



**MINUTES OF THE XXVTH PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL ON
ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE -
31ST JANUARY-1 FEBRUARY 2007**

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	2
2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.....	2
3. PREVIOUS MINUTES ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE	2
4. COMMISSION SERVICES (CS).....	2
4.1. NEW MANDATES.....	2
5. OPINIONS AND REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION/ ACCEPTANCE... 3	
5.1. ECHINOCOCCUS.....	3
5.2. RABIES	3
5.3. ZOO BIRDS VACCINATION	3
5.4. TICKS	3
5.5. EFSA GUIDANCE DOCUMENT ON THE CONDUCT OF RISK ASSESSMENTS IN FOOD PRODUCING ANIMALS.....	3
6. WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE STATE OF PLAY OF THE SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS AND REPORTS TO BE DISCUSSED ONLY IF REQUIRED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WG 4	4
6.1. BLUETONGUE MANDATE AND FOLLOW UP OF THE EPIDEMIOLOGY WG.....	4
6.2. PIG WELFARE; 1) TAIL BITING; 2) SOWS AND BOARS 3) FATTENING	4
6.3. FISH WELFARE; 1) ATLANTIC SALMON; 2) TROUT SPECIES;3) CARP SPECIES; 4) SEA BASS AND GILTHEAD SEABREAM; 5) EUROPEAN EEL	4
6.4. NEWCASTLE DISEASE	4
6.5. AVIAN INFLUENZA VACCINES	5
6.6. WELFARE OF DAIRY COWS	5
6.7. TUBERCULOSIS IN DEER	5
7. MISCELLANEOUS.	5
7.1. GENERAL ISSUES	5
7.2. NEXT PLENARY MEETING	5

PARTICIPANTS

Bo Algers, Harry Blokhuis, Donald Broom, Mariano Domingo, Matthias Greiner, Daniel Guemene, Joerg Hartung, Trevor Hastings, Per Have, Frank Koenen, David Morton, Christine Müller-Graf, Albert Osterhaus Mo Salman, Moez Sanaa, Michael Sharp, Philippe Vannier, Martin Wierup, Marion Wooldridge and Ron Roberts.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (DG SANCO): Sabine Osaer and Maria Ferrara.

EFSA: E. Franchi, R. Carfagnini and M. C. Addis (administrative staff AHAW Unit); S. Correia, O. Ribó, A. Afonso, F. De Massis, J. Pujols, D. Candiani, E. Aiassa, J. Serratosa (Scientific Coordination AHAW Unit)

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The chairman welcomed the participants and no member declared any conflict of interest on the items on the agenda. Dr Ron Roberts was introduced as an observer for this plenary and appointed by the Management Board as a new member of the AHAW Panel from 2nd February 2007. Dr Roberts replaces Dr T. Hastings who announced his resignation at the last plenary meeting from 1 February 2007.

Apologies were received from Dirk Pfeiffer, Patrizia Costa, and Mrs. Lea Knopf (OIE).

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

The minutes of the previous 24th Plenary Meeting held in Parma on 11-12 December were unanimously adopted by written procedure by the Panel members on 9 January 2007 and published on the web (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu>).

4. COMMISSION SERVICES (CS)

4.1. New Mandates

- i) CS representatives presented a new mandate on “**Vector species and live stages of susceptible species as regards certain aquatic animal diseases**”. It was clarified that it should not focus on the diseases listed, but on the vectors and susceptible life stages. The Panel was also informed by the Commission that MS provide data to EFSA. The chairman for this WG was nominated and agreed unanimously.
- ii) **Salmonella in pigs:** BIOHAZ Panel requested support from the AHAW panel members concerning experts on epidemiology to support the mandate on Salmonella in pigs (QMRA). The Panel proposed two experts.

5. OPINIONS AND REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION/ACCEPTANCE

5.1. Echinococcus

The opinion was adopted by written procedure on 18 January 2007. Comments from EMEA were received and considered before publication. After a final editorial and scientific review by 2 members of the AHAW Panel, the Opinion was published on 26 January 2007.

5.2. Rabies

After adoption of this Scientific Opinion at the last plenary meeting in December, EMEA (previously invited to provide comments on this opinion) sent to EFSA some suggestions for improvement and clarifications of certain points related with the authorisation process of rabies vaccine. Although the Panel's conclusions and recommendations were not contested it was considered necessary to take into account before publication. The chairman of the WG presented EMEA's comments concerning the use of the rabies vaccine as well a review of the terms and definitions used (*e.g.* vaccine efficacy, booster vaccination, etc). After a review of the opinion, the panel accepted a number of editorial improvements and changes. This final version was accepted for publication at the EFSA website.

5.3. Zoo birds Vaccination

In order to meet the Commission's deadline of 31 January 2007, the Scientific Opinion was presented to the AHAW Panel for adoption during this Plenary Meeting. The chairman reviewed the methods used for the analysis of the data received from Member states followed by a detailed discussion of each chapter. The Scientific Opinion was amended and unanimously adopted.

5.4. Ticks

The Chairman of the WG presented the main aspects of the Opinion and the Panel discussed the conclusions and recommendations. The Opinion will be revised taking into account comments of Panel members and a revised version will be sent for final review by two Panel members and then forwarded to all Panel members for possible adoption by written procedure by the 14 February 2007.

