



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Health and Food Safety Directorate General

sante.g.3(2024)9294735

Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed
Section *Animal Health and Welfare*
24-25 October 2024

CIRCABC Link: <https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/55b2edd3-069e-40fd-ad4a-8b163f54ff1f/library/d36ff9ae-0fd1-41e0-8ee0-8fec085e3c37>

SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 General information by Member States.

No item raised.

A.02 Presentation of the EFSA opinion on "Welfare of sheep and goats during killing for purposes other than slaughter".

Point postponed.

A.03 Presentation from EFSA on the scientific reports regarding overview of the avian influenza epidemiological situation in March - September 2024 and on other activities for avian influenza.

Point postponed.

A.04 Information from Member States on highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Hungary, Italy, France, Austria, Czechia, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Croatia and Bulgaria, where HPAI virus was recently detected in kept birds, presented the epidemiological situation and measures taken. The Commission highlighted the increased number of Member States recently affected by outbreaks in poultry in parallel with an increase of virus detections in migratory wild waterfowl. In addition, the Commission stressed the importance of an appropriate surveillance system to early detect the HPAI virus in wild birds, including the active surveillance component on priority and high-risk areas, aiming to an early awareness on the risk for poultry and better preparedness to mitigate that risk.

France presented data on the official plan for preventive vaccination against HPAI in ducks, that is implemented since 1 October 2023 and will continue until end of September 2025.

A.05 Information from Member States on Newcastle disease.

Sweden and Poland presented details on the epidemiological situation and the measures taken to control and eradicate the outbreaks of Newcastle disease, recently confirmed

in those Member States. The Commission called for reflection on the use of the available appropriate preventive measures, to avoid outbreaks in poultry.

A.06 Report on the EUVET mission to Bulgaria on highly pathogenic avian influenza.

An EUVET mission took place in Bulgaria on 10-12 September 2024 in response to the HPAI epidemiological situation in Bulgaria linked with demand for assistance on the most suitable preventive and control measures for HPAI especially in the context of controlling HPAI through the implementation of preventive vaccination in poultry.

At the time of the mission, a total of 26 outbreaks of HPAI have been confirmed in Bulgaria in poultry establishments during the epidemic season 2023-2024, and only one outbreak in wild birds during the same period. Recommendations were made on improving the surveillance in wild birds and poultry, on strengthening awareness, preparedness and training of veterinarians and poultry farmers on biosecurity. In relation to a possible vaccination plan, recommendations ask for improving the content in accordance with requirements of relevant EU legislation and to seek agreement of all the stakeholders of the poultry industry before starting the implementation of such a plan.

A.07 Information from Member States on African swine fever.

Poland, Italy, Greece, Slovakia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, and Hungary updated the Commission and Member States on the African Swine Fever (ASF) situation in their territory. Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland also presented improved situation in certain areas of their territories.

A.08 State of play of the situation on bluetongue measures

Followed by the presentation from the EURL (point AHW.A.10), Member States raised several issues related to movements within the Union of animals vaccinated against BTV-3. Some Member States expressed concerns by the use of the new BTV-3 vaccines as a risk mitigating measure to allow safe movement of animals to other Member States. The reason is that, as the duration of immunity period may be not well defined yet, the certifying officer may not always ensure that the animals are within the immunity period. Other Member States supported the possibility to use the vaccines and be able to certify. The Commission welcomed the inputs, repeatedly clarified the legal framework and emphasised the responsibility of the certifying competent authority in all the above. Overall, the Commission suggested flexibility and to make use of lessons learnt from the past.

A.09 Outcome of the budget reallocation exercise for veterinary programmes for the year 2024.

HaDEA presented the outcome of the evaluation and proposed budget reallocation for the veterinary programmes for the year 2024. All proposals were accepted. The budget leftover will be sent back to DG SANTE. The grant amendments will be initiated by HaDEA, and the country representative will countersign in EGRANT once ready (expected date: end of November 2024).

A.10 Report from the EURL for bluetongue on vaccination against BTV-3.

EURL presented the challenges that Member States performing vaccination campaigns against BTV-3 are facing, in particular related to the circulating virus.

A.11 State of play of the situation on EHD measures.

The Commission explained how the new EU rules related to EHD conditions for animals subject to movements within the Union will be implemented in the relevant animal health certificates and the timelines for adoption, publication and entry into the force of the new rules and availability of new certificates in TRACES for full implementation. The Commission proposed pragmatic and timely arrangements enabling the smooth and early implementation of the two risk mitigating measures provided by the new EU rules, mainly vaccination.

A.12 Information from Member States on peste des petits ruminants.

