



# Mission of the Veterinary Emergency Team (EUVET) to Poland

(19-22 November 2019)

# Objective

- **Reason: occurrence first positive** result for ASF in wild boar in free area (Slawa – Lubuskie Voivodship) (last case in 300 km distance).
- **ToR:** The experts should provide scientific, technical, managerial and practical assistance on the spot on the refinement of the most suitable control and eradication measures for African Swine Fever (ASF) under local conditions, especially as regards epidemiological investigations and comprehensive management of the restricted areas.
- **Expert:** Team leader-Klaus Depner (Germany), Tsviatko Alexandrov (Bulgaria); Paulius Bušauskas (Lithuania)

## Agenda

*Meetings and field visits were organized by regional veterinary authority as follows:*

1st day – meeting with members of local hunting association, forestry authority, officers from District Veterinary Office in Slawa, Wschowa district and Zielona Góra district, Lubuskie Voivodship, and representatives from Central service;

2nd day –, visit hunting ground with ASF presence, 2 places where the dead wild boar have been found, 1 forest rest point for drivers.

3rd day – final meeting District Veterinary Office in Slawa.

# Epidemiological situation

- On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 a fresh wild boar carcass (female, 40 kg) was found by rangers in a large forest.
- It was assumed that the animal was killed in a car accident.

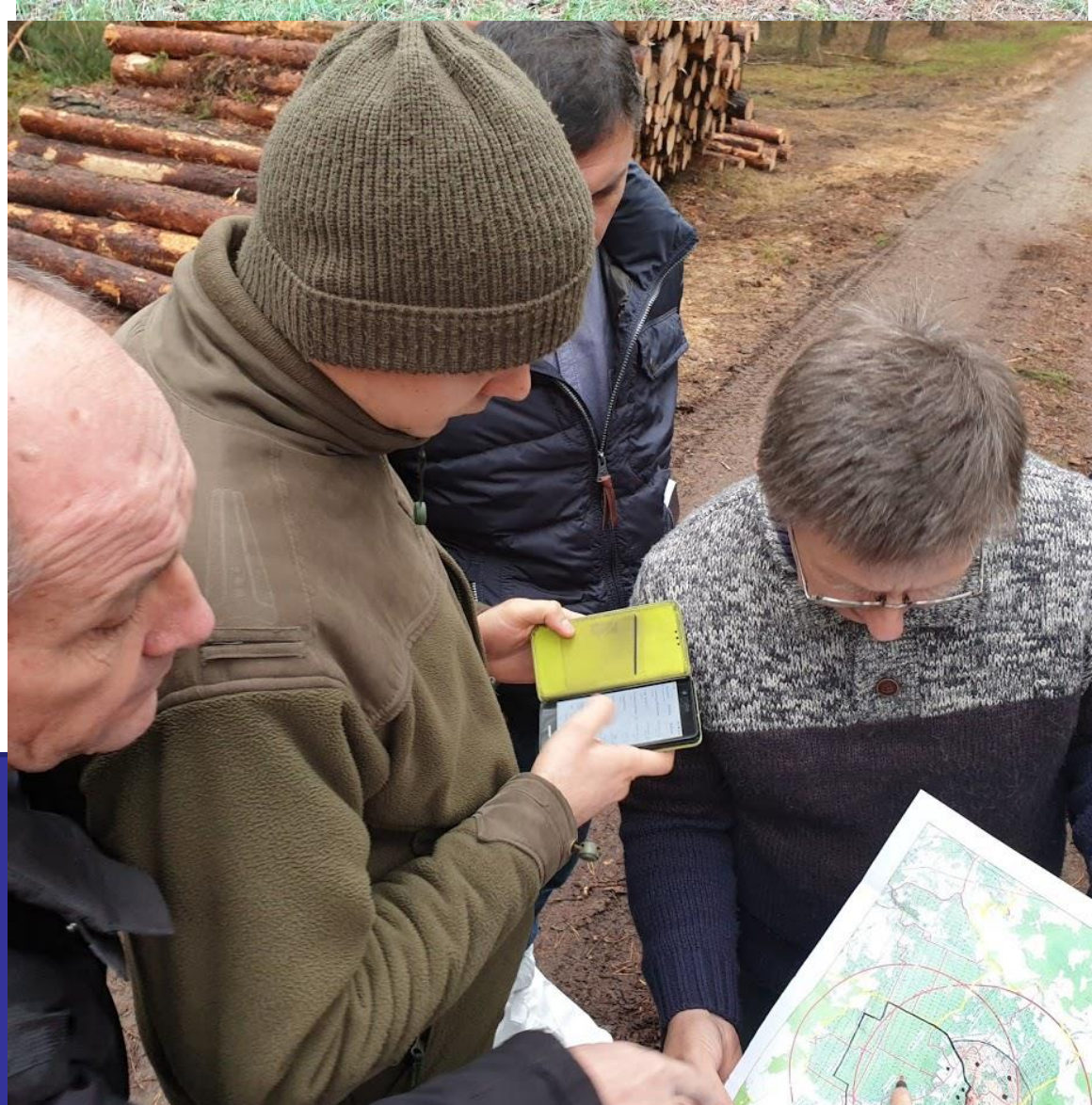




The carcass was lying in a ditch by the forest road used only by forest workers and rangers.



