



**European Commission  
Community Veterinary Emergency Team**

**Ref: CVET: BTV6-NL**

**Date: 7 November 2008**

## **BLUETONGUE VIRUS TYPE 6 (BTV-6)**

### **IN THE NETHERLANDS**

**Preliminary Report (Working document)**

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# BTV-6 in the Netherlands



24 October 2008

- The Netherlands reported 4 BTV-6 positive cattle

Two Provinces affected

- Gelderland (one positive)
- Overijssel (three positive)

Disease control zones

- Controlled zone (50km radius)
- Restricted Zone – rest of country



# European Commission

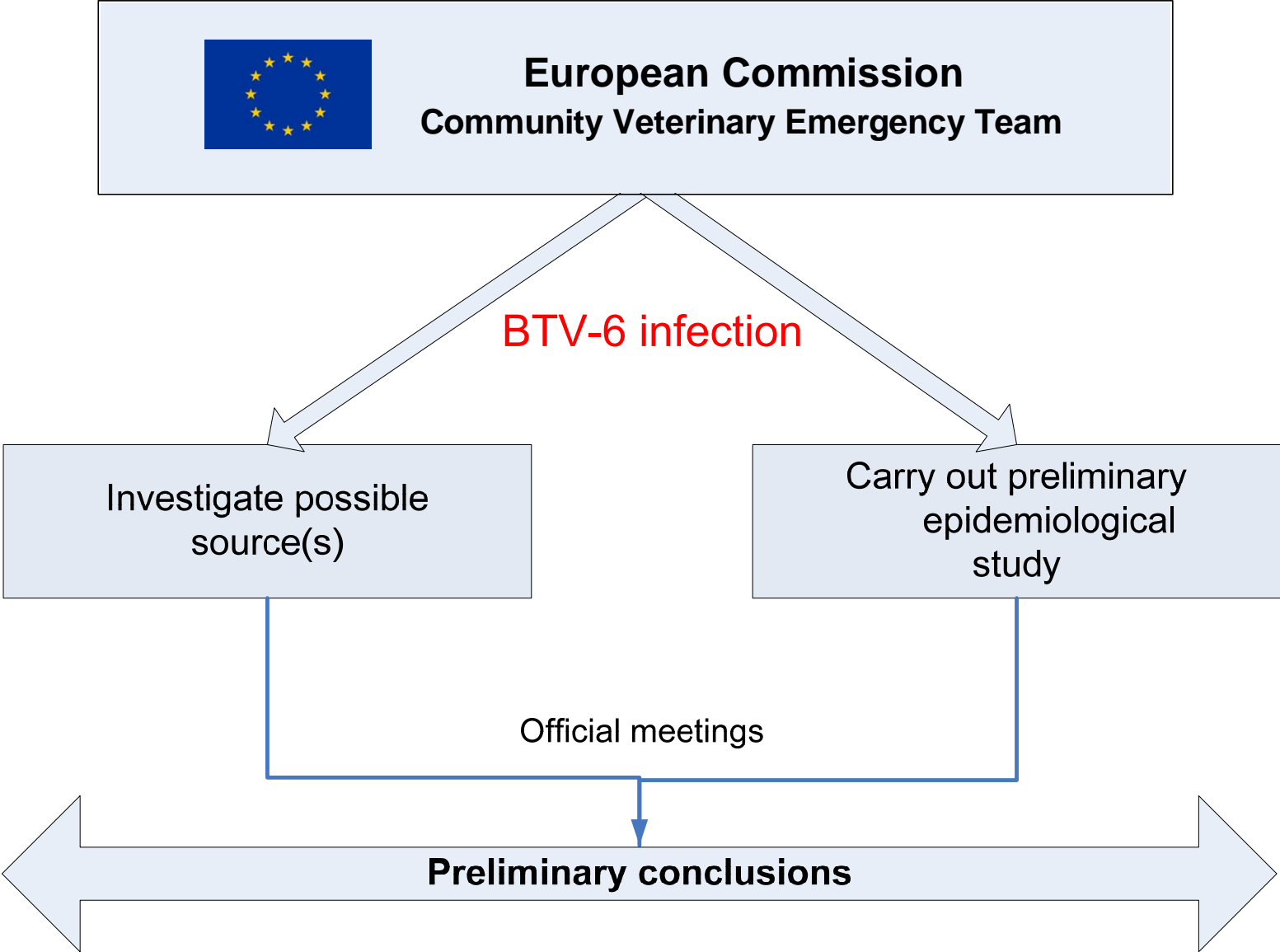
- ➔ **Emergency SCoFCAH Meeting – 28 Oct 2008**
- ➔ **Community Veterinary Emergency Team (CVET)**
  - Mission to the Netherlands (5-7 Nov 2008)

