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**WORKING DOCUMENT**

**Strategic approach to the management of African Swine Fever for the EU**

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# ***Strategic approach to the management of African Swine Fever for the EU – Rev. February 2020***

## **1) Introduction**

The Strategic approach to the management of African Swine Fever for the EU (ASF Strategic approach) has been developed with the aim of establishing harmonised measures in response to the epidemiological situation with regard to African swine fever (ASF) in the EU.

The ASF Strategic approach is aimed to all Member States.

It is intended to prevent and control the spread of the disease and eventually to eradicate the disease in the affected territories of the EU. This aim should be achieved by the application of harmonised measures, tailored to the specificity of each Member States, concerning among others wild boar metapopulation and pig herds.

The functional areas where the control measures described in this document should be on the basis of a risk assessment. The areas do not overlap the restriction areas as described in Commission Implementing Decision 2014/709/EU, which are intended for an administrative regionalisation and management of the disease. In this document is clearly specified where the control measures have to be applied in the restriction areas as described in Commission Implementing Decision 2014/709/EU.

The Strategic approach could differ between Member States, from area to area (either free or infected) and, in affected territories, based on the time the disease has been present in a given area. Therefore, each area will be subject to measures to prevent the introduction or control, eradicate or confine the disease in wildlife, proportional to the level of risk defined by each Member State, to the veterinary infrastructure and national legislation.

Infected areas: the ASF strategic approach provides guidelines to attempt to eradicate the disease in wild boar in newly infected areas and to contain the disease in infected areas where this first attempt was not successful.

Free areas: specific recommended measures are foreseen to manage the wild boar population in free Member States and in free areas of already affected Member States, as well as for the introduction of the disease in wild boar in any newly infected area.

The wild boar management in free areas should take into account two risk factors: (i) the contiguity of free areas with infected areas; (ii) the long spread caused by the so called human factor. The first factor can be managed by the competent authority on the basis of EU legislation (where relevant), a risk assessment, tailored on the local conditions and national legislation of each country. The human factor can be managed using other tools

such as: awareness campaigns, training and informing all the stakeholders on the risks related to the occurrence of ASF in an area (Annex I and II).

Each country should decide the level of preparedness activities to implement. It is worth to maintain high passive surveillance in each area.

In addition to the recommended measures foreseen by the Strategic approach, additional legal requirements apply based on the epidemiology of the disease and other measures put in place such as after detection of an outbreak in domestic pig holding the establishment of protection and surveillance zones, the infected area<sup>1</sup> in case of first case of ASF in wild boar population or the measures foreseen in the EU ASF regionalisation<sup>2</sup>. This is also valid for specific legal requirements of Member States.

The measures pertaining to wild boar management are intended for all EU Member States with the aim of providing the basis for a coherent approach to the management of this wildlife resource. Even in absence of ASF, a long term planning is required to control the wild boar metapopulations<sup>3</sup> and ensure an optimal coordination with national resources involved in wildlife conservation. For this purpose, National action plans on wild boar management in the context of ASF prevention, control and eradication should be developed, where appropriate, in all Member States as laid down in the Annex IV.

The Annex I provides for key messages tailored to different target audiences in relation ASF; these should constitute the baseline for to setting up national awareness campaigns.

The Annex II highlights the main measures that should be implemented in the Member States that are free from ASF.

Annex III summarises in a table the ASF main measures for management of wild boar populations in the context of ASF control measures, described in **section 3** of this document.

The measures established in this Strategic approach should be applied until the end of 2022 and reviewed following the developments in the epidemiological situation and scientific findings.

## ***2) ASF measures to be applied for domestic pigs at least in the areas covered by Decision 2014/709/EU***

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<sup>1</sup> Council Directive 2002/60/EC of 27 June 2002 laying down specific provisions for the control of African swine fever and amending Directive 92/119/EEC as regards Teschen disease and African swine fever (OJ L 192, 20.7.2002, p. 27).

<sup>2</sup> Commission Implementing Decision 2014/709/EU of 9 October 2014 concerning animal health control measures relating to African swine fever in certain Member States and repealing Implementing Decision 2014/178/EU (OJ L 295, 11.10.2014, p. 63).

<sup>3</sup> EFSA Scientific Reports and Scientific Opinions: Epidemiological analyses of African swine fever in the European Union (published on 30 January 2020); Epidemiological analyses of African swine fever in the European Union (published on 29 November 2018); Scientific opinion on African swine fever in wild boar (published on 11 July 2018); Scientific Report on Epidemiological analyses of African swine fever in the Baltic States and Poland (published on 7 November 2017); Simulation-based investigation of ASF spread and control in wildlife without consideration of human non-compliance to biosecurity (published on 7 November 2017); Epidemiological analyses on African swine fever in the Baltic countries and Poland (published on 23 March 2017); African swine fever (published on 14 July 2015); African swine fever (published on 7 April 2014); Mitigation measures for African swine fever virus in wild boar (published on 17 March 2014); Ticks as vectors of CCHF and ASF (published on 10 August 2010); African Swine Fever (published on 22 March 2010).

2.1.1. Pig farms are classified in three categories:

- A. *Non- commercial farms (NCF)*: holdings<sup>4</sup> where pigs are kept only for fattening for own consumption or are otherwise permanently resident and pigs are not traded or leave the holding and none of their products enter the food chain.
- B. *Commercial farms (CF)*: holdings which sell or supplies pigs, send pigs to a slaughterhouse or move pig products off the holding.
- C. *Outdoor farms*: holdings which pigs are kept temporarily or permanently outdoor.