Greece provided an update of the epidemiological situation of peste des petits ruminants in their territory. Since the last PAFF meeting the epidemiological evolution is favourable, with only a small number of new outbreaks occurring in certain areas.

Romania also provided an update of the epidemiological situation of peste des petits ruminants in their territory. Since the last PAFF meeting the epidemiological evolution remains favourable, with no new outbreaks reported since 4/9. However, there still remains one outbreak in Western Romania where control measures were not yet finalised, therefore the relevant zoning is extended.

A.13 Information from Member States on sheep pox and goat pox.

Bulgaria provided an update on the recently confirmed outbreaks of sheep pox and goat pox (SPGP) in the country, highlighting the extensive control measures and targeted surveillance efforts implemented to contain and control the disease. In response to the outbreaks of SPGP in the country, the Commission presented a draft Commission Implementing Decision concerning certain emergency interim measures relating to sheep and goat pox in Bulgaria (Draft presented for vote under AHW B.01).

Greece provided an update of the epidemiological situation of sheep and goat pox in their territory. Since the last PAFF meeting the disease has spread further to the west as well as to the south. In view of the epidemiological situation a national ban of movements of sheep and goats is in place for the next 10 days, while a suspension of movements of small ruminants outside the country until the end of November 2024 is foreseen in the next amendment of Commission Implementing Decision 2024/2207 (Draft presented for vote under point AHW B.07).

B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the evolution of animal diseases in the Union.

Commission Implementing Decision concerning certain interim emergency measures relating to sheep pox and goat pox in Bulgaria (PLAN/08SPGP/2024).

In line with Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011, Commission Implementing Decision concerning certain interim emergency measures relating to sheep pox and goat pox in Bulgaria, was presented for an opinion (measures relating to the outbreaks of sheep pox and goat pox in the regions of Stara Zagora and Haskovo).

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

Commission Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2119 concerning certain emergency measures relating to infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in Romania (PLAN/14PPR/2024).

The Commission presented a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending the Annex to Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2119 following information received from the Romanian authorities regarding the epidemiological situation and control measures implemented for peste des petits ruminants.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2447 concerning emergency measures in relation to outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States.

The EU regionalization highly pathogenic avian influenza needed to be updated to take into account the restricted zones established by certain Member States due to new outbreaks in kept birds.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.03 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Annexes I and II to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 laying down special control measures for African swine fever.

The Commission presented to the Committee the draft of the Implementing Regulation, amending Annex I, following the changes of the ASF epidemiological situation in Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia. Italy and Latvia established new restricted zone III following the confirmation of outbreaks in domestic pigs. Poland and Slovakia established new restricted zones II following the confirmation of outbreaks in wild boars. In addition, based on the information and justification provided by Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, certain restricted zones III were reverted in restricted zones II.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.04 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/110 by prolonging the period of application of emergency measures regarding confirmed cases of infestation with the small hive beetle in France and Italy.

The Commission briefly explained that the point had to be postponed due to new epidemiological developments in Italy, which are still being investigated and indicated its intention to come back to the topic later.

Vote Postponed

B.05 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on Annex IV to the draft Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the Programme for the internal market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, the area of plants, animals, food and feed, and European Statistics and the adoption of the work programme for 2025-2027.

The Commission presented the annex to a draft indicating upcoming grants, procurements, indirect management agreements and other actions. Some Member States raised issue of not sufficient co-financing rates, especially for animal diseases and plant pests emergency measures.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.06 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2132 concerning certain emergency measures relating to infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in Greece.

The Commission presented a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending the Annex to Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2132 in view of the epidemiological situation of peste des petits ruminants following information received from the Greek authorities regarding the epidemiological situation of and control measures implemented for peste des petits ruminants.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.07 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2207 concerning certain emergency measures relating to sheep pox and goat pox in Greece.

The Commission presented a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/2207. Amendments include the adjustment of the size and location of the restricted zones in the Annex, considering new disease outbreaks, as well as the prohibition of movements of sheep and goats outside the entire territory of Greece, until 30 November (see also point AHW A.13).

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

M.01 Animals stuck at the border between Bulgaria and Türkiye originating from Romania (at the request of Romania).

Romania reported on a consignment of live bovine from Constanta County, stuck at the border Bulgaria-Türkiye due to animal disease restrictions, seeking a resolution. The Commission stressed that the legislation is clear and that these issues require urgent attention and prompt actions, in strict compliance with animal health and welfare rules.

Germany shared its recent experience with a similar case and underlined the needs for preventive efforts. Bulgaria stressed that these cases are very difficult to manage and urged Member States to be particularly vigilant in the pre-export certification process to ensure compliance with bilaterally agreed animal health conditions.