

# Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare

## Minutes of the 127<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting

**Held on 26 November 2020**

**EFSA, Parma, WEBMEETING<sup>1</sup>**

**(Agreed on 03 December 2020)<sup>2</sup>**

### Participants

#### ■ Panel Members:

ALVAREZ Julio, BICOUT Dominique, CALISTRI Paolo, DREWE Julian, GARIN-BASTUJI Bruno, GONZALES ROJAS Jose Luis, GORTAZAR SCHMIDT Christian, MICHEL Virginie, MIRANDA Miguel Angel, NIELSEN Søren Saxmose (Chair), ROBERTS Helen, SIHVONEN Liisa, SPOOLDER Hans, STAHL Karl, VELARDE Antonio, VILTROP Arvo, WINCKLER Christoph

#### ■ European Commission: MASSOT-BERNA Cristina (Point 6.1), SANDER-VORNHAGEN Kirsten (point 5.1, 6.1-6.6, 9-1) SIMONIN Denis (point 5.1), KUSTER Laszlo (point 6.2, 9.1), FORCELLA Simona (6.7-6.11), GAVINELLI Andrea (point 8.1).

#### ■ EFSA:

ALPHA UNIT: Antoniou Sotiria-Eleni, Ashe Sean, Aznar Inma, Baldinelli Francesca, Broglia Alessandro, Candiani Denise, Carfagnini Roberta, Dhollander Sofie, Dorbek-Kolin Elisabeth, Fabris Chiara, Ivanciu Corina, Gervelmeyer Andrea, Križ Nik (HoU), Omodeo Sara Gisella, Rapagna Cristina, Van der Stede Yves, Veggeland Maria Vaeret, Zancanaro Gabriele

#### ■ Hearing experts<sup>3</sup>: not applicable.

#### ■ Observers: not applicable

<sup>1</sup> All meetings were rescheduled to web meetings due to Covid-19

<sup>2</sup> Minutes should be published within 15 working days of the final day of the relevant meeting.

<sup>3</sup> 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. Apologies were received from Klaus Depner, Christoph Winckler (from 9 to 13h) and Paolo Calistri (attended after 10h).

## 2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

## 3. Declarations of Interest Scientific Panel Members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence<sup>4</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management<sup>5</sup>, 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 126<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting held on 28 October 2020, Parma, (Italy)

The minutes of the 126<sup>th</sup> Plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 9 November 2020.

## 5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

### 5.1. Art. 29 - Disease control measures category A diseases AHL (EFSA-Q-2020-00193-00198) - Methodology report

This draft opinion was thoroughly discussed with the Panel members. The abstract and summary were presented to the AHAW Panel.

The summary was agreed and approved by the AHAW Panel. An explanatory sentence was added in order to better understand the equations. The Test Se was kept as a random variable in the assessments as agreed with the WG experts and kept in the report. Additional explanation on how the Relative Risk (RR) will be used. The section 4.3.1 'Methodology for assessing the duration of the disease control measures in the protection and surveillance zones' was thoroughly discussed with the AHAW Panel and agreed. Likewise, the abstract and summary was presented and discussed.

The AHAW Panel adopted the Opinion unanimously.

### 5.2. Art. 29 - Disease control measures category A diseases AHL (EFSA-Q-2020-00193-00198) – African horse sickness

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/policy\\_independence.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/competing\\_interest\\_management\\_17.pdf](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf)



It was requested to insert what is currently there as legislation in the beginning of the SO (interpretation of TORs).

Specific comments:

- The time needed for confirmation; if you do not have organs (only blood) the PCR can be negative even if the animal is infected. Therefore, for live animals you need to wait up to 7 days and conduct antibody testing and to confirm a suspicion. This should be clarified in the narrative.
- Figure 4 needs to be better explained in order to understand the vector free period and change of overwintering (depending on seasonality and climatic circumstances). Proper interpretation of this table is crucial to provide guidelines on whether the existing minimum time measures are applied in the PZ (100 days) and the SZ (150 days) are effective.

It was agreed to wait for adoption and adopt by written procedure, since no comments yet by EC were received. The deadline for receiving comments by EC has been set on 7 December. Moreover, conclusions and recommendations need to be revised, made more specific and put in a Table.

### **5.3. Art. 29 - Disease control measures category A diseases AHL (EFSA-Q-2020-00193-00198) – Highly pathogenic Avian Influenza**

This draft opinion was thoroughly discussed with the Panel members, in particular, section 4.2. The abstract and summary had new parts which were presented to the AHAW Panel. Panel Members agreed on the new sections.

Table on conclusions and recommendations: the sampling procedure should be left in the tables. The AHAW Panel adopted the Opinion unanimously.

