

MINUTES OF THE XXVIII PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL ON ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

27 AND 28 JUNE 2007

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PARTICIPANTS

Bo Algers, Harry Blokhuis, Donald Broom (27 June), Patrizia Costa, Mariano Domingo, Daniel Guéméne, Matthias Greiner, Joerg Hartung, Frank Koenen, David Morton, Christine Müller-Graf, Albert Osterhaus (28 June), Ronald Roberts, Moez Sanaa, Mike Sharp, Philippe Vannier, Martin Wierup, Marion Wooldridge.

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

INVITED OBSERVERS: David Mackay (EMEA), Stéphane De la Rocque (FAO)

EFSA: R. Carfagnini and H. Figoluszka (administrative staff AHAW Unit); S. Correia, O. Ribó, A. Afonso, F. De Massis, D. Candiani, E. Aiassa, S. Barbieri, P. Have, 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.

Apologies were received from Mo Salman and Dirk Pfeiffer, and Lea Knopf (OIE).

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

The minutes of the previous 27th Plenary Meeting held in Parma on 26-27th April 2007 were unanimously adopted by written procedure by the Panel members on 6 June 2007 and published on the web (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu>).

4. COMMISSION SERVICES (CS)

4.1. New Mandates

The representative from the Commission explained that no new mandates are foreseen in a short term.

4.1.1. Zoonoses: Frank Boelaert (EFSA- Zoonoses Unit) presented this EFSA self-mandate concerning the Community Summary report on “Trends and sources of zoonoses, zoonotic agents and antimicrobial resistance in the European Union in 2005”. BIOHAZ Panel will chair the WG with experts from both Panels. The mandate is addressed to the BIOHAZ Panel (Public health issues) and to the AHAW Panel (Animal health issues). It is expected to be co-adopted by both Panels within their respective remits. Some AHAW Panel members were chosen to provide some conclusions and recommendations concerning the animal health issues included in the report according to the terms of reference (ToR). The deadline, the ToR and the working methodology were accepted.

4.1.2. Guidelines for animal welfare risk assessment: EFSA secretariat explained that a self-mandate is going to be launched on the guidelines for animal welfare risk assessment, in agreement with recommendations from the AHAW Panel and the recommendations from EFSA Colloquium held on 2005 on food producing animals.

4.1.3. Projects on AH and AW under Art 36: EFSA will prepare calls for proposals under Article 36, to finance two projects - the first project will focus on some animal diseases and the second on risk assessment methodology applied to animal welfare. Outsourcing has, as a main objective, to do preparatory work on possible future opinions which could be addressed to EFSA. It would shorten the delivery time for future mandates and reduce the current

workload of the Panel and working groups. The public call, expected by September the latest, will be publicly available at the EFSA web including the conditions and terms of reference (www.efsa.europa.eu).

4.1.4. Update Risk assessment on Avian Influenza: EFSA secretariat asked the Panel to nominate a chairman for the possible new opinion to update risk assessments on Avian Influenza. A meeting with EFSA secretariat and the elected chairman will be organized in order to define the scope of an update to be discussed with the Commission services before starting any activity.

5. OPINIONS AND REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION/ ACCEPTANCE

5.1. Welfare and health of fattening pigs

The Scientific Report was discussed taking into account comments from Panel members and DG Sanco. The Scientific Report and the Scientific Opinion (containing conclusions and recommendations) were amended after the discussion. EFSA and the Chairman of the WG were asked to redraft the Scientific Report and Opinion in accordance with the agreed decisions (i.e. only conclusions and recommendations related to the fattening pigs will be kept in the SO). Therefore, EFSA will forward the final draft taking into consideration comments from Panel members for possible adoption by written procedure.