2.1.2. Minimum biosecurity requirements for each category are defined:

I - Biosecurity criteria for non-commercial farms (NCF):

- a) No swill feeding and removal of animal by-products in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009.
- b) No contact between the pig(s) of the NCF, pigs from other holdings and feral pigs or wild boar. Pigs should be kept in a way that ensures that there is no direct, neither indirect, contact with pigs coming from other holdings or with pigs outside the premises nor with wild boar.
- c) No contact to any part of the carcass of feral pigs/wild boar (including hunted or dead wild boar/meat/by-products).
- d) The owner (or the person in charge of the pigs) should take appropriate biohygienic measures such as change clothes and boots on entering the stable and leaving the stable. Disinfection should be performed at the entrance of the holding and the stable.
- e) No contact with pigs within 48h after hunting activity.
- f) No unauthorized persons/transport are allowed to enter the pig holding (stable) and records are kept of people and vehicles accessing the area where the pigs are kept.
- g) Home slaughtering is allowed only under veterinary supervision.
- h) No sows and/or boar used for reproduction are allowed on the holding (this does not apply to commercial farms).
- i) Commercially traded crops, vegetables, hay and straw have a very low ability to contain and maintain infectious ASFV. If the use of locally harvested grass and straw is considered to represent a risk under local prevailing conditions, the following should apply:
  - o Ban of feeding fresh grass or grains<sup>5</sup> to pigs unless treated to inactivate ASF virus or stored (out of reach of wild boar) for at least 30 days before feeding.
  - o Ban on using straw<sup>6</sup> for bedding of pigs unless treated to inactivate ASF virus or stored (out of reach of wild boar) for at least 90 days before use.
- j) Farms buildings should:

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<sup>4</sup> Definition of Establishment is in Article 4(27) of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law') (Text with EEA relevance) OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1

<sup>5</sup> Originating from areas where ASF has been reported.

<sup>6</sup> Originating from areas where ASF has been reported.

- be built in such a way that no feral pigs or other animals (e.g. dogs) can enter the stable.
- Allow for disinfection facilities (or changing) for footwear and clothes at the entrance into the stable.

II - Biosecurity criteria for commercial farms:

- a) Same criteria as for NCF with, in addition, the following criteria:
- b) Stock-proof fencing of at least the stable and premises where feed and bedding are kept.
- c) Biosecurity plan approved/recommended by veterinary services according to the profile of farm and national legislation. This biosecurity plan should include, but is not limited to:
  - Establish the clean/dirty areas for personnel appropriate to the farm typology (e.g. changing rooms, shower, eating room).
  - Review, when applicable, the logistical arrangements for entry of new animals into the farm.
  - Detailed procedures for the disinfection of vehicles, fomites and personnel hygiene rules should be established and applied.
  - Set rules on food for workers on site and ban the keeping of pigs at workers' homes if applicable.
  - Dedicated recurrent awareness programme for all workers on the farm.
  - Review logistical arrangements in order to ensure proper separation between production units. Avoid pigs being in contact (directly or indirectly) with animal by-products and other production units.
  - Internal basic audit or self-evaluation for enforcing the biosecurity measures.

III - Biosecurity criteria for outdoor farms:

Outdoor keeping of pigs is banned.

2.1.3. Inspection and investigation regime

Inspection and investigation have to be performed by official veterinarians or contracted/designated veterinarians of the veterinary services. These are to be supported by awareness campaigns addressed to farmers.

Inspections of holdings will take place minimum once per year in the areas listed in the Annex to Commission Decision 2014/709/EU. This area can be further extended based on a risk assessment carried out by the competent authority. Inspection means that the veterinarian at task performs a veterinary interview with the farmer and observes and examines the pigs. In case of suspicion samples for laboratory investigations are taken. During the inspection the veterinarians are checking the identification of pigs, biosecurity of the farm and perform a verification of the owner data while performing a census of the pigs.

Investigation will be performed in the whole country. The principle of investigation will be based on an enhanced passive surveillance (examination of pig plus sampling for ASF if appropriate).

2.1.4. Recurrent awareness campaigns to target farmers (especially from NCF) should be performed at least for informing about the strategy and the role of the farmer so to encourage their full involvement in implantation of biosecurity rules, rapid reporting and participation in surveillance.

2.1.5. Sampling for laboratory investigations will be performed

- a) In case of clinical signs resembling ASF (e.g. fever or haemorrhagic lesions). If necessary, sampling should be repeated to exclude ASF when specific clinical signs occur.
- b) Each week, in the form of virological testing of at least the first two deaths (post weaning pigs or pigs older than 2 months) in each production unit.
- c) When ante or post-mortem signs raise suspicion at home slaughtering at least within the area covered by Commission Decision 2014/709/EU.

2.1.6. Laboratory tests for screening

- PCR from blood or organs has to be performed always for early detection and confirmation of ASF.
- Ab-ELISA: facultative if epidemiologically relevant (e.g. for research purposes or to date the moment of introduction).
- IPT (immunoperoxidase test): confirmatory test for ASF antibody detection either in serum and exudate tissue samples.

2.1.7. Area of application of the measures

Unless stated otherwise above, measure should be applied in the areas listed in the Annex to Commission Decision 2014/709/(EU).

### **3) ASF Main measures for management of wild boar populations in the context of ASF control**

The wild boar population plays an important role in spreading and maintaining African swine fever. Adequate wild boar management<sup>7</sup> in areas affected and not affected by the disease is of paramount importance and it demands the development of a common strategy.

Hunting practices should be adapted to the epidemiological evolution of the disease due to their effects on the wild boar populations.