## **6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion (pre-adoption)**

### **6.1. Art. 29 –Request for scientific opinion on African swine fever: Exit Strategy (EFSA-Q-2020-00423-424)**

This draft opinion was discussed with the Panel members, main points below:

- The model used for designing the Exit strategy was presented and examples with fade out and non-fade out were shown. Persistence of viruses was assessed by using the current literature and was presented during the meeting.
- Prevalence and population profiles (virology, serology and carcasses) were used to propose an exit strategy.
- Performance of different exit strategies has been evaluated.
- Ecological and demographic factors (no evidence of a population threshold for spontaneous ASF fade out);
- Carrier animals is still controversial, there is little evidence that carrier animals play a role.
- Duration of immunity in animals surviving with ASF is still a knowledge gap;
- re-infection cannot be excluded.
- Screening phase (search for virus with low effort): 12 month with detection you go to confirmation phase.
- With 2 years of waiting time you have less than 1% chance of making a false decision on exit.
- Uncertainty: case fatality, acquired immunity

This SOs is planned for in depth discussion next Panel meeting on 18 Dec.



## **6.2. Art. 29 - Disease control measures category A diseases AHL (EFSA-Q-2020-00193-00198) – African Swine Fever**

Comments and feedback were incorporated. Main discussion points:

- A comment was discussed on the transmission within and between pens;
- The different modelling scenarios presented in Table 1 should be better explained, indicating clearly the parameters used for each of the scenarios. Five scenarios were presented in this table with data originating from different outbreaks (Malta, the Netherlands and 3 from Georgia 2007).
- Possible parameterisation of the kernels from the current outbreaks was discussed;
- We cannot use the ADNS data for these outbreaks because in the current scenario in the EU, disease dynamics are driven by wild boar, and outbreaks in domestic pigs mainly caused by spill over from wild boar. The model used in other SO within EFSA is also focusing on disease spread within wild boar. However, for this ToR we need a kernel that describes spread between domestic pigs, because the legislation in place for PZ and SZ is only for domestic pigs. Therefore, it needs to be explained in the SO that the parameters for CSF spread between domestic pigs are used.

SO should be ready by 10th December at the latest, to be sent for adoption to EC and Panel meeting of 18th December 2020

Also LSD possible adoption in Dec, FMD for discussion.

## **6.3. Art. 29 - Request for scientific opinion on welfare: transport of animals (EFSA-Q-2020-00481 & EFSA-Q-2020-00482) ;**

**Art. 29 - Request for scientific opinion on welfare: protection of laying hens (EFSA-Q-2020-00483);**

**Art. 29 - Request for scientific opinion on welfare: protection of calves (EFSA-Q-2020-00480);**

**Art. 29 - Request for scientific opinion on welfare: protection of broilers (EFSA-Q-2020-00479);**

**Art. 29 - Request for scientific opinion on welfare: protection of pigs (EFSA-Q-2020-00484)**

An update was given on the mandates related to Welfare Farm to fork (F2F) on protection of animals. Denise Candiani presented the WG Chairs and WG composition for each mandate, highlighting common ToRs, also updating on milestones and first achievements.

Main discussion points:

- approach for dealing with uncertainties related to the common ToRs: this will be based on a ranking exercise with an aim to identify the most relevant welfare consequences in each



husbandry systems per each animal category. A maximum of five welfare consequences will be identified per each husbandry system out of a total of 25 welfare consequences that were listed by the Welfare Task Force. The rank will be used to exclude the other 15 welfare consequences, not to rank the included ones.

- the related uncertainty will be analysed by assessing the probability that other welfare consequences are ranked in the list of the first five. The question for uncertainty analysis is under discussion (e.g. what is the probability that welfare consequence ranked at 6<sup>o</sup> place is similar to the previous five? Where are the break points?). The full approach and question will be developed in the coming month.
- A public consultation of the 6 scientific opinions is planned for spring 2021 in order to allow stakeholders and third parties to comment on the draft documents. By that time, the opinions will include the description of the husbandry systems and animal categories under assessment. When possible, the five welfare consequences identified per each husbandry systems will also be listed and subjected to consultation.

#### **6.4. Art. 31 Avian influenza: update on the situation in the EU**

Francesca Baldinelli updated on the current avian influenza situation in Europe, presented the scientific report published on 20 November and the ongoing work on the scientific report that will be published by mid of December.

## **7. New Mandates**

No new mandates.

## **8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission-Activities from other Panels**

### **8.1. Cross-cutting issues for AHAW**

The Chair informed the Panel about cross cutting issues and asked for input to a discussion with the Scientific Committee on these..

## **9. Any other business & wrap up**

### **9.1. COVID-19 in animals & Rapid Risk Assessment**

Joint ECDC-EFSA Rapid risk assessment on SARS-CoV-2 variant in mink was presented by Alessandro Broglia.

Comments by the Panel:

- To consider animal welfare guidelines for culling high number of animals
- Need for contingency planning when culling, to avoid environmental contamination



- Serology can be a possible surveillance tool due to high seroprevalence and little clinical signs in mink

## **9.2. Story maps characterisation of animal diseases: new FWC in place**

Sofie Dhollander presented the partners delivering the story maps on vector borne diseases under the new FWC.

## **9.3. Wrap up and next meeting**

A short wrap up was provided highlighting the agreed action points.

The next Plenary meeting will take place via WEB on 18 December 2020 (one full day).