



## European Food Safety Authority AHAW Panel

### MINUTES OF THE XXVI<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL ON ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE -

8<sup>TH</sup> -9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2007

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## **PARTICIPANTS**

Bo Algers, Donald Broom, Mariano Domingo, Daniel Guemene, Joerg Hartung, Per Have, Frank Koenen, David Morton, Christine Müller-Graf, Dirk Pfeiffer, Mo Salman, Moez Sanaa, Michael Sharp, Philippe Vannier, Martin Wierup, and Marion Wooldridge .

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION (DG SANCO):** Mr. F. Reviriego,  
**OBSERVER:** Mrs. Lea Knopf (OIE).

**EFSA:** R. Carfagnini and H. Figoluzska (administrative staff AHAW Unit); S. Correia, O. Ribó, A. Afonso, F. De Massis, D. Candiani, E. Aiassa, J. Serratos (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.

The panel welcomed H. Figoluzska which has been appointed in the AHAW team to support the administrative activities, Dr. Willeberg was invited as observer but due to other commitments he declined the invitation and he will attend the next plenary meeting in April. Therefore the point related to “discussion on the format and the contents of the previous adopted AHAW opinions” was taken out from the agenda.

Apologies were received from Harry Blokhuis, Patrizia Costa, Matthias Greiner, Albert Osterhaus, Ron Roberts, and Sabine Osaer (DG SANCO).

### **2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted.

### **3. PREVIOUS MINUTES ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE**

The minutes of the previous 25th Plenary Meeting held in Parma on 31<sup>st</sup> of January and 1st of February were unanimously adopted by written procedure by the Panel members on 26th February 2007 and published on the web (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu>).

### **4. COMMISSION SERVICES (CS)**

#### **4.1. New Mandates**

An Opinion on Microbiological risk assessment in feedingstuffs for food producing animals, and in particular the implication for animal health was discussed. The panel accepted to deal with the mandate in the part concerning the impact on animal health.

### **5. OPINIONS AND REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION/ ACCEPTANCE**

#### **5.1. Ticks**

The opinion was submitted for possible adoption however it was not possible to adopt the opinion because votes were not given sufficiently to reach the majority. The opinion was discussed for possible adoption and presented for vote at this plenary. Comments on the opinion annexed tables were accepted and the tables will be reviewed. Finally the opinion was adopted by unanimity.

## **5.2. Newcastle disease**

Several meetings have been organised, two of them transversal (6th and 7th, 19th and 26th February), in order to present the scientific report and opinion next Plenary and to finalise it by the end of April. It was mainly concluded by the WG that the available data on ND is not enough to draw definitive conclusions on the efficacy of the different control measures applied in the MSs. A proposal for a questionnaire has been developed in order to improve the current data collection system and to allow a better assessment.

The chairman of the working group presented the scientific report, the methodology and the main outcomes and uncertainties. The scientific report and opinion were discussed and amendments were proposed. The panel agreed that once the final report and opinion is finalized should be circulated for possible adoption following the written procedure as soon as the amendments have been introduced.

## **5.3. Bluetongue**

The current outcome of the Epidemiological WG was presented to the AHAW panel. 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. The Commission replied accepting the extension of the deadline. EFSA also requested to extend the remit in order to consider the origin and possible reoccurrence (persistence) of BTV in the EU, the Commission replied that such an extension would be very wide and general and wish to get the work on vectors and vaccines done before deciding to embark on any other exercise and after this work is finalised the Commission proposed to discuss what further scientific advice and assistance might still be necessary.

An additional self mandate on bluetongue has been sent on 7 March from the EFSA Executive Director to the chairman of the AHAW the Panel in line with the proposed self mandate accepted by the Panel at the plenary meeting in October 2006.

The last draft of the opinion was distributed to Panel Members on 2 March for general comments. The draft was discussed during the plenary. The work of the WG groups is proceeding, and the mandate is expected to be finalised within the given deadline. Possibilities for one or two reports and one or two opinions for each of the two mandates were discussed.

## **5.4. EFSA Guidance Document on the conduct of Risk assessments in food producing animals**

On 5 March the final version of this Opinion was distributed to the Panel for comments and possible adoption. After the discussion at the Plenary, during which the desirability of taking account of progress made in relation to the work in several recent working groups was emphasised, it was agreed to revise the text and follow the written procedure for possible adoption as soon as the comments from the members of the Panel have been considered.

# **6. WRITTEN COMMENTS ON THE STATE OF PLAY OF THE SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS AND REPORTS**

## **6.1. Pig Welfare; 1) Tail biting; 2) Sows and Boars 3) Fattening**

A teleconference was held last February 21st during which the three WGs' Chairmen, the Risk assessors and EFSA Secretariat agreed on the last version of the RA Approach document in order to provide the all WG Members with a standardized methodology for scoring the hazard tables in a uniform way. On February 23rd the RA Approach document Final Version was circulated

among the WG members. It was also agreed that at least one of the Risk Assessors will try to attend each meeting.

