



# Mission of the European Union Veterinary Emergency Team (EUVET) to Romania

(2-4 July 2018)

# Objective

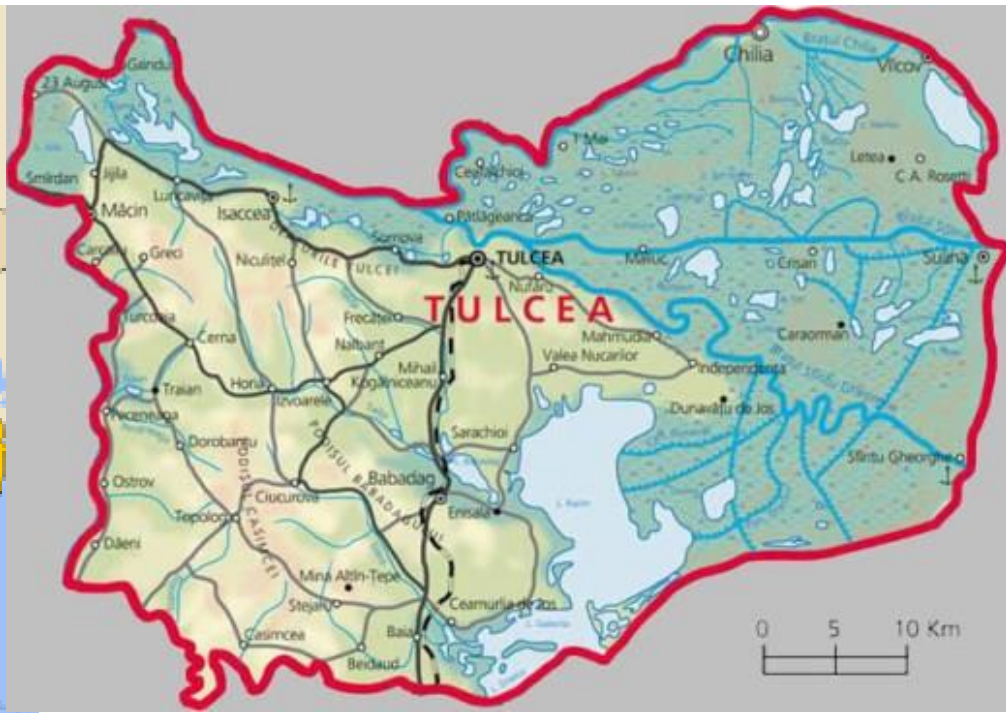
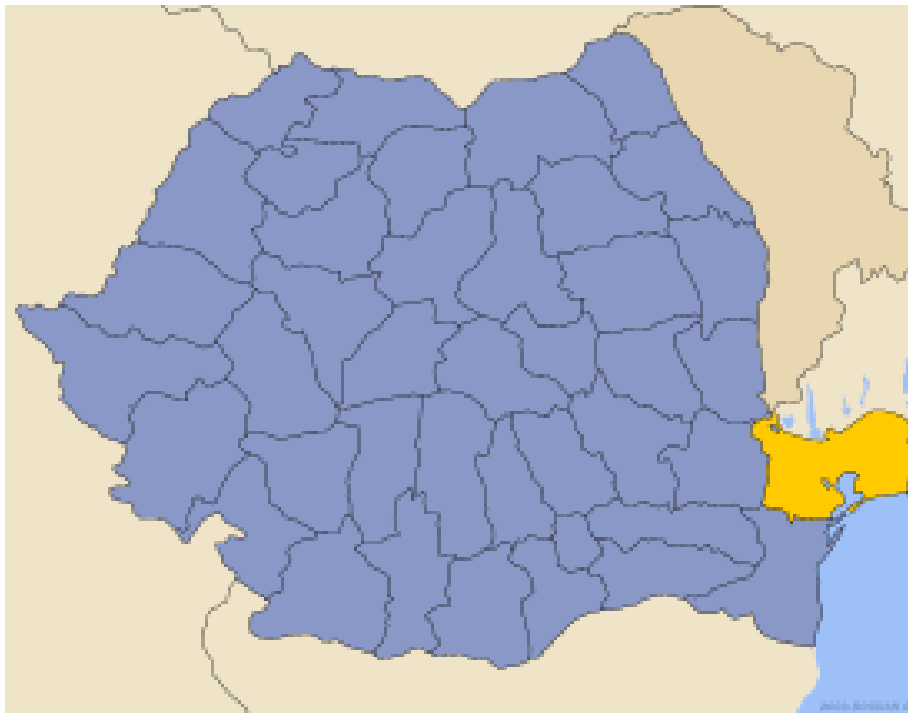
- **Reason of the mission:** occurrence of numerous ASF outbreaks including commercial pig holding with 43,8 thousand pigs in the Tulcea county.
- **ToR: provide assistance** to the scientific, technical, managerial and practical on-the-spot assistance on the refinement of the most suitable control and eradication measures for African Swine Fever (ASF) under local conditions, especially as regards epidemiological investigations, registration of holdings and management of the restricted areas.
- **Expert:** Marius Masiulis (LT), Alberto Laddomada (IT)

