Participants

- **Panel Members:**
  Edith Authié, Charlotte Berg, Anette Bøtner, Howard Browman, Klaus Depner, Mariano Domingo, Christine Fourichon, Aline de Koeijer (June 26), Frank Koenen (June 25), Simon More, Mohan Raj, Liisa Sihvonen, Hans Spoolder, Jan Arend Stegeman, Hans-Hermann Thulke, Ivar Vågsholm, Antonio Velarde, and Preben Willeberg

- **European Commission:**
  - Marina Marini (DG SANCO, Unit 03), Judit Krommer (DG SANCO, Unit G3, sheep mandate), Maria Pittman (DG SANCO, Unit G3, H3N2v mandate), and Francesco Berlingieri (DG SANCO, Unit G2, enzootic bovine leucosis mandate) joined the meeting by teleconference

- **EFSA:**
  - AHAW Unit: Ana Afonso, Franck Berthe, Denise Candiani, Sandra Correia, Sofie Dhollander, Chiara Fabris, Maria Ferrara, Andrea Gervelmeyer, Per Have, Justyna Jaskiewicz, and Karen Mackay
  - SAS Unit: Gabriele Zancarano, and Jose Cortinas Abrahantes
  - EMRISK Unit: Tobin Robinson, and Andrea Altieri

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair of the Panel, welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from Ilaria Capua, Sandra Edwards, and Stéphan Zientara.

2. **Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted with the following changes: new requests from the European Commission on bovine leucosis and welfare of sheep, and brainstorm on emerging risks.

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 (ADol) and the Specific Declaration of interest (SDol) filled in by the experts invited for the present meeting.

No conflicts of interests 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 75th Plenary meeting held on 21-22 05 2013.

The minutes were agreed by written procedure on 14 06 2013 and published on the EFSA website on 17 06 2013.

5. New mandates

5.1. Request for a scientific opinion on the main welfare risks related to the farming of sheep for wool, meat and milk production

Sheep farming for milk, meat and wool production is of increasing importance worldwide, including in the EU and particularly in Eastern European countries.

Council Directive 98/58/EC lays down minimum standards for the protection of animals kept for farming purposes, including sheep. The EU Strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 foresees the option of a revised animal welfare framework, introducing the use of animal-based welfare indicators to simplify the current legal framework and to enhance the applicability of general principles to all farm animals. The European Commission requests EFSA to review the scientific literature on the welfare of sheep farmed for wool, meat and milk production, and in particular to identify the main risk factors and welfare consequences for the different farming productions. Main factors and welfare consequences common to the different production systems should also be identified. The European Commission requested EFSA to finalise its opinion by December 2014.

Antonio Velarde accepted to chair the working group to be formed. The Panel welcomed this request, noting that small ruminants are increasingly important in the sector of animal production. It was noted by the Panel that addressing all forms for husbandry systems and breeds in a single mandate was challenging.

5.2. Request for a scientific opinion on Enzootic bovine leukosis

Enzootic bovine leukosis (EBL) is a disease caused by the bovine leukaemia virus (BLV). Most infections appear to be subclinical, but a proportion of cattle over 3 years old develop persistent lymphocytosis, and a smaller proportion develop lymphomas in various internal organs. While the infection appears to be widespread globally, in the EU there are many Member States that are officially free (Decision 2003/467/EC), or have one or more regions recognised as officially free.

There is a need to assess if EBL is a disease for which control measures are still justified. This is linked to the existence of free areas within the EU and in some of its trading partners and the possible risk of reintroduction of the disease in these currently free areas. Another important aspect is related to the determination the morbidity rate and if it can be considered significant at country or regional level; this consequently needs to be assessed against the control measures and their impact on cattle production.

There is a need for an assessment of the significance of the risk posed by EBL, its morbidity and the relevance of control measures and surveillance.

The Panel welcomed this new request from the European Commission. Klaus Depner accepted to chair the working group to be formed. The Panel noted the numerous terms of reference of the mandate and, in agreement with the Commission services, wishes to concentrate the work on the issues of impact as per first and third ToRs.
6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

6.1. Possible risks posed by the influenza A (H3N2v) virus for animal health and its potential spread and implications for animal and human health (EFSA-Q-2012-00912)

The draft opinion was presented, including a draft summary. During the discussion, focus was given to the proposed set of conclusions and recommendations, which were thoroughly discussed. Amendments were made to have clearer answers to the risk questions in the ToRs of the request. The assessment of the risk of introduction of H3N2v virus in the EU pig population was further discussed; after which discussion it was decided to separate the risk of introduction from the risk of subsequent spread of the virus to pig holdings. It was decided to postpone the adoption of the draft opinion, due to the many changes made during the plenary discussion and the need for the Panel to consider the amended version before its adoption. Changes will be made in the summary, risk assessment and respective conclusions and recommendations. After a further revision by some Panel members and a consultation with EC, EMA and ECDC, the document will be sent to the Panel for possible adoption by written procedure. EFSA will ask for an extension of the deadline for this mandate to September of 2013.