Particular attention should be given to the finding of the carcasses in newly infected areas. Usually first found carcasses do not represent the first cases of the disease in that area, therefore it is a need to enhance passive surveillance and testing of all carcasses on the basis of the risk assessed by the country.

As specified in Annex II the wild boar management requires cooperation of veterinary services with other stakeholders such as forestry management bodies, environmental

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<sup>7</sup> EFSA Journal 2018;16(11):5494

authorities and hunters and is essential for both prevention, early detection and control of ASF. The measures taken in the framework of this strategy mentioned above will have to be compatible with EU environmental, hunting and veterinary legislation (European and National), including nature protection requirements and properly assessed in terms of scientific basis, impact and effectiveness.

Wild boar management in relation to ASF to be taken in different areas:

- (i) In all areas
- (ii) Free areas
- (iii) Free areas bordering infected areas
- (iv) Infected areas (to eradicate)
- (v) Infected areas (to control)

The approach could differ from area to area and based on the time the disease has been present in a given area. The different phases of the infection can be identified through a continuous system of passive surveillance for early detection of ASF in wild boar coupled with testing of shot wild boar.

The areas should as well take into account the existing wild boar population dynamics, distribution, densities, the existence of natural or artificial barriers and environmental and climatic differences.

The main measures for management of wild boar should be implemented as follow:

### **3.1.1. Wild boar management in relation to ASF – in all areas**

Wild boar management practices should be aimed at reducing the wild boar population density. The following points for controlling the wild boar population are to be applied in all areas.

- a) Sustained feeding of wild boar is prohibited.
- b) Baiting is allowed (non-sustained feeding, limited food only for attracting wild boar for trapping and/or culling, not exceed 10kg/km<sup>2</sup>/month).
- c) Targeted hunting/culling is encouraged in order to target adult and sub-adult females. The overall hunting bag should be balanced between male and females (50% each). Priority in reaching the quotas should be given to adult and sub-adult females.
- d) In line with national legislation, additional technical equipment for hunting may be used to reach the objective of the strategic approach.
- e) The minimum biosecurity requirements for hunters are applied (see 3.1.6.).

### **3.1.2. Measures to be taken in free areas**

In free areas, management of carcasses of wild boar found dead is left to the authority in charge according to national legislation. However, it is important to sample the carcasses of wild board found dead, according to a risk assessment of the Competent Authority. In any Member States, hunters should be trained to be aware of the existence of the disease and

on the best practice in case of finding of a suspect carcass. Where hunting is not under the Competent Authority but under other authorities (e.g. hunters or environment associations), collaboration should be granted.

- a) Surveillance (key measure):
  - i. Principle of sampling should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: found carcasses, including road killed wild boar where relevant and sick wild boar have to be tested for ASF using PCR.
  - ii. Is recommended that samples be delivered as soon as possible to the laboratory max within 48-72h from the sampling .
- b) Hunting to obtain reduction of wild boar density.
- c) Hunting including trapping should be addressed as result of collaboration between competent authority and responsible organisations, where appropriate <sup>8</sup>.
- d) On the basis of points above, testing for ASF of hunted animals is encouraged, carcass for personal consumption if results are negative.
- e) The competent authority addresses the use of fencing<sup>9</sup>.

### **3.1.3. Measures to be taken in free areas bordering infected areas**

Where hunting is not under the Competent Authority but under other authorities (e.g. hunters or environment associations), collaboration should be granted.

- a) Surveillance (key measure):
  - i. Principle of sampling should be based on a risk assessment and on enhanced passive surveillance: found carcasses, including road killed wild boar where relevant and sick wild boar have to be tested for ASF using PCR.
  - ii. Active patrolling to find carcasses (trained staff) in order to reinforce passive surveillance.
  - iii. Is recommended that samples be delivered as soon as possible to the laboratory max within 48-72h from the sampling .
- b) Baiting is allowed for trapping and culling.
- c) Intensive hunting to obtain a reduction of wild boar density.
- d) Driven and solo hunt are allowed.
- e) Wild boar management addressed and encouraged (involving public and private sectors) to reach population reduction goals, the hunters are considered part of the strategy.
- f) Biosecurity in place (hunting grounds fulfil the prescribed biosecurity measures approved by competent authority) (see 3.1.6.).
- g) Trapping for culling/hunting and testing for ASF is permitted, carcass for personal consumption if results are negative (in case of hunting).
- h) Competent authority addresses culling, hunting and trapping in collaboration with other relevant authorities.

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<sup>8</sup> EFSA Journal 2018;16(11):5494

<sup>9</sup> EFSA Journal 2018;16(11):5494



- i) The use of fencing should be addressed by competent authority in collaboration with other relevant authorities.
- j) Disposal of all found dead wild boar, as foreseen by competent authority.
- k) Restriction of areas should be managed by competent authority according to specific procedures.