- The carcass was taken to the rendering plant where the veterinary doctor identified skin lesions which might have been caused by a car accident;
- However, at the place where the animal was found no signs indicative for a traffic accident were seen, neither a driver nor a car involved in the accident could be traced.



On 14<sup>th</sup> of November, the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) in Pulawy confirmed that the animal was positive for ASF

# What is known about area?



# Measures after confirmation

- The local veterinary service started an intensive carcass search in the region;
- Ten teams consisting of 10 searchers including military service each were set up;
- A local ranger or local hunter conducted each team;
- Before starting the carcass searching, the involved rangers and hunters were trained regarding biosecurity and safe disposal of carcasses;
- Immediately on 14<sup>th</sup> November the regional crisis centre started operate.
- **The restrictions for human activity in the forest.**

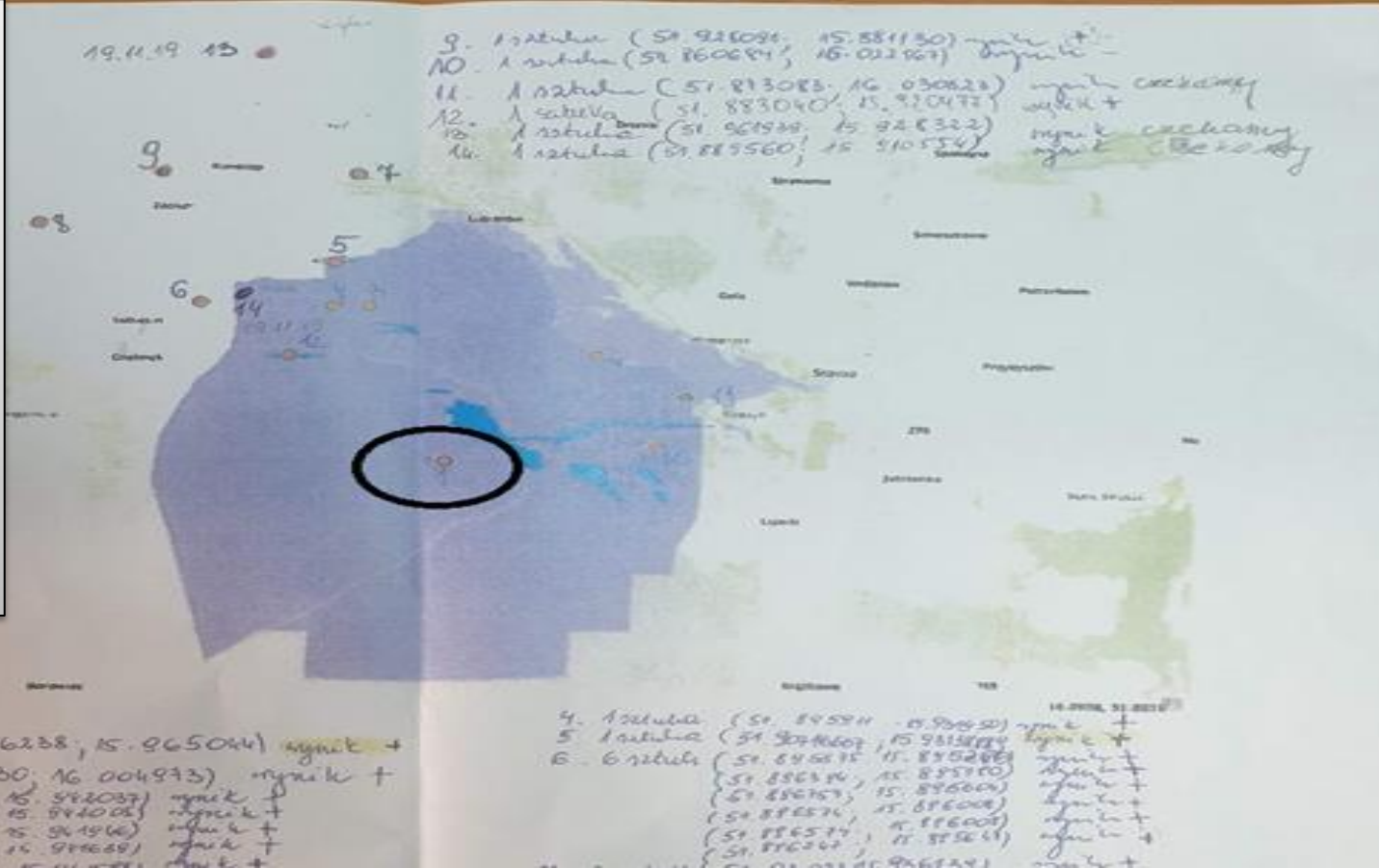




# Measures after confirmation

An infected zone with a radius of 5 km was implemented around the case and a fence of 36km length was erected

**The ban for any hunting activity has been established in infected zone**





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# Awareness



On 12<sup>th</sup> November, 5 km north of first case, but still within the fenced area, a second carcass was found (tested positive on 16<sup>th</sup> November);

Until the end of the EUVET mission on 22<sup>th</sup> November, 27 carcasses were found of which 22 were confirmed as ASF positive;

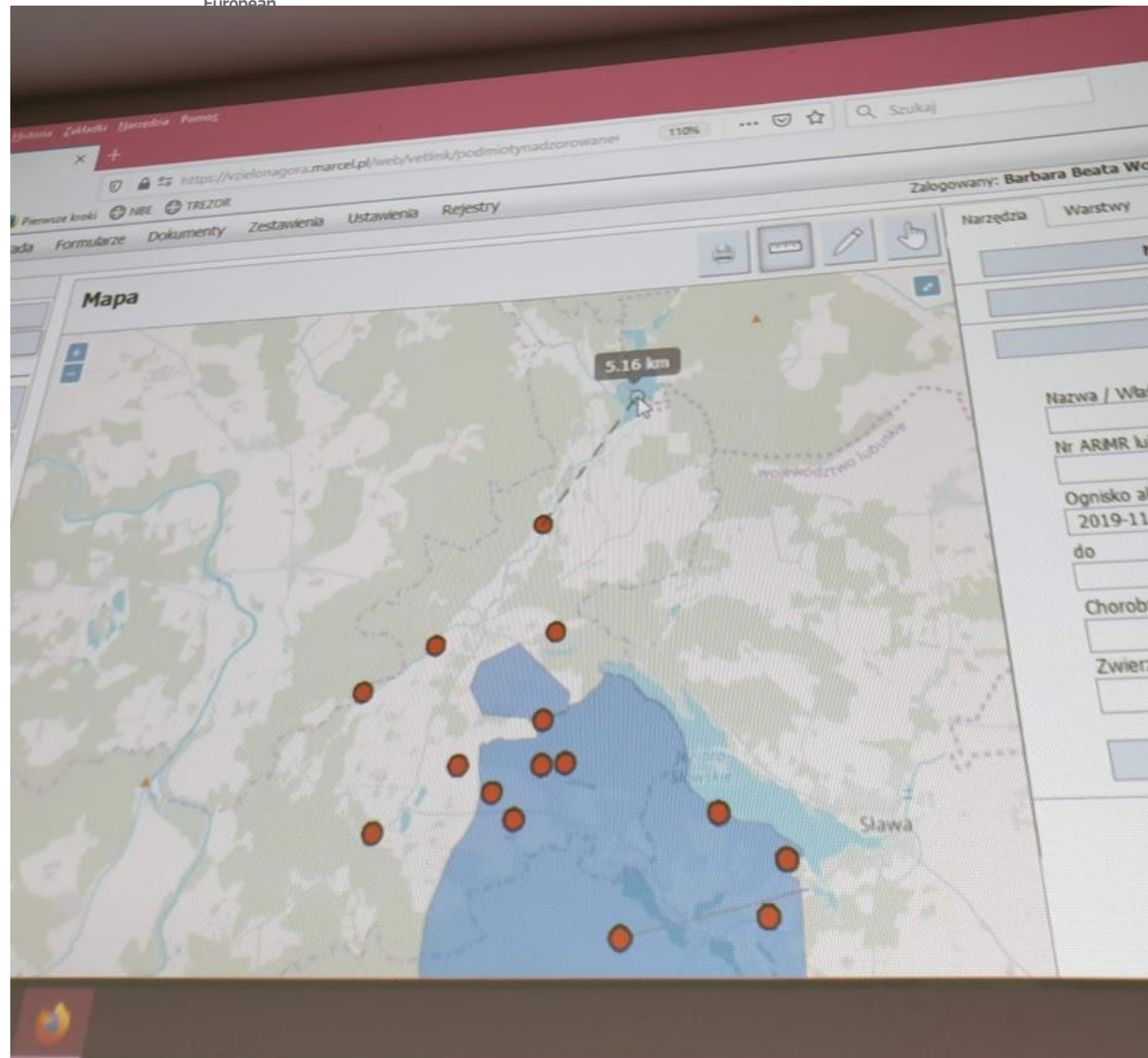




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Thirteen carcasses were found outside the fenced zone;  
Nine carcasses were in an advanced state of decomposition (bones and skins).

