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Section *Animal Health and Welfare*
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SUMMARY REPORT

A.01 General information by Member States.

No item raised

A.02 Information from the Member States on African swine fever

Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Sweden provided an update about the African swine fever (ASF) epidemiological situation in their territories and measure taken.

In addition, Norway presented the National Action Plan for wild porcine animals in order to avoid the spread of ASF in the Union, established in accordance with article 56 of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594.

Due to the very dynamic epidemiological situation in many involved EU Member States in the domestic pigs and in the wild boar, the Commission pointed out the importance of the application of the disease control measures, including the enhancement of biosecurity in the domestic sector and the building or strengthening of barriers to limit the spreading of the disease following the increased movement of wild boars.

A.03 Clarifications on the procedure for the adoption and committee opinion of implementing acts under the urgency procedure according to Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

The Commission explained to Member States the new procedure as regards the Implementing Decision concerning certain interim emergency measures relating to a Category A disease, taking as practical example the procedure adopted in case of confirmation of an outbreak of African swine fever in a disease-free territory, according to Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

This new procedure has been adopted with the support of the Commission legal service to avoid any challenging situation.

A.04 Derogation for movements of kept equine animals to other Member States in accordance with Article 69 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688. Information from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden on the conditions established for such movements.

Article 69 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688 (derogation based on Article 144 of the Animal Health Law) allows for derogations, whereby the Member State of destination accepts registered equine animals in compliance with animal health requirements but without being accompanied by an animal health certificate. To make these derogations operational, the Member State of destination must inform the Commission and the other Member States about the conditions under which such movements are authorised.

Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden presented conditions established for the derogation in accordance with Article 69 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688.

A.05 Union and national antigen, vaccine, and diagnostic reagent banks - information from the Commission and from Member States.

The Commission shared information with Member States and Norway/Switzerland on the Union antigen and vaccine banks for FMD, CSF, LSD, PPR and SPGP, including quantities and subtypes, in a paper document distributed against acknowledgment of receipt. Germany, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland orally informed on their relevant national vaccine banks (for FMD, with the Netherlands also having a bank for CSF), while other Member States indicated having no relevant banks, or being absent (Greece, Cyprus, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia). Details on quantities and subtypes in a paper document were shared with the Commission by Switzerland, while France and the Netherlands will do so in July, and Germany after the renewal of the relevant contract in October.

A.06 Update on ADIS and ensuring accessibility using the multi factor authentication (MFA).

The Commission updated the Committee on the new MFA procedure to access ADIS (highlighting the risk is that non-compliant users will not be able to access the interface). Also, the Commission updated the Committee on a second testing wave for the ADIS-WAHIS link underlining that no blocking issues were identified and that a dedicated training would be organised by WOA in November this year.

A.07 Presentation from several Member States of their applications for disease freedom with regard to certain Category B and Category C diseases.

The Commission explained that applications from Member States to obtain a disease-free status with regard to category B or C diseases will be presented at PAFF by Member States before the Commission presents for an opinion a draft Implementing Regulation amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/62.

Germany presented applications for Bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) freedom for the region of Oldenburg in the state of Niedersachsen and the region of Rendsburg-Eckernförde in the state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Italy presented an application for infection with Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex (MTBC) freedom for the province of Sassari in the Region of Sardegna and for infection with Brucella abortus, B. melitensis and B. suis in kept ovine and caprine animals in the province of Matera in the Region of Basilicata.

A.08 Information from Member States on Newcastle disease.

Italy and Sweden, recently affected by outbreaks of Newcastle disease in poultry or captive birds have presented the epidemiological situation and the measures taken to control and eradicate the disease. The Commission indicated the need for reflection by competent authorities on the appropriate use of effective preventive measures available, such as the use of vaccination in poultry and captive birds, when there is evidence of Newcastle disease virus circulation in the wild bird population, also considering the approach to EU financing for this disease.

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.

Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision concerning certain interim emergency measures relating to African swine fever in Germany.

Following the notification of ASF outbreaks in wild boars in an area previously free in the State of Hesse, Germany established an infected area, which was adopted by the Commission at Union level with the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1790 (interim emergency measures). The Decision was presented to Committee for vote, in accordance with article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 on animal health rules for animal by-products and derived products as regards the digitalisation of records, the model commercial document, the model health certificate for movement of animal by-products from restricted zones and the model health certificate for transport of unprocessed manure.

The draft has been presented to Member States with detailed explanation of provision of the draft. The Commission took note of Member States' comments.

Vote Postponed

B.03 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Annex I to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/594 laying down special control measures for African swine fever.

The Commission presented to the Committee the draft of the amended Regulation, following outbreaks of ASF in wild boar in Italy, Poland and Slovakia, as well as outbreaks in domestic pigs in Greece, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

B.04 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a Commission Implementing Decision concerning certain interim emergency measures relating to African swine fever in Germany.

Germany informed the Commission of the confirmation of ASF outbreaks in domestic pigs in a previously disease-free zone and established protection and surveillance zones, where the general disease control measures laid down in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 were applied. The Commission adopted the Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1695, which was presented to the Committee for vote, in accordance with article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

C.01 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation on slaughterhouse inspections (hygiene and animal welfare).

The Commission presented its current reflections on the initiative to amend Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627 as regards animal welfare inspections in slaughterhouses. The presentation was well received. There were no questions from the Member States, who were invited to submit written comments by 2 July 2024. Denmark expressed support for the initiative to have a more harmonised approach to these inspections. The Commission declared its intention to, according to its current planning, discuss a first draft Implementing Regulation with the Member States at an animal welfare working group meeting on 16 September 2024.

M.01 Requirement for blood samples in relation to B. Ovis from ovine animals transported to other Member States (requested by Estonia).

Estonian delegate explained that serological testing of uncastrated male ovine animals for intra-EU trade is overburdensome and costly suggesting to re-categorise Brucella Ovis as a Category C animal disease. The Commission clarified that the point is related to Article 15(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688 explaining that there is intentionally no separation of requirements for “fattening” animals and that official free statuses are only possible for Category B and C diseases. Two more Member States also took the floor and one supported diseases re-categorisation, while the other suggested to explore fine-tuning rules on movements. The Commission explained that the current Regulation is largely in line with international standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), is based on risk assessment by the European Food Safety Authority and on expert advice from all the Member States during its drafting and although it sees little room of maneuver remains open to consider new data.

M.02 HPAI vaccination in confined establishments.

Spain presented an update of its HPAI-vaccination programme, which is applied in three confined establishments: two zoos and a wildlife recovery center. France presented its HPAI-vaccination programme for confined establishments on its territory, with 64 eligible establishments. Both programmes are in line with Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/361 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council as regards rules for the use of certain veterinary medicinal products for the purpose of prevention and control of certain listed diseases.

M.03 Blue tongue virus in Germany.

Germany provided an update of the Blue tongue virus (BTV-3) situation in the Western part of the country. Following an incident with a vaccine, positive animals were detected in previous months in North Rhine Westphalia, Rhineland Palatinate and Lower Saxony. Currently there are three vaccines for which authorisation for its use under article 110 of Regulation (EU) 2019/6 has been granted. Other animals have recently tested positive, but it is very likely that were infected last year. It is assumed that the BTV3 circulation season in Germany has not started yet.

One Member State pointed out that as a result of the occurrences in Germany close to its border, they have strengthened their surveillance without detecting positive animals.