#### **3.1.4. Measures to be taken in infected areas to eradicate the disease**

Passive surveillance will help you to define in which epidemic phase you are (e.g. decreased phase when you find less carcasses of dead wild boar). The purpose of banning hunting activities should be read as a measure to prevent the spread of contamination. Hunting of all species should be banned, as well as any activities in the forest. In practice no actions in the area(s) until the decreasing of the epidemic curve is consolidated and identified through a continuous system of passive surveillance. Fences<sup>10</sup> may limit the movement of wild boar thereby contributing to slowing the spread of the disease. The environmental legislation, either national or EU based, should be taken into account

- a) Surveillance (key measure):
  - i. Principle of sampling should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: all found carcasses and sick wild boar have to be tested for ASF using PCR.
  - ii. Active patrolling to find carcasses (trained staff) in order to reinforce passive surveillance.
  - iii. Is recommended that samples be delivered as soon as possible to the laboratory max within 48-72h from the sampling .
- b) Baiting is allowed for trapping and for culling.
- c) Total ban of hunting activities should be done until the epidemic phase has decreased. The Group of experts will define when the end of the epidemic phase might have been reached.
- d) No driven hunts.
- e) Biosecurity measures in hunting grounds applied by all persons searching for and handling wild boar carcasses (e.g. avoid possible contamination of vehicles, yards and houses).
- f) Restricted access to the infected area. Only authorised staff in the area. Farmland can have access on the basis of derogations.
- g) Specific training for hunters to reduce the probability of further spread of the virus in the environment and outside the infected area.
- h) Containers to store wild boar carcasses in each hunting ground or at least within the infected area if not possible otherwise. In each storage-point means for cleaning and disinfection have to be available.
- i) Trapping for culling and testing is permitted.
- j) Culling, by trained hunters, allowed to eradicate when the endemic phase has been reached (after the epidemic phase) and under the supervision of CA.

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<sup>10</sup> EFSA Scientific Report: Epidemiological analyses of African swine fever in the European Union (November 2017 until November 2018);

- k) No dressing of the animals (no evisceration). Shot wild boar to be put in plastic bags to minimise the risk of spreading the fluids of the animal.
- l) Testing for ASF of all wild boar found dead and culled. All hunted wild boar tested for ASF virus detection using PCR and for Ab detection.
- m) Disposal of all carcasses
- n) Fencing should be done in defined areas. Timely built to slow down the disease speeding and anticipating the Epi-wave. Addressed to limit the spread. Compliant to EU for environment.

### **3.1.5. Measures to be taken in infected areas to control the disease**

Area where the disease is present and where the specific measures described in point 3.1.4. are not applicable anymore.

- a) Surveillance:
  - i. Principle of sampling should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: all found carcasses and sick wild boar have to be tested for ASF using PCR.
  - ii. Active patrolling to find carcasses (trained staff) in order to reinforce passive surveillance.
- b) Baiting is allowed for trapping, culling and hunting.
- c) Hunting finalised to collect samples for testing.
- d) Minimum biosecurity requirements should be foreseen during hunting and carcass removal (see point 3.1.6).
- e) Trapping and testing for ASF is permitted, carcass for local personal consumption if results are negative.
- f) Culling by trained hunters.
- g) Testing for ASF of all wild boar found dead and culled. All hunted wild boar tested for ASF virus detection using PCR and for Ab detection.
- h) Disposal of all carcasses of trapped or hunted wild boar if positive.
- i) Disposal of carcasses of found dead wild boar.
- j) Fencing not needed. However, fencing can be kept according to the risk assessment of the competent authority.

### **3.1.6. Minimum biosecurity requirements for hunters and for all staff searching for and handling wild boar carcasses:**

These should be foreseen by the competent authority; at least these aspects should be included every time hunting of wild boar is performed or wild boar carcasses are handled in areas under restriction as defined in Decision 2014/709/EU or in at risk areas :

- a) An adequate amount of dressing facilities should be available. Where possible, at least one dedicated authorised dressing facility should be available for each hunting ground. In case dressing area is not present in the hunting ground, then the closest hunting ground with a dressing facility should be used. The dressing area should be protected against unauthorised access by people and animals, equipped with water, sufficient effective disinfectants available and waste collection equipment.

- b) For each hunting ground a facility/premise should be equipped with refrigerator (or procedures reaching equivalent results in terms of keeping the carcass until laboratory results are available).
- c) Hunted wild boar should remain in the premises of the hunting ground until tested; only negative carcasses can be released. To achieve this individual identification of carcasses is required.
- d) Offal from hunted wild boar should not be removed from the animal in the field; shot wild boar should be brought to dedicated authorised dressing facilities limiting loss of body fluids (including blood).
- e) After dressing the wild boar, the place and equipment used (including transport vehicles) should be washed and disinfected with effective disinfectants.
- f) Animal by products should be collected and processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009.
- g) Biosecurity measures shall be applied when searching for and handling wild boar carcasses to avoid possible contamination of vehicles, yards and houses.

**3.1.7. Sampling of wild boar in Member States covered by Decision 2014/709/EU as follows:**

- a) Principle of sampling in the whole country (areas regulated by Decision 2014/709/EU and free areas of the same Member State) should be based on enhanced passive surveillance: all found dead and sick wild boar have to be tested for ASF using PCR on the basis of a risk assessment performed by the Competent Authority. In areas included in Parts II and III of the Annex of Decision 2014/709/EU, sampling in case of group of wild boar found dead simultaneously on the same spot can be pooled for PCR testing from a representative sample of the group.
- b) Additional sampling (active surveillance) from hunted animals has to be performed as regulated by Decision 2014/709/EU. In areas of Part I of the Annex to Decision 2014/709/EU all hunted animals which are intended to be taken out of that area must be tested for ASF (PCR). In areas of Part II and III of the Annex to Decision 2014/709/EU sampling of all hunted animals and of all found dead/sick animals has to be conducted (100% sampling and testing by PCR). The hunted animals of these areas should be tested additionally for antibodies against ASF virus.
- c) From hunted animals only blood samples are requested (organs in case of blood samples unavailable).

