



Brussels, 08/01/2018

Minutes

Meeting of the Animal Health Advisory Committee, the sub-group of the Advisory group on the food chain and animal and plant health

Brussels, 18/12/2017

- 1. Approval of the agenda of 2nd Meeting of 2017 of the Animal Health Advisory Committee**
- 2. List of points discussed**

Introduction, opening: Head of Unit G2 Animal health and welfare - DG SANTE

The Commission explained briefly the purpose of the meeting and asked for any additional AOB points. OIE asked to share information on the application of international standards

- 1. Information on the state of play and follow-up after adoption of the EU Animal Health Law (SANTE G2 and G3)**

- Planning and context of future work on delegated and implementing acts.

The Commission presented the revised structure of delegated and implementing acts under the Animal Health Law, with the focus on those that need to be adopted by April 2019 and which are an absolute priority for the Commission. The Committee was also informed about the timelines for further discussions and the dates of the expert groups meetings on the drafts.

- Update information on disease listing and categorisation process

A short presentation was given on the process of the listing and categorization of animal diseases and the state of play of the discussions with the Member States (MSs) which are expected to be concluded by spring 2018.

- Information (update) on the study with regard to Article 144 of the EU Animal Health Law – on possible derogation from certification for intra-EU trade

The Commission presented the results of the study and noted that it focused purely on the economic impacts of a potential future derogation from the Intra-EU certification of certain categories of live animals. The study suggests an average annual direct economic benefit from a possible derogation to the animal health certification requirement for the intra-EU movements of cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, pigs and horses for direct slaughter and of day-old chicks of €22 million for EU28. Economic benefit varies between MSs and between animal species (main benefits for poultry and pigs), and it concerns competent authorities (75% of benefits) more than private operators (25% of benefits).

- Q and A and feed-back of stakeholders on other aspects of the EU Animal Health Law

Interventions by EAZA, FVE, FESASS, EU Dog/Cat Alliance and FEAP.

EAZA asked why the transposition of Directive 92/65/EEC into the new legal framework was postponed and wondered about the impact of such postponement. The Commission clarified that the transposition of this directive was not postponed and that rules will be adopted by 2019, with the exemption of those for some animals that cannot be categorized under terrestrial or aquatic animals, e.g. reptiles, amphibians or marine mammals.

FVE and FESASS enquired as to when and how they will be consulted on the drafts and emphasized that they needed enough time to consult their members. The Commission replied that it will do its best that everybody will be consulted in time. If necessary, an additional meeting of this Committee will be organized.

FESASS asked how Articles 9 and 10 of Directive 64/432/EEC will be taken over in the new legislation. The Commission explained that this will be done by delegated acts regulating disease freedom and trade measures. These acts are scheduled for adoption by 2019.

FESASS also requested on how to deal with EFSA opinions inconclusive, such as paratuberculosis. The Commission explained that that is the reason why discussions on the Commission proposal with MSs are held and that in the particular case mentioned, EFSA opinion is conclusive even though for certain criteria which do not affect the final outcome, a consensus was not reached.

Dog and Cat Alliance asked for the plans about the development of acts and the impact assessment for compulsory identification and registration of dogs and cats. The Commission explained that nothing is planned on this item, as this issue is not a part of the priority acts. Any possible reflection on this can only start after 2019.

FEAP informed on the common position on categorization of 3 diseases (ISA, IHN, VHS) and wondered if inequalities for fish farmers in different MSs that arise from Directive 2006/88/EC will be improved in the future. They noted that MSs often apply more restrictive measures than those requested in EU directive. They also asked if a similar study to the one on certification derogation for terrestrial animals is also planned on aquatic side. The Commission replied that such study was not envisaged for aquatic sector and explained that the Animal Health Law, which is a regulation and directly applicable in the Member States should in principle bring a more homogeneous approach across the EU. But it noted that basic regulation in some cases nonetheless allows the MSs to take their own specific and more stringent measures.

In relation to the Study on intra-EU animal health certification, FVE and FESASS highlighted the necessity of taking into consideration animal health risks and costs of animal disease outbreaks when further discussing a possible derogation from the animal health certification. The Commission indicated that the results of the study need to be further analysed and put into perspective as regards the possibilities for derogation provided in the Animal Health Law and other risks involved, such as those related to animal health and animal welfare.

2. State of play in the EU of certain animal diseases: Avian influenza, African Swine Fever, Lumpy Skin Disease, Sheep and Goat Pox (SANTE G3)

LSD/Sheep Pox

The Commission gave a presentation on the state of play with regard to Lumpy Skin Disease and Sheep/Goat Pox.

