

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE UNIT

MINUTES OF THE 46th PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL ON ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

1-2 December 2009, Parma

PARTICIPANTS

Anette Bøtner, Don Broom, Mariano Domingo, Jörg Hartung, Linda Keeling, Frank Koenen, Simon More, David Morton, Fulvio Salati, Moez Sanaa, James Michael Sharp, Jan Arend Stegeman, Endre Szücs, Hans-Hermann Thulke, Philippe Vannier, John Webster.

OBSERVERS

none

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Xavier Pavard (DG SANCO)

EFSA AHAW UNIT

E. Franchi, R. Carfagnini, E. Krzeminska (administrative staff), A. Afonso, S. Correia, D. Candiani, I. Alpigiani, S. Dhollander, M. Georgiev, T. Grudnik, P. Have, O. Ribó, J. Tarres, F. Berthe, D. Quilichini (scientific coordination).

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman welcomed the Panel Members to this meeting and also welcomed the attendance of Diana Quilichini, who has joined the AHAW team as a trainee for a period of 5 months.

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Declarations of Interests (DoI), EFSA screened the Specific Declaration of Interest (SDoI) provided by the Panel Members 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 beginning of this meeting. No further declaration of interest.

Apologies were received from the following panel Members: Albert Osterhaus, Pascal Oltenacu, Mo Salman, Martin Wierup, Marcus G. Doherr. Apologies were also received from Laurence Bonafos (SANCO).

The Chairman informed the Panel that he had attended a symposium in Cambridge, UK, given in honour of the merits of Prof. Don Broom, who recently retired from the University of Cambridge.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted and a point was added for comments on the Zoonoses report 2008.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

The minutes of the 45th Plenary meeting held in Parma on 28-29 October, 2009 were unanimously adopted by written procedure by Panel Members on 24 November, 2009 and published on the EFSA web (<http://www.efsa.europa.eu>).

4. NEW MANDATES

4.1. New mandates from the Commission

The Official from the Commission informed the Panel that a Commission request for a scientific opinion on the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus in animals has been sent to EFSA. Furthermore, a number of other questions were being finalised for submission to EFSA. For 2009 the planned questions are:

- Q fever
- Oyster mortality
- Broiler genetic resistance to stress and disease
- Harvesting of feathers from live geese (signed 2 December, deadline 15 Nov 2010)
- Update on opinions on welfare of main farm species during transport (excluding fish) covering previous SCAHAW and EFSA opinions (deadline December 2010).

For 2010 the following questions are currently being considered by SANCO:

- *Histomonas meleagridis*
- West Nile fever
- Transport of fish
- Welfare indicators of farmed species

A request has also been made to EFSA to present previous opinions on *Brucella suis* and classical swine fever (risk of virus in meat after vaccination) to SCofCAH.

After a short discussion of the impact of AHAW opinions, a reminder to request regular feed-back from SCANCO was presented. This remark was referring to a letter from R. Madelin to EFSA indicating the dedication of SANCO to provide such feed-back.

4.1.1. Welfare during transport

Concerning an update on welfare during transport it was questioned whether only a review of recent literature was needed or whether also implementation consequences of legislation should be considered. The Commission official indicated that the reply to the mandate should clearly indicate what can be done within the timeframe given and what might still need to be done in a longer perspective.

4.1.2. Pandemic (H1N1) influenza (M-2009-0310)

It was proposed to respond to the terms of reference (ToR) by preparing two different opinions: one dealing with monitoring for emergence of new viruses with pandemic potential

(ToR 1, 2 and 3) and another opinion dealing with the impact of the current pandemic on animal health (remaining ToR).

4.2. Self Mandates

As a consequence of the new requests for mandates presented by the Commission the planned self-mandates on African horse sickness (AHS) and Tuberculosis in wildlife will be put on hold until resources and work load allow to take them forward.

5. OPINIONS AND REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION/ ACCEPTANCE

5.1. Epizootic Haemorrhagic disease (EFSA-Q-2009-503)

The Chairman of the WG introduced and presented the draft opinion to the Panel for discussion. Replies to the comments received were discussed. The risk assessment model and risk estimates were described and chapters 5 and 6 were slightly modified. Proposed conclusions and recommendations were presented and discussed. The Panel adopted the opinion by unanimity.

5.2. Good Practice in Conducting Scientific Assessments in animal health using modelling (EFSA-Q-2009-408)

The Chairman of the WG introduced and presented the draft guidance to the Panel for discussion. The procedure for the proper integration of models of scientific assessments on animal health issues was explained. Replies to the question concerning terminology and model types were given. Proposed conclusions and recommendations were presented, discussed and agreed. The analysis of modelling usage in previous opinions on animal health has been outsourced as a procurement and will be annexed to the opinion as soon finalised. The Panel adopted the opinion by unanimity.

6. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION OF CURRENT MANDATES

6.1. African swine fever (EFSA-Q-2009-506)

The status of the report was briefed. The 6th working group meeting was held on 3-4 December in Parma and a Russian hearing expert was invited to the meeting. The 7th working group meeting will be on 12-13 January, 2010 in Brussels, and the transversal meeting will be on 3 February, 2010 in Brussels.

6.2. Tick-Vectors of African swine fever and Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (M-2009-124)

The current state of the opinion on tick vectors was presented by the Chairman. The 3rd WG meeting was held one day before the Panel meeting. Three new WG members were present. The structure and the geographical scope of the report were discussed, as well as the strategic approach to address the mandate. Tasks were assigned. The WG has recognised the need for additional expertise.

6.3. Self-mandate on “Development of Animal Welfare Risk Assessment Guidelines” (EFSA-Q-2007-168)

Following the agreement from the October Plenary, a WG meeting was held on 16 November, 2009 in Brussels to review and amend the ToRs of the self-mandate of September 2007. The amended ToRs were submitted to the Panel and were discussed and accepted during the Plenary. The next WG meeting was held on the 3 December, 2009 in Parma.

6.4. Mandate on the impact of the genetic selection of broilers (M-2009-0087)

The requested tasks for this mandate (M-2009-0087) are to: 1) collect, assess and collate all data available (published and unpublished) on genetics/welfare of broilers (deadline: February 2010); and 2) to produce two Scientific Opinions on i) the impact of the selection of broiler breeder birds, and ii) on housing and management of the grand-parent and parent stocks raised and kept for breeding purposes (deadline: June 2010). Two Working Groups have been established and already held 3 meetings (June, September and November). During the last meeting, three experts from the industry participated for a technical hearing. A public call for data was used to collect relevant information. An Art.36 grant (TOGA project) is currently preparing a systematic review for the working groups. TOGA also assists in the development of a broiler welfare ontology. Deadline for the delivery of grant outcomes is end of January 2010. Next WG meetings are planned on 10 December (web-meeting, Ontology), 25 January, 2010 (web-meeting, Risk Assessment), and 10-12 February, 2010. The public consultation undertaken in September 2009 (Technical Meeting with stakeholders) will have its second phase in March 2010 (Web-consultation). Stakeholders have requested feedback on the Technical Meeting during the stakeholder platform plenary meeting, 2 December.

7. OTHER ISSUES

7.1. Comments on the draft Community Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in EU in 2008.

The AHAW Panel has been invited by the Zoonoses Unit to provide comments on the draft Community Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in EU. This draft 2008 report contains information on 15 zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks for the year 2008.

The following diseases have been considered and responded to in detail: tuberculosis due to *Mycobacterium bovis* (S. More), *Brucella* (M. Salman), rabies (H. Thulke), *Trichinella*, *Echinococcus*, *Toxoplasma* and *Cysticerci* (M. Domingo) and Q-Fever (J. A. Stegeman). Comments have been forwarded to the Zoonoses Unit.

F. Boelaert introduced the Zoonoses report 2008. The data quality has improved from 2008 onwards and is published in two Community Summary Reports: the first covering the reported information on zoonoses, zoonotic agents and food-borne outbreaks, the second, the data reported on antimicrobial resistance. The Panel members briefly presented their comments on the current draft. A discussion on data collection and reporting followed.

7.2. Guidance on scientific requirements for the risk assessment of genetically modified animals and derived food and feed.

A draft guidance on scientific requirements for the risk assessment of genetically modified (GM) animals has been received from the GMO Unit for comments on any relevant animal health specific elements. Moreover, a member of the GMO Panel and Unit joined the Plenary meeting and gave a short presentation on the background of the guidance on food and feed safety aspects of GM animals. Responding to the request from the GMO panel J. Webster presented comments by him and other Panel members (D. Morton, D. Broom, P. Oltenacu, J. Hartung and P. Vannier) on points related to animal health and welfare. These comments should be seen as individual responses from Panel members and not a consolidated response by the AHAW panel, due to the short time given. However, it was agreed that for the food and feed derived from genetically modified animals it is also necessary to identify hazards induced by the genetic modification which may be capable to cause adverse health and welfare effects to the animals themselves.

7.3. Any other business

Following a request of SANCO to MS to provide comments on proposed changes to the OIE terrestrial animal health code, it was suggested to draw the attention of OIE to the EFSA opinion on tuberculosis in deer. This opinion recommends an output-based rather than an input-based approach when certifying disease freedom. The Code chapter on bovine tuberculosis of farmed cervidae currently applies the input-based approach.

A draft letter that could be sent from EFSA to OIE was drafted by a Panel member and presented to the Panel. The format was agreed and it will be forwarded to the Secretariat for further action.