**3.1.8. Removal of wild boar carcasses in Member States covered by Decision 2014/709/EU:**

- a) Carcass searching and safe disposal to be carried out at least in the areas listed in the annex of Decision 2014/709/EU and in any at risk area as defined by the competent authority. The faster infected carcasses are found and safely removed, the better.
- b) In case of detection of ASF in unaffected areas, the passive finding of carcasses should be supplemented by active search by professionals in hotspots established by the competent authority.

- c) The disposal of carcasses to be carried out either by deep burial, bringing to the rendering plant or burning (under supervision of the competent veterinary authorities). Possible use of appropriate chemicals for local disinfection.

#### 3.1.9. Relevant terms and definitions.

**Baiting:** (non-sustaining feeding of wild boar): Attracting of wild boar with limited food (e.g. maize) only for the purpose of hunting, trapping or culling. The maximum amount of food should not exceed 10kg/km<sup>2</sup>/month. Baiting should not in any case, represent a source of feeding wild boar for sustaining the population during winter.

**Culling of wild boar:** shooting of wild boar with the intention of collecting and rendering the whole carcass (no dressing takes place).

**Dead wild boar:** according to the level of risk each wild boar carcass should be managed in line to this strategic approach (e.g. dead wild boar in free areas or in infected area)

**Carcass:** the term carcass covers both found dead animals and shot animals.

**Risk:** each country should perform a risk assessment to define its own level of risk<sup>11</sup>.

**Feeding places/devises for other species:** (e.g. wild ruminants): Such feeding places for wild ruminants should not be accessible for wild boar. The feed should not be attractive for wild boar (e.g. hay).

**Trapping:** catching wild boar with traps.

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<sup>11</sup>EFSA Journal 2018;16(11):5494

## Annex I

### KEY MESSAGES FOR AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGNS IN MEMBER STATES<sup>12, 13</sup>.

#### RELEVANCE OF THE DISEASE:

ASF is a devastating, usually deadly, infectious disease of pigs and wild boar; it represents a serious threat to pig farmers worldwide; it does not affect humans nor other species but there is no treatment or vaccine for ASF. The disease can cause severe health impact on farms, disruption of international trade of animals and animal products, and massive economic losses.

The pig sector is one of the most economically significant farming sectors in the EU.

- It represents 8.5% of the total output of the EU agricultural industry, the highest when compared to other meat sector (year 2016, source DG AGRI).
- Pigmeat accounts for 50% of total EU meat production (year 2018, data source DG AGRI).
- Pigmeat is the most exported of all the meats produced in the EU: it represents 59% of EU total meat exports (year 2018, data source DG AGRI).
- During the planning of awareness campaigns the importance of the pig sector at local level and not only at EU level should be highlighted.

The awareness campaigns should be built on facts (e.g. ASF kills pigs and wild boar, can hamper livelihood of farmers, can make local wild boar population decrease significantly or even disappear) to inform, educate and motivate all stakeholders in order to increase surveillance and reporting, enhance prevention practice and prevent further spread and introduction of ASF in new areas.

Particular relevance should be given to the reasons and benefits for stakeholders to act, and disadvantages if actions against ASF are not taken.

Communication should be frequent, multiple communication channels should be properly chosen. Opportunities for audience feedback and evaluation should be created.

Awareness campaigns should be periodically reviewed to take into account new information.

Awareness campaigns should be tailored to reach the intended target audience. The main target groups should include:

1. VETERINARIANS (public and private)

Why should ASF be stopped?

- ASF represents a serious threat to pig farming.
- There are no treatments or vaccines for ASF.
- The disease can cause massive economic losses at local, national and EU level.

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<sup>12</sup> [http://web.oie.int/rr-europe/eng/regprog/en\\_ASF\\_depository.htm#ASFcampaignmaterial](http://web.oie.int/rr-europe/eng/regprog/en_ASF_depository.htm#ASFcampaignmaterial)

<sup>13</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/regulatory\\_committee/presentations\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/health/regulatory_committee/presentations_en)

What veterinary services should do to stop ASF?

- Perform surveillance.
- Ensure transparent and prompt reporting of suspicions.
- Contribute to and monitor awareness campaigns.
- Apply biosecurity measures between visits (bio-hygienic measures)<sup>14</sup>.
- Ensure and advice to enhance biosecurity<sup>4</sup> in holdings.

Suggested communication tools:

- Press material, articles, media buying in specialised magazines and regional/local media
- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed by targeted mailing to veterinarian associations
- Organisation of events, seminars training, conferences for this target
- Online web and social media
- Short videos and animations –only if distributed to target

## 2. FARMERS

Why should ASF be stopped?

- ASF represents a serious threat to pig farming.
- The disease can cause massive economic losses (direct and indirect).
- ASF can threaten farmer's livelihood.

What farmers should do to stop ASF?

- Report signs and symptoms of African swine fever or abnormal mortality.
- Make sure that all leftover food is put in sealed waste containers and not feed to domestic and feral pigs.
- Ensure and enhance biosecurity at farm level as agreed with competent authority.

Suggested communication tools:

- Press material, articles, media buying in specialised magazines and regional/local media
- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed by targeted mailing to farmers associations
- Organisation of events, seminars training, conferences for this target
- Online web and social media
- Short videos and animations –only if distributed to target

## 3. HUNTERS

Why should ASF be stopped?

- To avoid restriction or ban of hunting, limitations for hunting tourism and significant economic losses to the hunting sector in infected areas.

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<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad\\_control-measures\\_asf\\_wrk-doc-sante-2015-7113.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad_control-measures_asf_wrk-doc-sante-2015-7113.pdf)

- Because of ASF the disease wild boar populations can decrease significantly or even disappear.
- Infected wild boar contaminate the environment making more likely secondary outbreaks in domestic pigs.
- If ASF is not contained in limited area, the virus might persist in the environment for a long time with a very difficult exit strategy.