# Background

## Epidemiological evaluation:

- ASF was first detected in Romania, as from 31 July 2017, in the county of Satu Mare at the border with Hungary and Ukraine, where 2 ASF outbreaks in non-professional holdings were confirmed, with no cases in wild boars.
- In 2018, 4 outbreaks in non-professional holdings and 4 ASF cases in wild boar were reported in Satu Mare; however, in recent weeks the situation appears stable.
- From **10 to 30 June 2018**, more than 140 outbreaks of ASF were reported by Romania in the county of Tulcea, at the border with Ukraine, in the south eastern part of Romania.
- Due to the incursion and spread of ASF, the Annex to Decision 709/2014/EU was amended two times by the European Commission to include, initially, only one part of the territory of Tulcea in part III of the Annex; and then the entire territory of this county.

# Tulcea County



# Census of pigs in 2018 in Tulcea County

Non-professional holdings (for personal consumption, not permitted to trade)*		Commercial holdings		Type A holdings (permitted to place the meat on the local market only)	
No. holdings	No. Swine	No. holdings	No. Swine	No. holdings	No. Swine
3 487	24 003	5	69 500	30	830

## *Wild boars:*

\* Existing rules do not establish a maximum number of pigs to be kept in these holdings.

No. hunting grounds	Estimated no. of wild boars
54	2 277

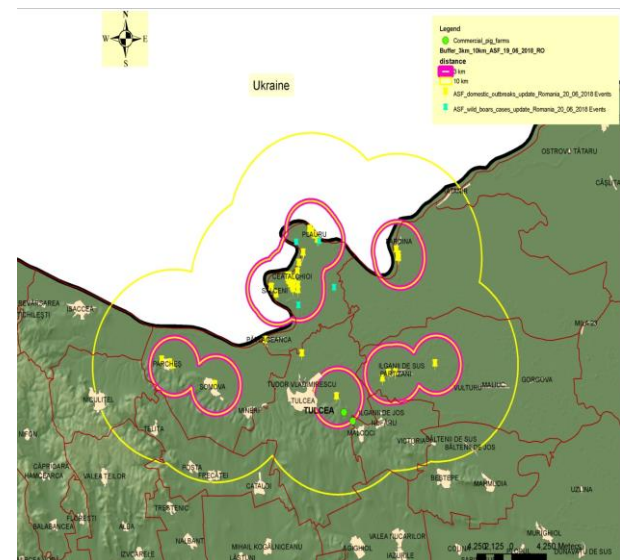
## Background

- Between 10 and 30 June 2018, around 140 ASF outbreaks had already been confirmed, all of them in non-professional holdings.
- During the first meeting of the on-the-spot visit on 2 July, the Romanian authorities informed that 57 additional suspected outbreaks were awaiting confirmation;
- By the end of the visit, as at 4 July in the morning, a total of more than 200 outbreaks were reported by Romania to ADNS, including one in a large commercial holding, and one in the Braila county, close to the border with Tulcea.

## Background

- On 11 June 2018, three dead wild boars were found in three different locations, in the hunting ground no. 39 Sireasa, in Danube Delta, all located in the surveillance zone established due to the ASF outbreaks in domestic pigs, which had been confirmed on 10 June.
- On 15 June another 2 dead wild boars were found in the same hunting ground.

In the Danube Delta Biosphere Reservation, hunting is forbidden by law!





# Surveillance

In the entire country of Romania:

**PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE** (until 31.05):

4658 in domestic pigs;

79 in wild boars.

**ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE** (until 31.05):

In 10 counties 2479 wild boars were sampled.





# Epidemiological hypotheses

The main epidemiological hypothesis of the ASFV introduction in to the Danube Delta Biosphere Reservation - **epidemic wave in wild boar from infected areas;**

The most probable time of ASFV introduction in to the Tulcea region was estimated around 20 April – 3 May 2018;

**However,** the **anthropogenic factor** is still considered as the main risk that may lead to a further spread of ASF.





# Surveillance

In the Tulcea County:

**PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE** (until 31.05):

639 in domestic pigs;

7 in wild boars (5 cases positive).

**ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE** (until 31.05):

129 wild boars were sampled.





European  
Commission

# Surveillance



# Surveillance



## Background

On 17 June an ASF outbreak was confirmed in a non-professional holding with 34 pigs (ADNS 2018/35), which is located approx. 400 m from two commercial farms (one with 43 800 pigs – where ASF was confirmed in the following days, the other with 2 500 fattening pigs) and a slaughterhouse with meat processing plant, that all together belong to the same company. In the slaughterhouse, only pigs coming from those two commercial farms are slaughtered.



## Background

- Outbreak in the commercial pig holding with 43,8 thousand of pigs was confirmed on 1 July 2018;
- The suspected case was detected in the slaughterhouse in one pig. Suspicion was based on the post-mortem lesions;
- In the infected farm samples were taken from 8 sick or dead pigs and ASF was confirmed on 7 pigs.
- The most probable time of ASFV introduction has been estimated to be around 24 May 2018. The way of ASFV introduction in the farm has not been clarified.





## Background

- Romanian authorities applied the measures laid down in article 14 of Directive 2002/60/EC, including tracing and processing of meat and meat products (approx. 565 tons of fresh, frozen meat and ready to use or semi-finished products) from the 7524 pigs slaughtered as from 24 May.
- The tracing of meat has also involved three other Member States, to which Romania provided the relevant information on 2 July that had received limited amount of suspected meat.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Romania has been facing an unprecedented epidemic of ASF in non-professional holdings in the county of Tulcea, where the presence of a very high number of non-professional holdings in a very special geographical context, that includes the Danube Delta, makes disease control very difficult.

Romanian authorities were able to swiftly deploy in the affected area a large number of staff from the whole country to deal with the numerous ASF outbreaks.

# ***Recommendations***

## **Domestic pigs**

- Culling of animals has been performed and procedures for the compensation for the owner are being adopted;
- Based on the current national legislation, it is not possible to compensate farmers that have had their animals culled because their holding was considered as suspected or in case of pre-emptive culling, unless the disease is finally confirmed in the holding in question;
- legal situation leads to the fact that laboratory confirmation of ASF is needed before pigs are culled;

# ***Recommendations***

## **Domestic pigs**

- possible delays in the culling operations and even more importantly, it makes it impossible the adoption of more rigorous control measures such as pre-emptive culling that are necessary to fight such a high number of outbreaks and to reduce the risk of further major outbreaks outside Tulcea, in case of further geographical spread of ASFV;
- It is thus recommended that national legislation is urgently revised in this regard.

# ***Recommendations***

## **Domestic pigs**

- Awareness campaign targeting the non-professional holdings, commercial farms and type A farms, including the veterinarians, visiting such a farms, should be enhanced;
- Passive surveillance should be maintained at the highest level in the entire county of Tulcea, and further enhanced in the whole country;
- Every single dead pig in the entire county of Tulcea and outside, in the entire country of Romania, should be tested for the presence of ASF for early detection of the disease.

# ***Recommendations***

## **Domestic pigs**

- “Backyard” or “non-professional holdings” definitions and minimum biosecurity rules applicable for thus holdings should be in line with Working Document SANTE/7113/2015 (Rev. 9) on African Swine Fever Strategy for the EU, in particular point 2.1.2. on Minimum biosecurity requirements;
- Inspection and investigation regime and recurrent awareness campaign should be strengthen;
- In case of non-compliance with the national biosecurity rule, the early slaughtering / depopulation of pigs can be considered as alternative, if compensation for the pigs would be granted and the pigs will be not kept appropriate time frame.

## ***Recommendations***

### **Wild boar management / hunting in Danube Delta Biosphere Reservation, Tulcea County**

- ✓ at present there is no evidence that the wild boar has played any role as amplifier of the ongoing ASF epidemic in non-professional holdings;
- ✓ It is strongly recommended not to take any actions to reduce wild boar density at the moment, but wait until the epidemiological situation becomes clearer;
- ✓ Possible actions to reduce the wild boar population must be properly studied and eventually included, if considered appropriate, in the eradication plan of Romania;
- ✓ In order to address the issue of ASF in the wild boar, it is recommended to fully involve experts in the design of an appropriate strategy.

# Thank you for your attention!

The EUVET team wish to thank all colleagues from Romania for their support and help given.

The working atmosphere during the mission was very good.

The colleagues from Romania gave all their support and assistance to facilitate a fruitful mission.