

KEY MESSAGES FROM THE EVALUATION

The following key points have emerged from this evaluation:

1. Over the time period reviewed by this evaluation (1995-2004), the Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP) has become increasingly successful in terms of achieving the outcomes it is seeking to pursue. Although policy improvements were mainly stimulated by the need to respond to some major crises that occurred in the Community during this period, the results can be considered to have been positive. Thus, for example, there has been a considerable reduction over time in the prevalence of a significant number of animal diseases and a considerably better structured response to crises. Following the CSF, FMD and AI crises all relevant "vertical" legislation on the control of these diseases was revised and updated, taking into account the lessons learnt, including those on vaccination and contingency planning. It is also an achievement that over time the Commission's role in respect of the policy has come to be increasingly widely accepted both within the EU and internationally.
2. This having been said, until now the policy has consisted of a series of interrelated policy actions/actors at institutional and civil society level operating under a large umbrella of legislation and formal/informal networks but without a definition of strategy for the whole and limited assessment of the success of actions taken in terms of review and feedback on performance. The evaluation has demonstrated the need to develop a clear and transparent strategy accompanied by a communication strategy which improves stakeholder engagement and involvement in decision-making. In addition, future actions need to be informed by a review of the achievement of outcomes in relation to past actions.
3. The evaluation has highlighted the many linkages inherent in the policy e.g. between what happens in third countries, what happens at EU borders and what actions are taken to secure animal health status within the EU. In future better consistency between actions to improve animal health and welfare in the EU and international competitiveness could be achieved by pursuing simplified rules and better regulation and carrying out impact assessments before introducing new legislation.
4. Subsidiarity aspects have been a key theme underlying the various policy areas covered by this evaluation. With principles and rules laid down at EU level but implemented by Member States, enforcement issues have often been identified as a key parameter in allowing flexibility at MS/regional/local level while the Commission's role is crucial in guaranteeing that a common approach and standards apply across the Community.
5. In terms of strategic focus, while it is clear that crises will always recur, the evaluation has highlighted the need to move towards a policy which is more focused on effective risk management/disease prevention. This can be achieved via better risk based targeting of funding (using cost effectiveness and cost benefit analysis), measures and incentives at all levels as well as early detection of exotic and new/emerging disease threats. This involves better prioritisation of actions relating to disease eradication and surveillance, research and development, controls on illegal entry of potentially risk carrying materials but also

more generally creating a stronger culture of bio-security at all levels.

6. Following analysis undertaken in particular under Part II of this evaluation, a key component in the creation of such a culture of bio-security would be the introduction of a harmonised framework for cost and responsibility sharing. This could be structured so as to allow implementation in line with subsidiarity at Member State and regional level. A key component of such a cost and responsibility sharing framework as well as the idea of better overall prioritisation of actions would be the introduction of a disease classification system. This would allow greater focus on those diseases which can be considered to have high 'EU relevance' in terms of the need for coordinated action at EU level due to their potential impact on human health and potential supra-national/supra-regional economic impact.
7. More specific actions which could be considered for the future would include:
 - Further alignment of EU rules more closely with OIE guidelines and standards;
 - A gradual move towards integrated electronic identification and certification procedures for intra-Community trade;
 - The streamlining of texts going through the Standing Committee procedures;
 - Providing specific support for bio-security measures at farm level via existing funds;
 - Providing specific support to third countries to assist them in upgrading their animal health status to meet EU and international (OIE) requirements;
 - Negotiating export conditions at Community level;
 - Targeting illegal (commercial) imports/fraud.

A preliminary assessment of the advantages/disadvantages, feasibility, stakeholder acceptance and needs for further assessment has also been undertaken for each of these actions.