5.2. Welfare and health of Sows and Boars

The chairman of the WG presented the Scientific Report. The Scientific Opinion (including conclusions and recommendations) was discussed taking into account comments sent by Panel members and DG Sanco. The Scientific Report and Opinion were amended. EFSA and the chairman of the WG were requested to draft a final version and forward it for possible adoption by written procedure before the next plenary meeting in September.

5.3. Framework for EFSA AHAW Risk Assessments

On 15 June the final version of the Opinion was distributed to the Panel for comments and possible adoption. After the discussion during the Plenary, the document was amended. The final document will be circulated by 29 June for possible adoption following the written procedure in 10 working days. Deadline for adoption (voting) 13 July.

5.4. Fish Welfare; 1) Atlantic Salmon

The last meeting was held in Oslo 20-21/6/07 followed by a common meeting with members of trout and sea bass WGs. One purpose of the common meeting was to discuss the sections of the report that could be common to the 5 fish opinions. As a result of this common meeting new draft chapters will be drawn up for discussion at a later meeting. The Salmon Work group will meet again on the 5 & 6 July (transversal) to finalise the Report and Risk Assessment. The chairman of the Salmon WG will present the Salmon Scientific Report at the next September plenary meeting.

6. DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE AHAW OPINIONS FROM EMEA PERSPECTIVE (D. MACKAY)

David Mackay (EMEA) presented the objectives and the legal basis for the cooperation between EFSA and EMEA, the working procedures of EMEA and its CVMP, potential areas of mutual interest and future cooperation.

The Panel was very grateful for his contribution, and it was clear that EFSA and EMEA should strengthen their cooperation as in the last three opinions (AI, BT and ND). It was agreed that it would be useful to try to formalize the coordination of issues to be dealt by both AHAW/EFSA and CVMP/EMEA and to propose a framework for cooperation.

7. PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION OF THE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN ON THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF ANIMALS 2006-2010

Maria Ferrara presented “The Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010” with particular reference to animal welfare indicators. One of the areas of action of the Action Plan is the upgrading of existing minimum standards for animal protection and welfare as well as the introduction of standardised animal welfare indicators to assess the welfare standards applied.

The Commission intends to adopt in the future a more outcome based approach to animal welfare legislation in the EU. Welfare indicators are today the most suitable tools to achieve this objective. It was discussed that with welfare indicators at the core of the risk assessment methodology, they could form the basis for a flexible welfare monitoring system applicable to different types of production systems as well as different livestock species. In this sense, a number of clarifications were done concerning the objectives to be reached in the scientific advice. The Panel was very grateful for that presentation, which always is a very good input for a fruitful communication between risk assessors and risk managers, to better identify their respective needs.

8. THE STATE OF PLAY OF THE SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS AND REPORTS

8.1. Animal welfare aspects of the killing and skinning of seals

The preparatory meeting with the Commission took place on 8 May. The Mandate was examined and the Terms of Reference were agreed. The stakeholder consultation plan was discussed and a draft schedule of actions was taken into consideration. Experts were contacted and the first Working Group meeting was held in Parma on June 25 and 26. A proposal for a List of Contents of the Report which was previously distributed to the WG Members, was discussed and agreed during the meeting. Tasks were assigned to each expert according to the agreed list of contents. Deadlines and dates for the next WG Meetings were agreed. A letter to the stakeholders asking for scientific data (deadline 3rd August) and proposing a consultation meeting next 4 October will be sent in the following days after the plenary.

8.2. Pig Welfare; Tail biting;

The last meeting was held on June 7. Conclusions and Recommendations from the Scientific report were finalised. On the RA a final revision of the Hazard Tables needs to be made in order to finish the RA process, provide the RA outcomes and draft conclusions and recommendations from the RA. The Transversal WG Meeting will be held next 29 June. It is expected to finalise the SO for possible adoption during the September Plenary Meeting.

A letter has been sent to the Commission (20 June 2007) asking for two months extension deadline for the Tail Biting Mandate.

