

Opinion of the
Scientific Steering Committee
on the
GEOGRAPHICAL RISK OF
BOVINE SPONGIFORM
ENCEPHALOPATHY (GBR) in

HUNGARY

Adopted on 30/03/2001

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THE QUESTION

The Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) was asked by the Commission to express its scientific opinion on the Geographical BSE-Risk (GBR), i.e. the likelihood of the presence of one or more cattle being infected with BSE, pre-clinically as well as clinically, at a given point in time, in a number of Third Countries.

This opinion addresses the GBR of Hungary.

THE BACKGROUND

In December 1997 the SSC expressed its first opinion on Specified Risk Materials where it stated, inter alia, that the list of SRM could probably be modulated in the light of the species, the age and the geographical origin of the animals in question.

In June 2000 the European Commission adopted a Decision on SRM (2000/418/EC), prohibiting the import of SRM from all Third Countries that have not been "satisfactorily" assessed with regard to their BSE-Risk.

In July 2000 the SSC adopted its final opinion on "the Geographical Risk of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (GBR)". This opinion described a method and a process for the assessment of the GBR and summarised the outcome of its application to 23 countries. Detailed reports on the GBR-assessments were published on the Internet for each of these countries.

In September 2000 the Commission invited 46 Third Countries, which are authorised to export products to the EU that are listed in annex II to the above mentioned SRM-Decision, to provide a dossier for the assessment of their GBR.

Until today 36 dossiers have been received, 6 are already assessed, and 30 are in different state of assessment.

This opinion concerns only one country, Hungary. The Commission requested this opinion as essential input into its Decision concerning the treatment of SRM that will be requested from Hungary. It is recommended that this opinion on Hungary is read in the light of the GBR of the SSC of July 2000.

The SSC is concerned that the available information was not confirmed by inspection missions as they are performed by the FVO in the Member States. It recommends that BSE-related aspects are included in the program of future inspection missions, as far as feasible.

THE ANALYSIS

Hungary was exposed to **high external challenge** from 1980-1993 and **very high** since 1994.

According to EUROSTAT data between 1980-1987, 1,088 animals were exported from UK (105), FR and DE to Hungary (no country dossier data available). Between 1988-1993, around 1,600 animals were exported from FR, NL and DE (EUROSTAT data). A further 7,600 cattle were exported mainly from DE, NL and DK during 1994-1999.

According to EUROSTAT, between 1980-1985 around 26,000 t of MBM were exported mainly from IT to Hungary. Between 1986-1990, around 1,900 t were exported from IT and DE to Hungary; between 1991-1993 1,300 t were exported mainly from IT and DE; and between 1994-1999 12,000 t were exported mainly from IT, DE, NL.

The BSE/cattle system of Hungary was **extremely unstable** from 1980-1981, **very unstable** from 1982-1990 and **unstable** since 1991.

Since 1990, there has been a ban on the feeding of RMBM and feed controls were carried out. Since 1997 the ban has been extended to mammalian MBM. Rendering of SRM and fallen stock is common. High risk materials are subject to 133°C / 20 min / 3 bars standard heat treatment. There are measures to avoid cross-contamination but their efficiency has only been documented since 1997. There was no SRM ban until March 2001. BSE is notifiable since 1996 and active surveillance began in 1997.

It is concluded that it is likely but not confirmed that one or several cattle that are (pre-clinically or clinically) infected with the BSE agent are currently present in the domestic herd of Hungary (**GBR III**).

Given the extremely unstable system and the fact that the BSE-agent is likely to be already present in the country due to live cattle and MBM imports, it is assumed that the GBR is increasing.

A summary of the reasons for the current assessment is given in annex 1 to this opinion.

A detailed report on the assessment of the GBR of Hungary is published separately on the Internet. It was produced by the GBR-task force of the SSC-secretariat and peer reviewed by the GBR-Peer group. The country had two opportunities to comment on different drafts of the report before the SSC took both, the report and the comments, into account for producing this opinion. The SSC appreciates the good co-operation of the country's authorities.

Hungary – Summary of the GBR-Assessment, March 2001							
	EXTERNAL CHALLENGE		STABILITY				INTERACTION of EXTERNAL CHALLENGE and STABILITY
	1980-93: HIGH; SINCE 1994: VERY HIGH.		1980-81: EXTREMELY UNSTABLE; 1982-1990: VERY UNSTABLE; SINCE 1991: UNSTABLE.				
GBR-Level	Live Cattle imports	MBM imports	Feeding	Rendering	SRM-removal	Surveillance, cross-contamination	
III	<p>UK : 105 before 1988 (EUROSTAT)</p> <p>Other BSE affected countries:</p> <p>Around 10,000 animals in total imported mainly from NL, DE, DK and FR (no country dossier data before 1987).</p>	<p>UK: negligible</p> <p>Other BSE affected countries:</p> <p>Around 40,000 t in total, mainly from IT, DE, NL (no country dossier data before 1987).</p>	<p>Not OK 1980-1990, Reasonably OK since 1991</p> <p>Since 1990 an RMBM ban. Since 1997 ban extended to mammalian MBM ban.</p> <p>Voluntary feeding unlikely before 1990. Feed controls in 1990 but analytical controls since 1997.</p>	<p>Not OK 1980-1981, Reasonably OK since 1982</p> <p>Rendering of SRM and fallen stock common.</p> <p>133°C/20 min / 3 bar applied to high-risk material. Low risk material processed for pet food only.</p> <p>No detailed information on controls.</p>	<p>Not OK</p> <p>No SRM ban, SRM rendered and included in cattle feed.</p> <p>SRM ban and fallen stock incineration in place on 31 March 2001.</p>	<p>BSE surveillance:</p> <p>Notification of BSE compulsory since 1996. Active surveillance started in 1997.</p> <p>Cross-contamination:</p> <p>Measures to prevent cross-contamination of cattle feed with MBM but efficiency only documented since 1997.</p>	<p>An extremely unstable system was exposed to a high (86-93) and a very high (since 94) external challenge mainly due to MBM imports from BSE affected countries. Domestic cattle could have been infected during early 80s or mid 90s and BSE infected cattle could have entered processing and then being recycled and amplified. Given the instability of the system this risk is likely to increase over time.</p> <p>Recently adopted measures will improve GBR over time, pending on results of controls.</p>
GBR-trend							INTERNAL CHALLENGE
↑							<p>Between 1980-1981 internal challenge unlikely but cannot be excluded. Since 1982 likely to be present and growing.</p>