In response to a question from FESASS about the recognition of the preventive vaccination for LSD by the OIE code and if the Commission will ask for new modifications of the OIE code concerning LSD, the Commission informed the Committee that the new provisions (May 2017) of the OIE Code for countries that implement preventive vaccination against LSD, are considered as a very positive step. It is not clear at this stage if the EU will pursue further amendments of the OIE Code LSD chapter in the direct future.

Avian Influenza

The Commission presented an update on the epidemic of highly pathogenic avian influenza in MSs that had started in October 2016. Outbreaks declined end of April 2017, but during the summer the virus was again detected in Italy and Bulgaria, and most recently in the Netherlands. The Commission supports MSs with different tools including the deployment of EU Veterinary emergency teams which went to Italy and Bulgaria to give support. Scientific advice is provided by EFSA and by ECDC on the human health aspects.

AVEC pointed out that third countries continue to put in place unjustified trade bans on EU poultry and poultry products, also in relation to the occurrence of low pathogenic avian influenza in Member States. AVEC called on the Commission for further support the industry on this matter including at OIE level.

African Swine Fever

The Commission presented the latest developments on African swine fever (ASF) in EU and neighboring countries and current regionalization (Commission Implementing Decision 2014/709).

The Commission provided information concerning TAIEX multi-country workshop on animal health management (focus on the role of the wildlife) that will take place in Bulgaria in March 2018.

In a reply to a question by FESASS, the Commission explained that collection, disposal of carcasses of the wild boar remains to be one of the key elements to reduce the viral load in the environment for affected countries. Therefore this measure will have to be continued also next year.

EFFAB welcomed the work of the Commission on ASF and positive developments related to the trade of live breeding pigs to non-EU countries.

3. Information on the state of play and follow-up after adoption of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on Official Controls (SANTE G3)

– Import controls

The Commission gave a presentation on the state of play of the ongoing work on the preparation legislation on the basis of empowerment provided in the Official Controls Legislation (OCR). The Commission debriefed on the points discussed in the meeting of the expert/working group on entry into the Union on 15.12.2017, the planning of consultations and the preparation of the relocation of EURLs currently in the UK.

In response to a question from the FVE, the Commission informed the Committee that the next documents that could probably be shared with stakeholders would be the draft list of

animals and goods to be checked at BCPs, (Common Nomenclature codes) under OCR Art. 47.2(a) and the draft on specific training requirements under OCR Art. 49.5.

4. Animal Welfare (SANTE G2)

- Update on the 2nd Meeting of the Animal Welfare Platform

Following the presentation of the Commission on the outcomes of the meetings of the EU animal welfare platform, various representatives took the floor.

The EU cat and dog Alliance asked if they could be kept informed on a possible informal sub-group on the welfare of dogs and cats. EAZA and OFI respectively wanted to know how they could contribute to the animal transport sub-group of the Platform since it could have implications for their sectors. COPA COGECA wanted to know the distinction between the sub-groups and voluntary commitments. FVE proposed the Committee to be informed of the recently published studies on animal welfare on the Commission website. FESASS wanted to know if different experts than Platform members could be appointed in the sub-groups. They also wanted information on the designation of the future EU reference centre for animal welfare and its connection with the future sub-group on the welfare of pigs. Eurogroup for Animals and OIE made statements on their contribution to the Platform.

On the welfare of dogs and cats, the Commission replied that it was not informed of any specific initiative until now. Regarding sub-group on animal transport the Commission indicated that the appointment of the sub-group was under preparation and this should not stop stakeholders to send their contributions in writing, specifically in case of good practices. However, it was also reminded that the sub-group will focus on enforcement issues which have been identified in the past, mainly on farm animals. For the time being, the Commission favours the use of sub-groups when it relates to major enforcement issues such as animal transport or the welfare of pigs (phasing out routine tail docking in particular). There are no rules that should exclude sub-groups on voluntary commitments but due to limited resources, voluntary commitments will be tackled through topical discussion in the Platform rather than sub-groups.

The Commission also welcomed the suggestion of FVE to present in the future the outcomes of Commission's studies and reports on animal welfare. It pointed out in particular the forthcoming report on animal welfare international activities.

The Commission also confirmed that different experts than the members of the Platform could be appointed in sub-groups. The relationship between the sub-group on the welfare of pigs and the reference centre was not elaborated since both activities are under preparation. Responding to Eurogroup for Animals statement on the welfare of pigs, the Commission specified that, beside the sub-group, for which the main mandate will be on enforcement issues, it will launch early 2018 a pilot project on pig castration.