**Tail biting WG:** during the last meeting in Brussels (28/02/07) the Draft Scientific Report was discussed and reviewed and a simulation of a single hazard scoring was carried out. Next WG meetings were scheduled, in order to submit to Opinion for possible adoption during the 27/28 June AHAW Plenary Meeting. Next meeting is foreseen for March 29.

**Fattening WG:** The last meeting was held on February 15th in Parma. The Draft Scientific Report was discussed and it was agreed that for the next meeting the WG members will work on both the Draft and the RA table scoring. Next WG meetings on 12-13 April and 16 May (if needed) were scheduled.

**Sows and Boars:** the WG members will work on the RA tables and score individually all the hazards. The Risk Assessors will then process all the scores and present the final results on 17-18/04/07. Last WG Meeting has been fixed for May 15 to be able to submit the Opinion for adoption at the 27/28 June Plenary Meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for March 12.

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

i) The last meeting on Fish Welfare- Atlantic Salmon - was held on 16/02/07 in Parma. The Risk Assessment approach for fish welfare was discussed as well as the tables for scoring the hazards for each fish life stage and for each production system. Next WG meeting is scheduled for the 27-28th March in Parma.

ii) On 27/02/07 there was discussion with Commission representatives about progress with the salmon report and a kick off meeting for the Trout group with DG Sanco and the WG chairmen. The Commission staff considered that the methods used for the salmon report have been satisfactory. The need to use standardised animal welfare indicators was pinpointed. These will allow the commission to draft legislation for the control and monitoring of Animal Welfare.

**6.3. Avian Influenza vaccines**

A WG Meeting was held on 1-2<sup>nd</sup> February. Next Meeting is fixed for next 27 March (Transversal WG Meeting) to draft conclusions and recommendations and submit the Opinion for Possible adoption at the April Plenary Meeting (26-27/04). Filled questionnaires on AI Vaccines have been received and a summary table is being prepared to be circulated within the WG Members and discussed during the next WG Meeting.

**6.4. Welfare of Dairy Cows**

The Meeting with DG Sanco and the WG Chairman to clarify the ToRs of the Mandate was held last 27 February. A proposal of table of contents was agreed. Experts have been appointed and the first WG meeting has taken place on 07/03/07 in Parma.

**6.5. Tuberculosis in Deer**

A first meeting with the WG was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of Feb for clarification of the ToR given on the kick-off meeting with the Commission (19<sup>th</sup> of Dec in Brussels); discussing the approach to be followed to reply to the questions posed by the Commission.

A letter has been sent to the Commission to request, as agreed in the kick-off meeting, postponing the deadline to December 2007. Meetings dates have been already planned until the possible date

of presentation to the Panel (October's plenary). Next meeting will be on the 12 and 13<sup>th</sup> of March.

#### **6.6. Vector species and live stages of susceptible species as regards certain aquatic animal diseases a) Fish b) Molluscs c) Crustacea**

The Meeting with DG Sanco and the WG Chairman to clarify the ToRs of the Mandate was held last 27 February. The mandate was divided in 3 separate questions. The deadline was accepted although the complexity and extension of the question (15 different diseases 59 different susceptible aquatic animals). A letter accepting the deadline and clarifying some of the issues discussed was sent. The WG members were invited. The first WG meetings for fish, mollusc and crustaceans are planned for 30/3/07, 23/4/07 and 22 / 5 /07 respectively. Ornamental fish in spite of being relevant potential vectors are not being considered within the scope of this mandate.

During the plenary a presentation about the terms of reference and definitions stated in the directive 2006/88/EC was given. The definition of disease in the directive includes clinical and non clinical infection. As a consequence of this definition the question on vectors is limited to organisms which can act as mechanical carriers instead of organisms where the infection can occur without clinical disease. It was suggested to enlarge the TOR to include healthy carriers (infected but not presenting disease).

### **7. MISCELLANEOUS.**

#### **i) CAHP document**

A CAHP document (Common Animal Health Policy) was circulated to the panel members. EFSA received several comments and suggestions from the members of the panel. The Commission official pointed out that this was not an official consultation.

#### **ii) *Corrigendum to the scientific opinion on laboratory animals welfare:***

The Chairman of the working group and EFSA secretariat will address a reply to support DG ENV to give an appropriate response concerning some recommendations based mainly on expert opinion as there was little scientific data on which to make a risk assessment. The AHAW panel considered that there was no need to modify the scientific opinion.

#### **iii) Discussion on the FEFAC letter and transport letter from Prof Bernardini:**

Two draft responses will be circulated for possible acceptance following the written procedure or discussion at the next plenary meeting.

#### **iv) Wild bird imports:**

M. Sharp, chairman of the WG on Captive Birds considered not necessary to answer the letter as it was addressed to DG Sanco and EFSA was in copy. In addition the letter addresses management issues outside of the EFSA remit and no additional scientific evidence was provided.

### **7.1. Next Plenary Meeting**

The next plenary meeting will take place in Parma the next 26 April from 09.00 to 18.00h and 27 April from 08.30 to 15.30h.