7. Progress report on other scientific outputs

7.1. Vaccine for bovine tuberculosis (EFSA-Q-2013-00241)

The mandate received from the European Commission in relation to bovine tuberculosis vaccination purpose is to guide future field vaccine trials so that the best possible data regarding vaccine performance (effectiveness and duration of immunity), DIVA test performance, and related issues are gathered. Such information is essential for a future assessment of vaccination as a bovine tuberculosis control option. The mandate was formally accepted and the deadline for this mandate is December 2013.

Initial contact has been made with the European Medicines Agency to ensure its contribution and agree on a modus operandi for the mandate.

7.2. Self-task for bovine tuberculosis (EFSA-Q-2013-00531)

The AHAW Panel will develop a conceptual framework towards holistic approach to bovine tuberculosis. The objective is to establish and maintain a broad understanding of the epidemiology of bovine tuberculosis, relevant to effective surveillance and control, throughout the EU, while addressing specific questions posed from the Commission. The Panel considered necessary to compare epidemiological situations in the MS and in different areas within the MS, and to identify key issues that hinder effective bTB surveillance and control or otherwise provide an explanation for differences in effectiveness of surveillance and control programs in those different epidemiological contexts. The expected output would be a statement of the AHAW Panel to be finalized by December 2013.

7.3. Monitoring procedures at slaughterhouses (EFSA-Q-2012-00840)

On the mandate on monitoring procedures at slaughterhouses, the conceptual model is an assessment based on sensitivity and specificity of indicators for unconsciousness and death. A plan of action, including systematic literature review, data collection, and possible public consultation was presented and discussed. Specifically, an online survey to assess the use of the indicators and to get information, possibly, about their specificity and sensitivity has been launched. Since the outcomes of most of the mentioned activities will only be delivered in the end of June, it was agreed to discuss draft versions of the four opinions in the plenary meeting of June. In particular, a deeper discussion about the approach taken to develop the chapter on sampling size and sampling protocols for such monitoring procedures is foreseen.
The draft opinions will be circulated for endorsement by the Panel before they go out on public consultation.

7.4. **Use of low atmosphere pressure system (LAPs) for stunning of poultry (EFSA-Q-2013-00322)**

This request is similar to the two previous ones for Scientific Opinions concerning electrical parameters for the stunning of lambs and kid goats and the use of carbon dioxide for stunning of rabbits, received in February 2013. Currently, Council Regulation 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing does not allow the use of low atmosphere pressure system for stunning of poultry. EFSA is requested to assess four scientific publications received by the Commission to support the inclusion of this method in the EU Regulation.

The mandate was formally accepted by EFSA on 29 April 2013. Following the adoption of the above-mentioned Scientific Opinions on lambs and rabbits, the same methodological approach will be followed to address this mandate.

7.5. **Self-task for a guidance on assessing studies evaluating the efficacy of stunning interventions regarding animal protection during stunning (EFSA-Q-2013-00532)**

The AHAW Panel agreed to develop a guidance document, which defines the criteria against which studies evaluating the efficacy of stunning interventions regarding animal protection during stunning will be assessed. The approach followed in the guidance document was agreed with the panel. The draft guidance document will be sent to the panel members for endorsement for the public consultation of the guidance document, which will take place from 15 July to 08 September 2013 before its adoption in November.

8. **Other issues**

8.1. **Identification of drivers and emerging risks (Delphi approach- 1st round)**

The Standing Working Group on Emerging Risks (SWG-ER), has decided to conduct an expert consultation with the BIOHAZ and AHAW Panels to identify priority emerging risks and drivers of biological emerging risks to human and animal health for the next 5-10 years. This exercise should support EFSA in the identification of emerging biological risks to human and animal health. The outcome of the exercise will also inform and support the future AHAW Panel’s work and the future allocation of EFSA’s resources to address emerging biological risks. The overall objective of the first round of the Delphi process was to identify drivers and emerging risks. The first round was carried out during this plenary meeting in the morning of 26 June. A second round, a joint workshop with BIOHAZ panel members, is planned for autumn 2013, followed by a final round of consolidation and final ranking by email at the end of 2013/beginning of 2014.

8.2. **Preparatory work on canine leishmaniosis**

The contractors of the procurement CFP_EFSA_AHAW_2011_2 on canine leishmaniosis have submitted their draft final report. The terms of reference of the procurement were: 1) carry out a systematic review, to identify, evaluate and synthesize the evidence on efficacy of interventions for the prevention of natural *L. infantum* infection in dogs; 2) assess the role of animals in the spread of *L. infantum* within the EU and evaluate potential mitigation measures using simulation methods; 3) to evaluate the impact of canine leishmaniosis in endemic areas. The final report is due in July 2013. The draft report was presented to the Panel for information.
9. Next meetings

Next meeting in 2013: September 18/19, October 22/23, and November 26/27.
The October plenary meeting of the AHAW Panel will be open to observers\(^3\).
The following dates have been agreed for 2014: Feb 4/5, March 24/25, May 13/14, June 24/25, Sept 16/17, Oct 21/22, and Dec 02/03.

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