What hunters should do to stop ASF?

- Collaborate with the competent authority in the finding, rapid reporting and safe removal from the environment of wild boar carcasses.
- Clean and disinfect equipment, clothes, vehicle and trophies on site and always before leaving the area.
- Eviscerate shot wild boar in the designated dressing area of the hunting ground.
- Contribute to the gradual reduction of the wild boar density in the areas not yet affected by the disease, including targeted hunting of adult and sub-adult females.
- Do not feed wild boar throughout the whole year.

Suggested communication tools:

- Press material, articles, media buying in specialised magazines and regional/local media
- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed by targeted mailing to hunters associations, but also in airports, train stations, other transport facilities, including borders and in natural areas near wild boar
- Organisation of events, seminars training, conferences for this target
- Online web and social media
- Short videos and animations –only if distributed to target

#### 4. GENERAL PUBLIC (Including travellers and transporters of feeds/foods)

Why should ASF be stopped?

- To actively participate in protecting and animal health and pig producers livelihood.
- To actively contribute to stop ASF causing massive economic losses.
- To comply with legislation.

What the general public should do to stop ASF?

- Do not introduce live pigs or pigs' products (fresh pork, refrigerated or frozen pork, sausages, ham salt-cured meat, pig fat) from extra EU territories.
- Only move pork and other pig products from ASF restricted areas only if it is labelled with the EU oval stamp.
- Do not leave food in area accessible to wild boar

Suggested communication tools:

- Online web and social media

- Short videos and animations –to be displayed when general public is travelling –airports, train stations and other transport facilities, including borders- in natural areas near wild boar or in super markets
- Press material, articles, media buying in travel, food or environmental magazines
- Print material: Posters, Leaflets, Factsheets -to be distributed in transport facilities, supermarkets or natural parks



## Annex II

### MAIN MEASURES FOR ASF PREVENTION AND EARLY DETECTION IN MEMBER STATES FREE FROM ASF

The main measures in Member States free from ASF should be aiming for best prevention practice, early detection and to preparedness for the possible occurrence of ASF in previously free areas. These measures should be coupled to the ones taken in free areas as described in section 3 and adapted to the specific situation in each Member State or region. Particular attention should be given to the management of wild boar populations, pig farming sector and targeted public awareness campaigns. The main measures should include:

#### 1. MANAGEMENT OF WILD BOAR

- The risk and the consequences of any new introduction of ASF in an ASF-free wild boar population should be effectively minimised through preventive long-term actions aimed at reducing wild boar population density in ASF-free areas. This long-term management requires coordination with other stakeholders such as forestry management bodies and hunters and is essential for both prevention and early detection of ASF. Therefore, cooperation on the management of wild boar from both the agricultural and environmental sides is essential and it should start when Member State or region is still free from ASF.
- Hunters should be aware of the risks related to ASF and should be trained to actively contribute to passive surveillance, active dissemination of information and adapt their practices to the possible disease situation. They should enforce wild boar management practices and biosecurity measures aimed at minimising the risk of the disease entering into new areas.
- Biosecurity during hunting should be enhanced gradually going towards what is described in point 3.1.4. and in the GF-TADs “African swine fever in wild boar -

ecology and biosecurity<sup>15</sup> . Efforts should be undertaken to establish a dialogue and promote the importance of these measures to the hunting society.

- The efforts (hunting management, ban of supplementary feeding, agricultural practises) in ASF free areas should be undertaken to reduce wild boar populations, where appropriate. Intensive hunting of adult and sub-adult females and not feeding wild boar should be implemented to reduce the population density and the risks of ASF, as highlighted in the scientific opinion of EFSA of July 2018<sup>16</sup>. A long-term management strategy of wild boar population, including its appropriate reduction should be determined after an assessment of the potential effects, 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 State.<sup>17</sup>
- Due to possible spreading of the disease through infected material (for ex. infected pork or wild boar meat/products), certain risk mitigating measures should be taken along major land infrastructure routes, such as international communication roads, and related road networks, in particular in forestry areas. For example, these measures could include:
  - fencing of parking places in forestry areas,
  - limited access of animals to food waste bins (wild boar-proof waste bins)
  - increased frequency of food waste collection from parking places in forestry areas and rendering of such food waste.

## 2. PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Specific trainings should be organised for targeted groups (at least for official and private veterinarians, commercial and non-commercial farmers, hunters, forestry guards) to inform about the risks of ASF and possible prevention, biosecurity and control measures.

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<sup>15</sup> [https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal\\_Health\\_in\\_the\\_World/docs/pdf/ASF/EN\\_Manual\\_ASFinwildboar\\_2019\\_Web.pdf](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal_Health_in_the_World/docs/pdf/ASF/EN_Manual_ASFinwildboar_2019_Web.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/5344>

<sup>17</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad\\_control-measures\\_asf\\_conf-20181219\\_statement.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad_control-measures_asf_conf-20181219_statement.pdf)

- Specific and targeted awareness-raising campaigns should be tailored according to the specific situation in each Member State and are already compulsory in all Member States under EU legislation<sup>18</sup>.
- Member States should ensure that on all major land infrastructure routes, such as international communication roads, and related road networks, appropriate information on the risks of the transmission of African swine fever and on the relevant control measures are brought to the attention of all travellers in a visible and prominent manner. In particular, that information must be presented in a way that is easily understood by travellers coming from, and going to, the areas of Member States that are affected by the disease or are at the high risk or from third countries at risk of the spread of ASF (see Annex I on key messages for awareness raising campaigns in Member States).
- Possible spreading of the disease through infected pork or wild boar meat thrown away by humans (for example, travellers or professional drivers) entering the EU or also travelling within Member States, along European roads, through the habitats of wild boar deserves particular and urgent attention. This source of spreading is defined as 'human factor', and it can be the origin of unexpected long distance spread of ASF in Member States. Relevant routine public awareness campaigns should raise awareness of the risk of ASF along major highways. For example, this could include:
  - banners on the highways,
  - specific posters in the parking places in a forestry areas,
  - specific information campaigns in gas stations in forestry areas,
  - information to the professional long-distance drivers via national transport associations.