5. Report from the Commission to the EP and the Council on the mid-term evaluation of CFF (Regulation 652/2014 – financial aspects in relation to veterinary and plant programmes, EURL, BTSF) (SANTE D4)

The Commission presented a report on the outcome of the mid-term evaluation of Regulation No 652/2014 (Common Financial Framework Regulation, CFF) adopted on 26 September 2017. The mid-term evaluation was performed in accordance with the requirements of that Regulation (Article 42) to assess whether the animal health and plant health measures and the

European Union Reference laboratories and Better Training for Safer Food activities achieve the objectives set out in the Regulation, mainly as regards the efficiency of the use of resources and its added value, at the EU level.

The conclusions of the mid-term evaluation report are that Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 works well within its policy context, the activities receiving EU financial support in this area serve both its general and specific objectives, and the overall Commission's priorities; Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 has proven to be flexible to address emerging needs for co-financing especially in the occurrence of outbreaks and activities funded under Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 contribute to an EU which is safe and secure, prosperous and sustainable, social, and stronger on the global scene.

The Commission requested the representatives of stakeholders to see the report as preliminary step to reflect on future priorities to be addressed from 2021, under the new MFF.

The different Associations very welcomed the report and its findings and conclusions. OIE representative thanked the Commission for the detailed presentation and highlighted the good co-operation between the OIE and the Commission on several projects and stressed the need to continue and even further increase EU financial support to the OIE to deal with specific topics of interest for both but mainly for the EU. The Commission took note and thanked for suggestions.

FESASS thanked the Commission for the detailed presentation and requested an explanation about funding in relation to ASF, under the veterinary programme or under emergency measures and the Commission duly clarified that distinction. In addition, FESASS requested how future priorities post 2021, in relation to EU financial support, might be set up. The Commission explained that work is on-going to prepare a new CFF, based on the on-going new MFF and reflections have already started at Chief Veterinary Officer and Chief Plant Health Officer level and that stakeholders, also, will be requested to contribute.

6. Any other business:

- Presentation of ERPA's biosecurity information sheets

ERPA gave a brief presentation on the information leaflets that they produced with regard to 'Recommended biosecurity measures for rural poultry'.

The Commission welcomed the proactive stance taken by ERPA in informing its members on biosecurity issues and encouraged other members of the Advisory Group to disseminate the leaflets to interested parties.

7. Next steps:

In the period January-July 2018, the Commission will hold regular meetings of experts on the delegated and implementing acts of the Animal Health Law. In the period January-December 2018, the Commission will also hold regular expert meetings on the delegated and implementing acts of the Official Controls legislation. In addition, it is envisaged to have 2 meetings of the Animal Welfare Platform (provisionally June and November).

The Animal Health Advisory Committee will be briefed on the progress of the discussions on the Delegated and Implementing Acts of both the Animal Health Law and the Official Controls legislation at future meetings of the Advisory Committee and will also be briefed on items discussed at the Animal Welfare Platform.

8. Next meeting

The date of the next meeting has not yet been finalised due to the heavy workload envisaged in 2018. However, it is planned to hold two meetings in 2018 and members of the Advisory Committee will be informed as soon as possible on the proposed dates for these meetings.

9. List of participants

<i>Stakeholder Organisation</i>
AEPM/EMPA Association européenne de producteurs de mollusques
ANIMALHEALTHEUROPE
ATA Animal Transportation Association
AVEC Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU
CEFIC European Chemical Industry Council
CELCAA European Liaison Committee for the Agricultural and Agri-food Trade
CLITRAVI Liaison Centre for the Meat Processing Industry in the EU
COPA European farmers COGECA European agri-cooperatives
DIAGNOSTICS FOR ANIMALS
EAZA European Association of Zoos and Aquaria
EFFAB European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders
EGGVP European Group for Generic Veterinary Products
EPO European Pet Organization OFI Ornamental Fish International

ERPA European Rural poultry Association
EU DOG and CAT Alliance
EUROGROUP FOR ANIMALS
FACE Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU
FEAP Federation of European Aquaculture Producers
FESASS Fédération européenne pour la santé animale et la sécurité sanitaire
FVE Federation of Veterinarians of Europe
IPATA International Pet and Animal Transportation Association
OIE World Organisation for Animal Health
UECBV European Livestock And Meat Trading Union
VIER PFOTEN

TROIKA – Estonia and Bulgaria