

**Statement from the Ministerial conference on "Eradication of African swine fever in the EU and the long-term management of wild boar populations"**

**Brussels, 19 December 2018**

**Considering that:**

- The prevention, control and eradication of African swine fever (ASF), is a matter of high priority for the EU as it represents a serious risk for an important sector of farming, the wild boar population and the environment;
- The disease is highly contagious and deadly both for the domestic and the wild pigs;
- The wild boar population in several regions of Europe developed in uncontrolled manner and plays an important role in the spreading and maintaining the disease;
- High level of preparedness on ASF including farm biosecurity and proper wild boar management in areas that are not yet affected by the disease is of paramount importance and it demands the development of a common strategy at national level;
- Hunting practices are relevant to the epidemiological evolution of the disease due to their effects on the wild boar populations.
- Certain third countries react quickly with a total ban of imports of pigs, pig meat and pig products as soon as ASF is detected in a country even if the disease only affects wild boar.

**The following recommendations are proposed:**

All Member States, where appropriate, should put their efforts to ensure:

- **Enhanced coordination and cooperation** (including awareness raising) between agricultural and environmental side (veterinary services, farmers, forestry management bodies, hunters and etc.) to regulate wild boar populations with the objective of both to efficiently control and prevent the spreading of ASF;
- **A long-term EU management strategy of wild boar population**, including its appropriate reduction. This should be determined after an impact assessment, specific objectives, measures and joint programmes of cooperation between the agriculture and environmental sector (hunting management, ban of supplementary feeding, agricultural practises) tailored to the particular situation of the Member States;
- Particular attention should be paid to the management of the wild boar populations minimising wild boar dispersal in the affected territories with ASF or in the zones at risk of spread;
- Proper communication guidance and awareness campaigns towards all stakeholders (professionals, travellers, hunters, consumers) and general public should be deployed on

main transport routes and borders to prevent introduction and dissemination of ASF through the human factor;

- The Commission will continue to advocate for the proper implementation of the ASF OIE standards, in particular the principle of regionalization, differentiation of the disease situation in wild boar and domestic pigs.

The measures taken in the framework of strategy mentioned above will have to be **compatible with EU environmental and veterinary legislation**, including nature protection requirements and properly **assessed in terms of scientific basis, impact and effectiveness**.