

**Minutes of the meeting of the Expert group  
to discuss the exercise of the listing of animal diseases relevant for Union  
intervention according to the Animal Health Law**

**17 November 2017, Brussels**

**1. Approval of the agenda**

A preliminary agenda was circulated prior to the meeting and agreed at the beginning.

**2. Nature of the meeting**

The meeting was non-public. The Member States' and EEA countries representatives from the competent veterinary authorities were participating in the meeting. The Chair noted the absence of the European Council and the European Parliament.

**3. List of points discussed**

**1. Introduction**

The Commission explained the general context of the exercise of listing animal diseases for EU intervention and its relation to the preparation of the delegated act as laid down in Regulation (EU) 2016/429<sup>1</sup> on transmissible animal diseases (AHL), amending Annex II of that regulation. The Commission insisted that no detailed discussion on specific diseases was expected for this first meeting as the approach was to explain in detail the general exercise. Further meetings (24 November, 18-19 December, third week of January) are scheduled to discuss the diseases outcome (for practical purposes, grouping diseases by species).

**2. Presentation on the listing exercise of animal diseases according to the AHL criteria**

The Commission representative delivered a presentation on the general process of listing diseases according to the AHL highlighting that:

- The AHL is the legal framework which lays down rules for the prevention and control of animal diseases which are transmissible to animals or humans. These rules envisage that disease specific rules for the prevention and control of diseases should only apply to certain animal diseases, which are listed in a single harmonised list of transmissible animal diseases which pose a risk to animal or public health in the Union ("listed diseases"). This list comprises of five diseases set out in Article 5(1) of this Regulation and diseases set out in Annex II.
- The list of diseases in Annex II was agreed with the European Parliament and the Council on condition to be reviewed by the Commission. This list was taken by mutual agreement from the Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 for the management of expenditure for animal health and considered as a starting point with the view to be revised since it was not extensive, accurate and up-to-date.
- The revision of this Annex II has been carried out on the basis of an assessment following the set of criteria pre-determined in Article 7 of the basic regulation. The criteria laid down in article 5(3) of the AHL were used to consider a disease eligible to be listed.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law') (OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1)

- To run out this exercise almost 90 diseases were identified as potentially relevant for Union intervention.
- To note that as agreed with CVO's in October 2016, the zoonotic diseases of Annex II of the AHL for which specific EU rules apply (e.g. Directive 2003/99/EC) have been excluded from this exercise to avoid duplication of rules; non-priority diseases (smaller impact on animal and human health or trade implications) have been set aside for a further assessment at a later stage, if needed. To enhance consistency and the use of common language the diseases have been aligned to OIE nomenclature.
- Due to the complexity of the exercise and in order to compile all the information requested on the assessment parameters (art. 7 of AHL), several sources of information have been considered, from recent published EFSA scientific opinions, OIE Manual and OIE Code, and/or expertise from the European Reference Laboratories. Additionally, for 29 diseases new EFSA opinions were requested (to the date all published)
- The Commission presented the result of the exercise and stressed the importance of having feedback and inputs from the Member States to see how best to accommodate, highlighting again that the outcome will amend the Annex II of the AHL by a delegated act.

### **3. Exchange of views with Member States**

The Commission received a positive feedback on the decisions taken to channel the listing of animal diseases process.

On the process, several experts from Member States asked to align bovine tuberculosis with the OIE (as presented for Infection with *Brucella abortus*, *mellitensis* and *suis*) extending the scope of the disease to Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex. The Commission clarified that only for the purpose of structuring the discussions the disease had been placed under the presentation of cattle diseases.

The Commission proposal to exclude Enzootic bovine leukosis and Infestation with *Varroa* spp from the list of animal diseases relevant for Union intervention was questioned by several experts from Member States as well as the eligibility to list Infection with *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (Bsal). The exclusion of serotype 16 of the bluetongue virus was also contested from several delegations. On paratuberculosis views from the delegations were diverged, a few of them reasoned against its listing, while some others either welcomed it, or at least supported its listing. The Commission representative insisted on the need to comply with the criteria as laid down in the AHL leaving the door open for revision of the compliance with the criteria if consensus is reached.

Some experts from Member States had doubts on how the different control measures applicable to Infection with *Brucella abortus*, *mellitensis* and *suis* will be conducted, in particular for pigs. The possibility to categorise the disease depending on the susceptible species was mentioned by one delegation.

Several experts from Member States requested information on the future financial implications of this exercise, related to both, DG SANTE and AGRI financial mechanisms. The Commission insisted that the process of listing animal diseases according to the AHL should be considered as a completely independent process from the revision of the new budgetary horizon that goes far beyond the scope of this expert group meeting.

### **4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions and next steps**

The Commission obtained a favourable feedback from the exercise presented, summoned to the next meeting specific questions on the criteria met (or not) for each disease and its' overall outcome.

### **6. Next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on 24 November 2017.