaboration with relevant stakeholders from public health, animal health and environmental health, both at EU and MS level. Under that mandate, EFSA will be requested to carry out a prioritisation of zoonotic diseases on which to focus, as well as to develop strategies for surveillance that will be carried out by interested MS, data reporting and data analysis, and to carry out regular risk assessments based on the collected surveillance data. The project has an initial duration of 4 years.

9.2. Rabies

The EFSA staff presented and explained the legislative background of the recently received mandate. In this mandate EFSA is requested to assess the risks associated to a reduction of the waiting time for dogs prior to entering the EU after a successful antibody titration test. The workload and activities planned for the mandate were also presented and discussed with the panel. EFSA clarified that the terms of reference of this mandate had been further discussed with the EC to reflect on the short deadline for this mandate. In agreement with the EC, EFSA has identified scientific questions that will be answered via a systematic literature review. The output of this mandate will be a scientific report. A Working Group will be established to carry out the activities related to this mandate.



10. Any other business

10.1. Report requested by the ENVI committee of the EP: Relationship between different zoonotic pandemics and the livestock sector

An overview of a review was presented which examines the zoonotic disease risks posed by the livestock sector and reviews the risks posed by different livestock species and production systems and examines case studies of past zoonotic disease epidemics. The study recommends improvements including integration of human and animal disease surveillance services, alterations to surveillance to include measures on livestock production systems (and changes to these systems) and modifications to the funding of Member States' zoonotic disease programmes under Regulation (EU) 652/2014.

10.2. Discussion on practicalities; sharing of documents and communications

The Panel agreed on the meeting dates for 2022 and 2023 and agreed on practical arrangements.