5.5. EFSA Guidance Document On the conduct of Risk assessments in food producing animals

On 17 January the final version of the Opinion was distributed to the Panel for comments and possible adoption. However the Opinion was not discussed due to lack of time, and will be discussed at the next plenary in March for possible adoption.

6. WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE STATE OF PLAY OF THE SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS AND REPORTS TO BE DISCUSSED ONLY IF REQUIRED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WG

6.1. Bluetongue Mandate and follow up of the Epidemiology WG

A mandate was received at EFSA on 11 December regarding Bluetongue (vectors and vaccines) with a deadline of 30 March 2007. The AHAW Unit organized a kick-off meeting on 20 December 2006 to start the activities with Panel members and *ad hoc* experts. The terms of reference and deadline for the mandate were discussed. EFSA sent a letter to the Commission requesting an extension of the deadline to 30 April in order to collect data on vectors and vaccines. Additionally EFSA requested to extend the remit to consider introduction and possible reoccurrence of BTV in the EU.

The epidemiological working group is currently delivering a weekly report available at EFSA website (Bluetongue Serotype 8 Epidemic Bulletin by EFSA Epidemiology Working Group). The deadline for the final epidemiological analysis is by 31 January 2007. Because the results from the EPI BTV8 WG will support the Opinion of the AHAW Panel, a joint meeting between both WGs has been organised for the 6 February in Parma to present the first report of the global epidemiological analysis.

6.2. Pig Welfare; 1) Tail biting; 2) Sows and Boars 3) Fattening

During the last meetings of the WG Sows and Boars (13/12/06) and WG Fattening (11/01/07) the document on Pig Welfare Risk Assessment was revised and final agreement reached. The document was then distributed amongst the Pig Welfare WGs together with the respective tables for scoring the hazards. At present, first scorings on "adverse effect" of hazard as well as "duration" and "intensity" of exposure are being made and agreed upon. Those first hazard scorings made by the Sows and Boars WG were discussed during the 30 January WG Meeting. The work in the various groups is proceeding as expected and the mandate should be finalised within the given deadline.

6.3. Fish Welfare; 1) Atlantic Salmon; 2) Trout Species; 3) Carp Species; 4) sea bass and gilthead seabream; 5) European eel

The last meeting on Fish Welfare Atlantic Salmon - was held on 5 January. The Risk Assessment approach for fish welfare (in spite the big differences on types of farming over 5-6 life stages) is in line with the pig welfare groups although in this mandate uncertainty is sometimes higher due to lack of scientific evidence. A list of possible experts for the Trout group was set up. Next meeting for the Salmon WG is scheduled for the 16 February in Parma. A meeting was scheduled with the Commission Services on 27 February for an exchange of views over the methodology followed by the Salmon WG. The chairmen were appointed for the remaining 4 WGs on Trout, Carp, Sea bass, and European eel.

6.4. Newcastle disease

The last WG meetings were held on the 9 & 10 and 29 January. A transversal WG meeting is planned for the 6-7th February. A meeting with IFAH, vaccine manufacturers and EMEA experts was held on the 19 January in Brussels in order to gain information on new developments in vaccines for ND. It was decided to draft recommendations to the

Commission on improvements that could be made to the current data collection system. The deadline for adoption of this Opinion has been postponed to the end of April with the agreement of the Commission.

6.5. Avian Influenza vaccines

Two WG Meetings took place on 15 November and 3 January and the next will be on 1-2 February 2007. An International meeting on AI vaccines will take place in Verona (March 2007) and it would seem necessary to include this up-to-date information in the Opinion leading to a short delay in its delivery.

6.6. Welfare of Dairy Cows

A list of WG experts has been agreed with the chairman. A kick-off meeting with the Commission has been proposed for 27 February. EFSA has contacted experts and arranged a first meeting on welfare of dairy cows.

6.7. Tuberculosis in Deer

A kick-off meeting with the Commission was held in Brussels on 19 December. The ToR of the mandate was clarified and a reply letter of acceptance was sent to the Commission. Due to the complexity of the mandate and the difficulties expected in collecting data, an extension of the deadline to December 2007 has been agreed with the Commission. The first WG meeting was planned for 1st (afternoon) and 2nd February.

7. MISCELLANEOUS.

7.1. General issues

- i) The Zoonoses booklet (aimed at consumers) was sent by the Communications Unit to the Panel for comments.
- ii) Common Animal Health Policy (CAHP)- white paper: it was requested to EFSA secretariat to provide information to Panel members about this strategic document as soon as it becomes available for discussion.
- iii) **Brucellosis:** following the adoption at the last AHAW Plenary in December and after an editorial review, the Scientific Opinion was published on the EFSA website.
- iv) **FEFAC:** a letter from FEFAC with comments on the EFSA Opinion of Calves Welfare was distributed to Panel Members for discussion at the next Plenary Meeting.
- v) **Wild bird imports:** A letter from the European Association of Importers/Exporters of birds and live animals was distributed to the Panel Members for discussion at the next Plenary Meeting.

7.2. Next Plenary Meeting

The next plenary meeting will take place in Parma the next **8 March** from 09.00 to 18.00h and **9 March** from 08.30 to 15.30h.