



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

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**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANTS, ANIMALS, FOOD AND FEED
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 16 MAY 2017
(Section Animal Health & Welfare)**

CIRCABC Link: <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/d36ff9ae-0fd1-41e0-8ee0-8fec085e3c37>

A.01 General Information by Member States.

No item raised.

A.02 Information concerning a declaration from Austria on disease free status for infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) and viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) for the zone "Sägenbach".

The Commission informed about a declaration from Austria concerning disease-free status as regards IHN and VHS for a zone comprising the fish farm "Güfisch-Zucht", and the water catchment area of the river Sägenbach". This fish farm is producing rainbow trout and brook trout, char and mullets for further growth and for human consumption. The declaration is based on two years of targeted surveillance with reduced sample size following several years of active surveillance without any detection of the pathogens of concern.

A.03 Information concerning declarations from Slovenia on disease free status for infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) and viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) for three different compartments.

The Commission informed about three declarations from Slovenia on disease free status for IHN and VHS.

The first declaration was concerning the compartment "Reka", which consist of the fish farm Reka and parts of the water ways of the stream Sevnica. The farm produces different categories of rainbow trout for further growth, all based on live material originating from establishments already declared free of IHN and VHS.

The second declaration was concerning the compartment "Češnicja", which consist of a fish farm managed by the fishing family Zelezniki producing brown trout and rainbow trout for repopulation of open waters and for human consumption, and the

water catchment area of the stream Češnicja from its spring to a natural barrier downstream the water intake to the farm.

The third declaration was concerning the compartment “Soča”, which consists of a fish farm managed by the Fisheries Research Institute of Slovenia mainly rearing genetically pure breed Marble trout for repopulation of open waters, and the springs “Korenov izvir” and “Frاندololičev izvir”.

All the three declarations from Slovenia are based on two years of targeted surveillance with reduced sample size following several years of active surveillance without any detection of the pathogens of concern.

A.04 Information concerning a modified declaration from Slovenia on a surveillance programme for achieving disease free status for infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) and viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) for the compartment “Šumec”.

The Commission informed about a declaration from Slovenia for a modified surveillance programme for achieving disease free status with regard to IHN and VHS. This declaration was primarily presented to the Committee in May 2016, but significant comments to the supporting evidence were raised from the United Kingdom during the following 60 days period of Member States scrutiny. In the following arbitration process it was not possible to find an acceptable solution. In accordance with Article 50.2 (e) of Directive 2006/88/EC the Commission then decided to make an on-the-spot inspection to verify the compliance of the declaration with the criteria set out in the Directive. Based on the findings of the mission team, the Commission reached the following conclusion:

1. The declaration of a compartment comprising the Šumec hatchery and the waterways of the river Meža with its tributaries upstream the dam in Črna na Koroškem is not recommendable without establishing a buffer zone with the necessary health surveillance of the fish population downstream the dam.
2. A compartment comprising the Šumec hatchery and the waterways of the river Meža with its tributaries upstream the artificial barrier located close to the village Mežica, will, given that targeted surveillance in accordance with an approved surveillance programme demonstrates absence of the diseases of concern, comply with the requirements for a disease free compartment set out in Annex V of Directive 2006/88/EC, without the establishing of an additional buffer zone.

The modified declaration is submitted in accordance with this conclusion, and complies as such with the criteria for surveillance programmes for the purpose of achieving disease free status for IHN and VHS. The declaration shall consequently enter into force immediately after this meeting of the Committee.

Links to all the declarations presented under A.02, and A.03 and A.04 will be found on the SANTE WEB page under the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/aquaculture/declarations_en.htm

A.05 Results of the 2016 EU-funded rabies eradication programmes from Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Slovenia and Italy.

Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia presented the results of their 2016 rabies eradication programmes. A very favourable epidemiological trend was observed as cases were detected only in one Member State (Poland) with a dramatic decrease compared to the previous year: 92 cases in 2015 and 16 in 2016.

The most important setback was related to the partial implementation of the vaccination campaigns in third countries, particularly in Belarus.

The Hungarian, Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian programmes will be presented in the upcoming Committees.

A.06 Information from the Commission and Member States on highly pathogenic avian influenza.

The Commission informed on the improvement of the overall epidemiological situation. The United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, Slovakia and Sweden presented their national situation, data on the surveillance carried out and the measures in place for highly pathogenic avian influenza. The situation was reviewed by the Committee and the need for further discussion was noted.

A.07 Review of the African swine fever strategy for the eastern part of the EU.

Item was not raised.

A.08 Information on the epidemiological situation of bluetongue.

The Commission presented the situation of BT once the period of vector activity has started. The lack of action from MS on taking appropriate measures following the outbreaks occurred close to the French borders was highlighted as well as the need to revise the bilateral agreements in the light of the new scientific evidence provided by the EFSA.

A.09 EU Platform on Animal Welfare: state of play.

