

Minutes of the meeting of the expert group to discuss a draft delegated act on rules for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases under Regulation (EU) 2016/429

10 December 2018, Brussels

1. Approval of the agenda

A preliminary agenda was circulated prior to the meeting and approved at the beginning of the meeting.

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public. The Member States' and EEA countries representatives from the competent veterinary authorities were participating in the meeting. The Chair noted the absence of the European Parliament and the Council.

3. List of points discussed

3.1. Introduction

The Commission noted that the distributed working documents include animal health requirements for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases of terrestrial animals. The Commission informed Member States that the next and last meeting of this Expert Group is provisionally booked for 7th February 2019. Member States were invited to provide comments on the latest draft version circulated by 9th January 2019.

3.2. Exchange of views with Member States on prevention and control rules of certain listed diseases

General provisions

The Commission highlighted the main changes since the last meeting related to the change of name to the 'monitoring period' to 'high risk period' and the change in its definition to clarify some of the issues highlighted at the last expert group. Two new articles have been added to this section to cover general sampling provisions and a reference to contingency plans. In doing so, there is no need to repeat those provisions in the different chapters making the new act leaner.

Disease control measures for Category A diseases of kept terrestrial animals in establishments - Part II, Chapter I

The Commission provided an overview of Sections 1 and 2 explaining how the articles follow a sequence of events in the case of an outbreak of a Category A disease, starting for the suspicion and measures to be taken during suspicion which are included in Section 1. Those provisions are followed by articles with measures in the case of confirmation which are included in Section 2. The articles in

these sections have also been re-structured to clarify better the responsibilities of operators and Competent Authorities. The Commission clarified questions in relation to preventive killing.

In section 2 related to disease control measures in the case of confirmation of a Category A disease there were discussions related to the use of vaccination and to ensure that the act covers and do not hamper possible new developments in this field or in the field of veterinary treatments.

The majority of Member States who intervened expressed support to maintaining the preliminary cleaning and disinfection as it is an measure that could help to reduce the load of the infective agent. The Commission will consider this request.

Disease control measures for Category A diseases of kept terrestrial animals in restricted zones - Part II, Chapters II, III, IV, V and VI

Member States raised issues on the distance of restricted zones and the need to make sure the provisions are fit to deal with any of the diseases and their different epidemiology.

There was also a constructive technical discussion on the list of conditions, prohibitions and possible derogations in the restricted zones. Member States will provide written comments, including those for Annex V that contains the table with those prohibitions for different commodities.

In relation to the disease control measures in the Surveillance Zone, the comments and discussions were mainly around the need to ensure that movements are proportionate finding the correct balance between ensuring efficient disease control measures but at the same time being proportionate and risk based. There were suggestions to avoid possible animal welfare issues that could be triggered by the impossibility to continue the usual livestock production cycle.

Likewise, similar comments were made by Member States when discussing control measures in wild animals of listed species, mainly around the role of hunting as a tool to stop the spread of the diseases and what movements could be allowed. For this section, it was considered that more work will be needed to improve the current provisions and take into account the experience gained by Member States in dealing with certain diseases.

The Commission presented initial ideas in relation to vaccination, the role it could play in controlling certain diseases and what restrictions measures would be appropriate in the case vaccination is used. The Commission will present a more elaborated draft on vaccination for the next meeting.

Annexes

Most annexes of the future Delegated Act were discussed in parallel to the articles they refer to. Apart from some suggestions for technical amendments, the Member States were largely in favour of their contents. At the end of the meeting there was a review of all annexes to make sure all of them were discussed. Member States will provide written comments and suggestions.

4. Miscellaneous.

4.1. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

The Commission thanked Member States for their input and comments during the meeting and encouraged them to reflect on the issues discussed and provide written feedback not later than 9th January 2019.

5. Next steps

The outcome of the discussions and opinions provided by participants during this expert group meeting will be used by the Commission during future work towards the preparation of possible future delegated acts under the Animal Health Law.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting has been provisionally scheduled for 7th February 2019.