The longest distance between two ASF positive carcasses (one in the north, the other in southeast of first case) was about 20km.



# Findings and Conclusions

## **High risk period:**

The high risk period is defined as the likely length of time that ASF has been present in the region before notification;

Nine of the 22 positive carcasses found were in an advanced state of decomposition

It can be assumed, that ASF was already circulating in the wild boar population in the area of Slawa (southeast of Lubuskie Voievodship) during October, but most probable also during end of September 2019.

The carcass which was found first on 4<sup>th</sup> of November was not the first animal which got infected.

## How did ASFV arrived in the area

- The carcass which was found on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov. was not the first animal in that area which died on ASF
- Since several carcasses were in an advanced state of decomposition it can be assumed, that ASF was already circulating during October, but most probable during September 2019
- Most probably ASFV arrived during September
- Most probably the disease had its start in the area where the decomposed carcasses were found
- However, based on the data available so far it is not possible to conclude how ASFV arrived in that area

# Findings and Conclusions

## Size of the infected area:

Based on the locations where infected wild boar have been found so far, an infected area of about 800km<sup>2</sup> can be estimated

During October, when ASF was already present in the region driven hunts were conducted. It cannot be excluded, that these hunting activities might have contributed to the local spread of the ASF virus.

*However, the final size of the infected area can be calculated only after few weeks when the carcass search gives enough evidence over the virus circulation*

## ***First Step, Recommendations***

### **ASF diagnosis:**

*A better optimization of the laboratory diagnosis for ASF is needed.*

- For having a good functioning early detection system, samples from areas which are still considered to be ASF free should be tested with priority and results should be provide timely.

### **Control measures:**

It is highly recommended to implement similar control and eradication measures as the ones implemented in the Czech Republic in 2017/2018 and in Belgium 2018/2019. The aim of the measures should be:

- to identify exactly the size of the infected area;
- to slow down the spread of ASF;
- to keep the disease within a restricted area where it can be eradicated.



# First Step, Recommendations

## Passive surveillance:

Concerning the intensive carcass search, particularly the areas at the periphery of the assumed infected area should be screened. Trained staff, preferably teams guided by experts, should conduct the active surveillance.

## Total ban of wild boar hunting:

As long as the exact location of the infected area is not known, a prophylactic approach of a sufficiently large area of the infected area would be at least three times the size of the infected area.



# ***First Step Recommendations***

Traps for culling could be used according to forest structure.



## ***Second step, Recommendations***

### **Fences:**

*A fence is an additional tool to prevent disease spread. Once the size of the infected area has been estimated, additional measures can be taken to support the eradication of the disease. In particular, to keep the disease within the restricted areas, the option of erecting fences should be considered.*

- **It is not advisable to build fence before the size of the infected area is not known.**

### **Access to infected area:**

*Should be restricted. Only authorised staff in the area. Farmland, if relevant, can have access on the basis of derogations*

## ***Second step, Recommendations***

### **Wild boar reduction:**

- *Around the infected area (indicatively 100 km radius from the border of infected areas) a strong reduction of wild boar density is needed.*
- *To achieve this, hunting by targeting adult females followed by sub-adult females (sex ratio of the hunting bag 1 male: 2 females).*
- *This needs to be coupled by a complete ban of feeding.*
- *Wild boar passive surveillance has to be enforced continuously;*

*\*each found carcass has to be reported to the local veterinary service and tested for ASF*

## How to implement?

The intensive hunting activities should be coordinated with *the authorities of the neighbouring voivodships* as well as with the **German authorities of the federal state of Brandenburg.**

# Domestic pigs

*A census of holdings and pigs in the infected and high risk area should be conducted.*

*As for wild boar, passive surveillance should be prioritized also in the domestic pig sector.*

*Biosecurity measures implemented in the domestic pig farms have to be reinforced and verified regularly by the Competent veterinary authorities.*

*Awareness campaign have to be enforced including all stakeholders. Outdoor keeping of pigs should be banned.*

# Thank you for your attention!

*The CVET team wish to thank all colleagues from Poland for their support and help given.*

*The working atmosphere during the mission was excellent.*