8.3. Fish Welfare

8.3.1. Trout welfare group: The last meeting was held on June 22. The next WG meeting is scheduled for September 4.

8.3.2. Carp welfare group: Experts for the carp will start to be contacted in July to start in September.

8.3.3. Sea bass and gilthead sea bream: Experts will start being contacted in September to start in October.

8.3.4. European eel: Experts will start being contacted in November to start in January.

8.4. Welfare of Dairy Cows

The latest meeting with the WG members was held on May 14. The expert's contributions to the text were discussed and a Scientific Report Draft 2 rev 0 was agreed. Next WG meeting is planned for 3-4 July.

A meeting with members of EFSA's Advisory Forum and WG members will be organized in September (to be confirmed), following the request from the Danish Dairy Board to collaborate during the development of the Scientific Opinion. The objective of this meeting will be to get information from the different national research results and consider comments and suggestions given by the Members of the Advisory Forum for the completion of this Scientific Opinion.

8.5. Tuberculosis in deer

Two meetings have been held since the last Plenary: 7-8 May and 18-19 June. The systematic literature review has reached the second stage (selection according to pre-defined criteria) and the main purpose is to collect representative data on TB diagnostic tests' sensitivity and specificity. All articles required for the Meta-Analysis have been provided in a PDF format and are at the disposal of the WG members on a web portal. The next meeting will be on 25 -26th July.

8.6. Vector species and live stages of susceptible species as regards certain aquatic animal diseases: a) Fish; b) Molluscs; and c) Crustacea

8.6.1. Fish. The latest WG meeting for fish was held on the 30 April. On the 12-13 June a WG meeting concerning the Risk assessment was held. . The next WG meeting will be held on the 3-4 July for discussion of the RA approach and conclusions. A WG meeting will take place on the 6 September and a transversal meeting has been scheduled for 7 September in Parma.

8.6.2. Molluscs. The latest WG meeting for mollusc diseases was held on the 26/6/07. Next WG meeting is scheduled for the 10-11 September.

8.6.3. Crustacea. The latest WG meeting for crustacean diseases was held on the 25/6/07. Next WG meeting is scheduled for the 13-14 of September

The Fish diseases report should be submitted for adoption on the October Plenary meeting, The last meeting for completion of RA of molluscs and crustaceans is planned for 2-3 October.

9. MISCELLANEOUS

9.1. Follow up of the adopted Opinions

Opinions adopted in the previous plenary meeting has been published on the EFSA website (Newcastle disease on the 29 May 2007; Blue tongue - Commission mandate on Vaccines and vectors and the EFSA Self-mandate origin and occurrence on 12 May 2007, and Avian Influenza Vaccines after adoption by Written Procedure last May 11 was published on June 6)

9.2. Letters to be discussed on Transport, FEFAC and EMEA

Draft answer letters have been prepared and circulated to the Panel members. All comments have been considered and a final version will be sent after the plenary. It was agreed that in the next 10

working days the letters will be sent by EFSA on behalf of the Panel, unless further comments or amendments are sent to the AHAW secretariat.

9.3. Proposal from EFSA secretariat for 2008 plenary dates

The following dates were agreed for AHAW plenary meetings to be held in Parma next 2008:

- 30-31 January (XXXII)
- 13 or 14 March (XXXIII)
- 6-7 May (XXXIV)
- 17-18 June (XXXV)
- 11 -12 September (XXXVI)
- 22-23 October (XXXVII)
- 11-12 December (XXXVIII)

9.4. Next Plenary Meeting

The next plenary meeting will take place in Parma on 5 September from 09.00 to 18.00h and 6 September from 08.30 to 15.30h.

9.5. Acknowledgment to the Management Board

The AHAW Panel would like to thank the management Board for considering the comments received from the EFSA Panel and the WG experts, regarding the difficulties of the experts to comply with EFSA's expectations. They also welcome the Board's proposed actions that the Panel feel will positively support the work of the WGs and the Panel.