### 3. PIG FARMING SECTOR

- Review and update the ASF contingency plans to ensure they respond the actual needs with:

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<sup>18</sup> Article 15a of Commission Implementing Decision 2014/709/EU of 9 October 2014 concerning animal health control measures relating to African swine fever in certain Member States and repealing Implementing Decision 2014/178/EU (OJ L 295, 11.10.2014, p. 63)

- an updated chain of command,
  - an updated biosecurity measures in case of outbreak,
  - pre-approved solutions for culling and disposing of pigs in case of outbreaks (for example, supply of gas, pre-agreed burial places),
  - availability of staff and equipment for emergency operations,
  - relevant communications strategies,
  - collaboration with other public institutions (for ex. in charge of environment, transport, agriculture, customs and border protection and etc.).
- Bearing in mind the minimum biosecurity requirements provided under point 2.1.2., set up a dialogue with the commercial and non-commercial pig sector in order to enhance awareness and gradually bring to an upscaling of the biosecurity measures in the Member States.
- Ensure minimum requirements are in place for an effective passive surveillance in pig holdings. Review the number of samples tested regularly to assess the effectiveness of the passive surveillance in place and assess the use of tools to enhance reporting rate (e.g. awareness campaigns, incentives).
- Based on a risk analysis, set up the appropriate frequency of inspection of both commercial and non-commercial holdings in order to promote awareness and biosecurity for pig farms.
- If necessary, review of national legislation to allow preventive slaughter or preventive killing of pigs should take place.

#### 4. OTHER

- Implement official controls at borders to detect undeclared goods (food) that may be contaminated by ASF and are derived from pigs (pork, and wild boar ham, sausages, bacon, etc.). This activity should be complemented by the use of the Risk Information Form (RIF) that the Commission issued through the EU Customs Risk Management System (CRMS) for the custom services of the EU.
- Enhanced cooperation and public awareness on ASF risks and control measures with relevant public institutions (for ex. in charge of environment, transport, agriculture, customs and border protection, military trainings and movements)

and relevant stakeholders (for ex. farmers, hunters, forestry guards, private veterinarians, professional long-distance drivers) should take place in Member States, where appropriate.

- Enhanced cooperation on ASF with neighbouring Member States and/or third countries is of paramount importance for the agreement on cross-border measures.

Annex III – Table summarising recommendations described in Chapter 3

Topics		Measures for free areas	Measures for free areas bordering infected areas	Measures to eradicate the disease	Measures to control the disease
<b>Sustained Feeding</b>		Banned	Banned	Banned	Banned
<b>Baiting</b>		Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
<b>Hunting</b>	<b>Aim</b>	Increase hunting effort to reduce WB* population	Intensive hunting (maximal hunting effort)	Total ban of hunting activities of all species until the epidemic phase has decreased	Allowed, but only under strict biosecurity measures finalised to collect samples for testing
	<b>Degree of effort</b>	Increase hunting bag (quantitative effort)	Driven and solo hunts	Culling only after the epidemic phase has decreased	Culling by trained hunters
	<b>Methods</b>	Target female and sub-adults (qualitative effort) by usual hunting methods	Hunting at the highest level achievable in that area. Private/public involvement to achieve the objective to reduce WB population	No Driven hunts After epidemic phase has decreased hunting at the highest level achievable in that area. Private/public involvement to achieve the objective to reduce WB population	Hunting under strict biosecurity measures finalised to collect samples for testing
	<b>Collaboration</b>	Addressed by CA** in cooperation with responsible organisation on the basis of specific requirements/legislation of each country	Wild boar management addressed and encouraged through CA collaboration (involving public and private sectors) to reach population reduction goals, the hunters are considered part of the strategy	Wild boar management addressed and encouraged through CA oversight (involving public and private sectors) to reach population reduction goals, the hunters are considered part of the strategy	Wild boar management addressed and encouraged through CA oversight (involving public and private sectors) to reach population reduction goals, the hunters are considered part of the strategy
<b>Biosecurity</b>		Promoted, encouraged and sustained by CA	All that is in the strategy	All that is in the strategy	Required during hunting and carcass removal