The Commission briefly presented the status quo of the platform, especially the selection process of members from business organisations, civil society as well as independent scientific experts and their nomination. It was given a short overview of the logistic of the inaugural Platform meeting on 6 June as well the content of the agenda. It was mentioned that the meeting is structured in three sessions in which the Commission priorities related to animal welfare will be discussed:

1. better application and understanding of EU legislation,
2. promotion of EU animal welfare standards globally and,
3. use of voluntary commitments and promotion of market value of animal welfare friendly products.

It was underlined that the outcome of the Platform will depend on the *commitment of its members*. It was also stressed that the Platform is not a forum to discuss new legislation. The date of the second meeting (10 November 2017) has been announced.

A.10 Exchange of views and best practices on the national legal requirements and measures that are taken by the competent authorities to prevent and control the population of unwanted equidae excluded from the food chain, and to ensure the protection of their welfare.

In preparation of this exchange of views the Commission requested Member States to prepare essential information on the magnitude of the problems arising from unwanted and end-of-life horses which are excluded from the food chain, on the legal provisions on killing of unwanted equidae, an estimate of the cost for keeping a horse, for putting it down and the disposal of the carcass, the legal possibility to slaughter horses for purposes other than human consumption and where possible an estimate of the prices paid for a slaughter horse for human consumption.

At the beginning of the constructive discussion many Member States thanked the Commission for having this item included in the agenda and showed their willingness to find a solution to the problems caused by unwanted horses which cannot be slaughtered for human consumption. The facts presented by Member States draw a diverse picture, largely determined by the degree of horse meat consumption and the slaughter of horses for human consumption, by the size of the horse population and its importance in national economy.

Two Member States, reporting of the existing problem of unwanted horses at their territories, based their intervention on the detailed written information submitted ahead of the meeting. One of those Member States reported that the situation has improved compared to the years 2008-2010 following the economic and financial crisis, the second one is of the opinion that the number of unwanted horses excluded from the food chain is rising beyond the capacities for shelter and adoption. Three other Member States also informed the Committee in great detail of the problems they face with this type of horses. This group of Member States were of the opinion that the 6 months withdrawal period applied to imports of horse meat from third countries had aggravated the internal discussions.

On the other hand, several Member States stated that unwanted horses did not constitute a problem in their countries, in some cases also because unwanted horses are sent to other Member States or non-EU countries.

While in a number of Member States the animal welfare legislation prohibits the killing of unwanted horses, unless there was a good reason to justify it, such as prevention of unnecessary pain or control of a transmissible disease. Several Member States informed that on their territory killing of a horse for economic reasons is not forbidden, provided it was carried out in accordance with the applicable animal welfare rules.

Some Member States reported that the percentage of horses excluded from the food chain has remained stable over many years at a rate of 40 to 60%.

A few Member States were not in a position to provide detailed information at this PAFF meeting but they were invited to submit written information to continue the discussion at next PAFF or in July based on a detailed questionnaire to be prepared by the Commission services.

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.

No item raised.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision C(2016) 4840 on the adoption of a financing decision regarding a financial contribution by the Union to emergency measures to combat certain animal diseases and plant pests in 2016 and 2017.

The text could not be voted as the 2018 draft budget of the Commission has not yet been adopted by the college. A written procedure will be followed for the adoption of this decision.

Vote postponed

M.01 Information from Italy on new small hive beetle outbreaks in Calabria.

Italy explained new occurrences of small hive beetle (SHB) in Calabria Region, which this year occurred earlier than in previous years and some of them are outside of the previous protection zone. Italy outlined its new measures, which include increasing the radius of the protection zone from 20 km to 30 km and the creation of a 5 km wide “attention zone” at the borders of Reggio di Calabria province. Epidemiological investigations are still ongoing and it remains to be seen if the 2 spreads outside can be quickly eradicated or not. The Commission asked for clarification on the role of the concerned beekeepers and asked Italy to keep due update of the situation, as further information becomes known. One Member State emphasized the importance of educating beekeepers in all respective Member States and on EU level on the dangers of purchasing bees illegally from restricted areas. The Commission strongly supported this.

M.02 Information on EURLs-Brexit.

The Commission informed Member States that, on 29/03/2017 the UK submitted the notification of its intention to withdraw from the union pursuant to article 50 of the treaty of the EU. This means that unless the withdrawal agreement establishes another date or the period is extended by the European Council in accordance with article 50(3) of the treaty on EU, all Union primary and secondary law ceases to apply to the UK from 30/03/2019 00:00 h (CET). The UK will then become a third country.

The Commission also informed of its intentions to

1. merge EURL for avian influenza with Newcastle disease - a public call will be launched for the selection procedure;
2. for Foot-and-Mouth disease a public call will be launched;
3. merge EURL for bluetongue with the EURL for AHS to have a EURL for AHS and other orbiviruses;
4. merge the EURL for Crustacean diseases with the EURL for fish diseases. No need for public call.

Information for other EURLs will be provided in the relevant sections of the PAFF Committees.