<b>Restriction of areas</b>	No	Managed by the CA according to a risk assessment and to specific procedures	Area restricted Only authorised staff in the area Farmland can have access on the basis of derogation	Managed by the CA according to specific procedures
<b>Trapping</b>	Hunting and testing by Competent Authority carcass for personal consumption if negative	Hunting and testing by Competent Authority carcass for personal consumption if negative	Culling and testing by Competent Authority	Culling and testing by Competent Authority carcass for personal consumption if negative
<b>Culling</b>	Yes, is up to competent authority	Yes, is up to competent authority in collaboration with other relevant authorities	Allowed to eradicate when the endemic phase has been reached (after the epidemic phase) and under the supervision of CA. In practice no actions until the decreasing of the epidemic curve is consolidated and identified through a continuous system of passive surveillance	Yes
<b>Fencing</b>	Refer to EFSA for large scale fences. Depend to epidemiological factors	Country may to decide to delimit small areas to facilitate control measures	Defined areas. Timely built to slow down the disease speeding and anticipating the Epi-wave. Addressed to limit the spread. Compliant to EU for environment	Country to decide to keep delimited small areas to facilitate control measures
<b>Carcasses</b>	The carcasses should be managed by the CA according to specific procedures	Disposal of all carcasses of found dead wild boar.	Disposal of all carcasses	Disposal of all carcasses
<b>Surveillance</b>	Promote passive surveillance	Promote passive surveillance	Promote passive surveillance	Promote passive surveillance

	wild boar found dead sampled and tested on the basis of a risk assessment	Active patrolling to find dead wild boar and all dead wild boar tested	Active patrolling to find dead wild boar and all dead wild boar tested	Active patrolling to find dead wild boar and all dead wild boar tested
	Results of tests max within 48-72h from sampling	Results of tests max within 48-72h from sampling	Results of tests max within 48-72h from sampling	
<b>Key data</b>	wild boar found dead sampled and tested	On the basis of risk assessment: wild boar found dead sampled and tested and hunted wild boar tested for ASF virus detection. All carcasses tested if the risk evaluated is high.	All wild boar found dead and culled: sampled and tested All hunted wild boar tested	All wild boar found dead and culled: sampled and tested All hunted wild boar tested
<b>Testing</b>	virus detection	virus detection	virus detection + antibodies detection	virus detection + antibodies detection

\*WB : Wild boar

\*\*CA : Competent Authority



## **Annex IV**

# **NATIONAL ACTION PLANS ON WILD BOAR MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF ASF PREVENTION, CONTROL AND ERADICATION**

### **Background**

ASF is considered as a major and unprecedented animal health issue that world has ever faced. The prevention, control and eradication of ASF, is a matter of high priority for the EU as it represents a serious risk for an important sector of pig farming, the wild boar population and the environment.

The wild boar population in several regions of Europe increased substantially in recent decades and this plays an important role in the spreading and maintaining this disease.

To respond to this challenge, well-coordinated national efforts and close partnerships are crucial. Such partnerships, which should include relevant governmental sectors responsible for veterinary, agriculture, private sector (e.g. farmers, hunters) and civil society, must be coordinated to ensure efficient prevention and response to ASF risks and to avoid duplication of efforts.

### **Purpose and aim**

The main purpose and aim of National action plans on wild boar management in the context of ASF prevention, control and eradication is to ensure within each Member State a coordinated approach to prevent, control and eradicate ASF and long-term actions related to wild boar in a view of the ASF risk.

### **Guiding principles**

Alignment with Strategic approach on ASF management for the EU. All Member States<sup>19</sup>, where appropriate<sup>20</sup>, should have in place, by the end of 2020, National action plans on wild boar management in the context of ASF prevention, control and eradication that are aligned with the Strategic approach on ASF management for the EU and adapted to national priorities and specific contexts. The measures taken in the framework of the Strategic approach should be compatible with EU veterinary and environmental legislation, including nature protection requirements and properly assessed in terms of scientific basis, impact and effectiveness.

Multi-sectorial approach. All relevant sectors in addition to animal health or wild life management should have a sense of 'ownership' of the plan. Leadership and governance

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<sup>19</sup> National Action Plans should be developed in Member States even where the disease is not yet present.

<sup>20</sup> Taking into account the existence of wild boar population.

should be established in order to coordinate the strategic planning and ensure implementation of activities. All relevant sectors should be involved in preparing and implementing an action plan and thus should at least include the engagement of the following:

- all relevant ministries (e.g. agriculture, environment),
- competent veterinary authorities,
- research and academic institutes,
- farmer/hunter/veterinarian organizations,
- civil society.

Period of implementation and periodic review. Plan should foresee long-term actions (2021-2025) and should be reviewed annually with a view to assess and update the plan in terms of ASF epidemiological situation, scientific development, impact and effectiveness.

Main elements of a plan. A plan should include at least:

- The strategic objectives and priorities.
- The description of scientific data guiding the measures foreseen in the plan, where relevant and if different from the Strategic approach for ASF management for the EU.
- The description of roles and functions of relevant institutions and stakeholders.
- The description of budget plan, if relevant.
- The estimates of wild boar population (including targets for annual hunting bags) within a country or region based on harmonised methodologies (if and when available from EFSA's scientific recommendations) or, in the absence of EFSA's assessments - other methods,.
- The description of hunting management within the country (e.g. hunting grounds, hunting associations, hunting seasons, specific hunting methods and tools).
- The description of targets and means for appropriate reduction of wild boar, where relevant.
- The description of ongoing or planned studies, experiments or pilot projects to define alternative wild boar population reduction methods, where relevant.
- The description and links to national biosecurity requirements related to hunting of wild boar and relevant biosecurity measures (e.g. protection from feral animals) for pig farms.
- Implementation arrangements and a timetable.
- Communication strategy, related links and description of targeted awareness and training campaigns on ASF for hunting society in the country to prevent introduction and dissemination of ASF through the human factor.
- Joint programmes of cooperation between the agriculture and environmental sector ensuring sustainable hunting management, implementation of ban of supplementary

feeding and agricultural practises aiming to prevent, control and eradicate ASF, where relevant.

- Cross-border cooperation with other MS and/or third countries in relation to wild boar management.

Publication of a plan. A plan should be presented to other Member States in the framework of Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed and, where relevant, published on the internet at national level.