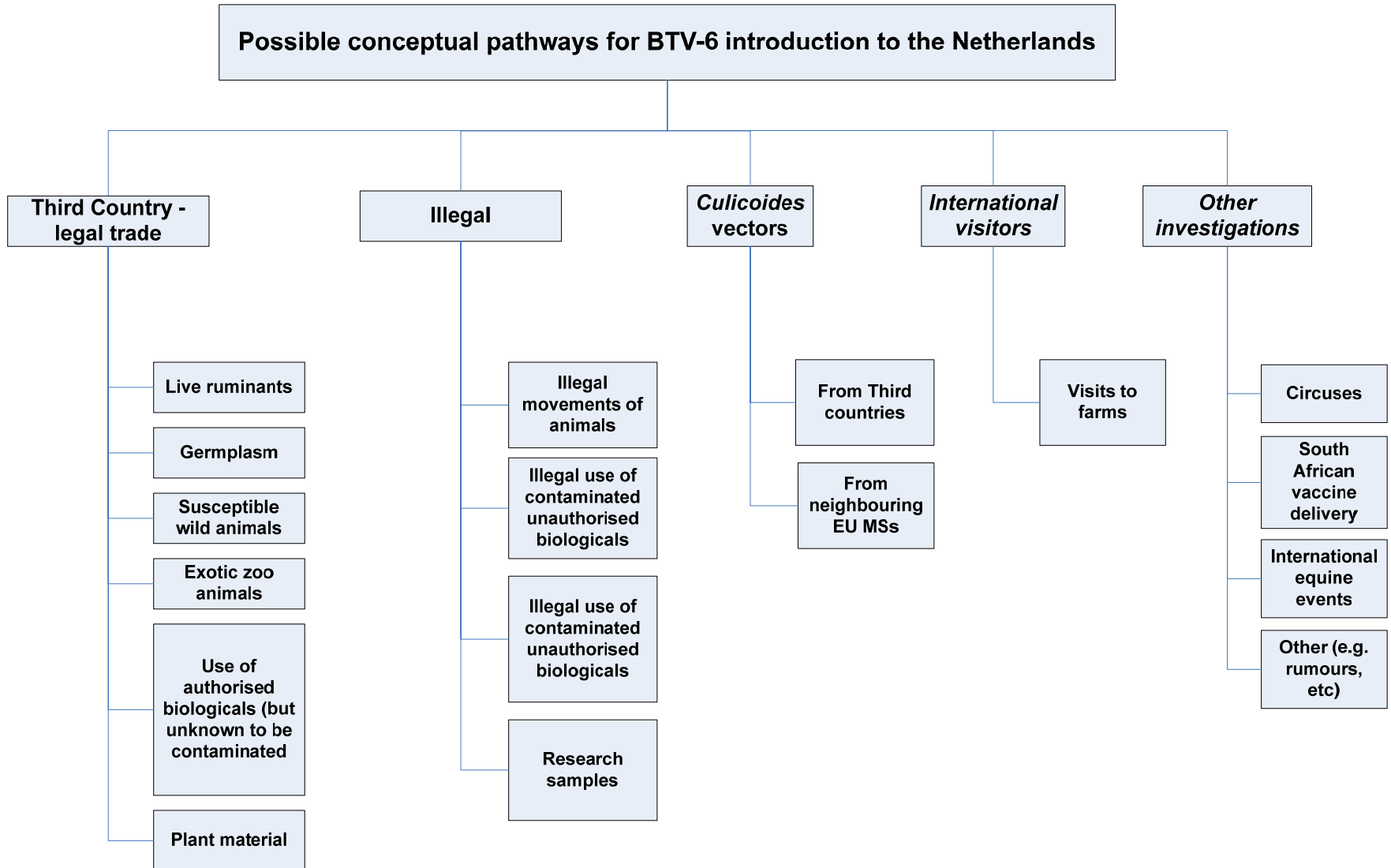
## ➔ **CVET Objectives:**



- Study the epidemiology of BTV-8 outbreaks in the country and the circulation of BTV-6 strain;
- Analyse the epidemiology and laboratory data on BTV-6;
- Support risk assessment on BTV-6 circulation;
- Provide recommendations and immediate to medium-term needs for surveillance and control.

# Methodology







## Preliminary conclusions:

### The virus

- BTV-6 VP2 segment sequencing – 99.9% identical to live vaccine BTV-6 strain;

### Legal trade – Third country

- Live ruminants imports – highly unlikely;
- Three consignments of live alpacas from Chile – highly unlikely;
- Germplasm – no imports taken place from South Africa;
- Use of commercially available BTV-8 inactivated vaccine; cross-contamination unlikely; investigation underway;

### Illegal activities

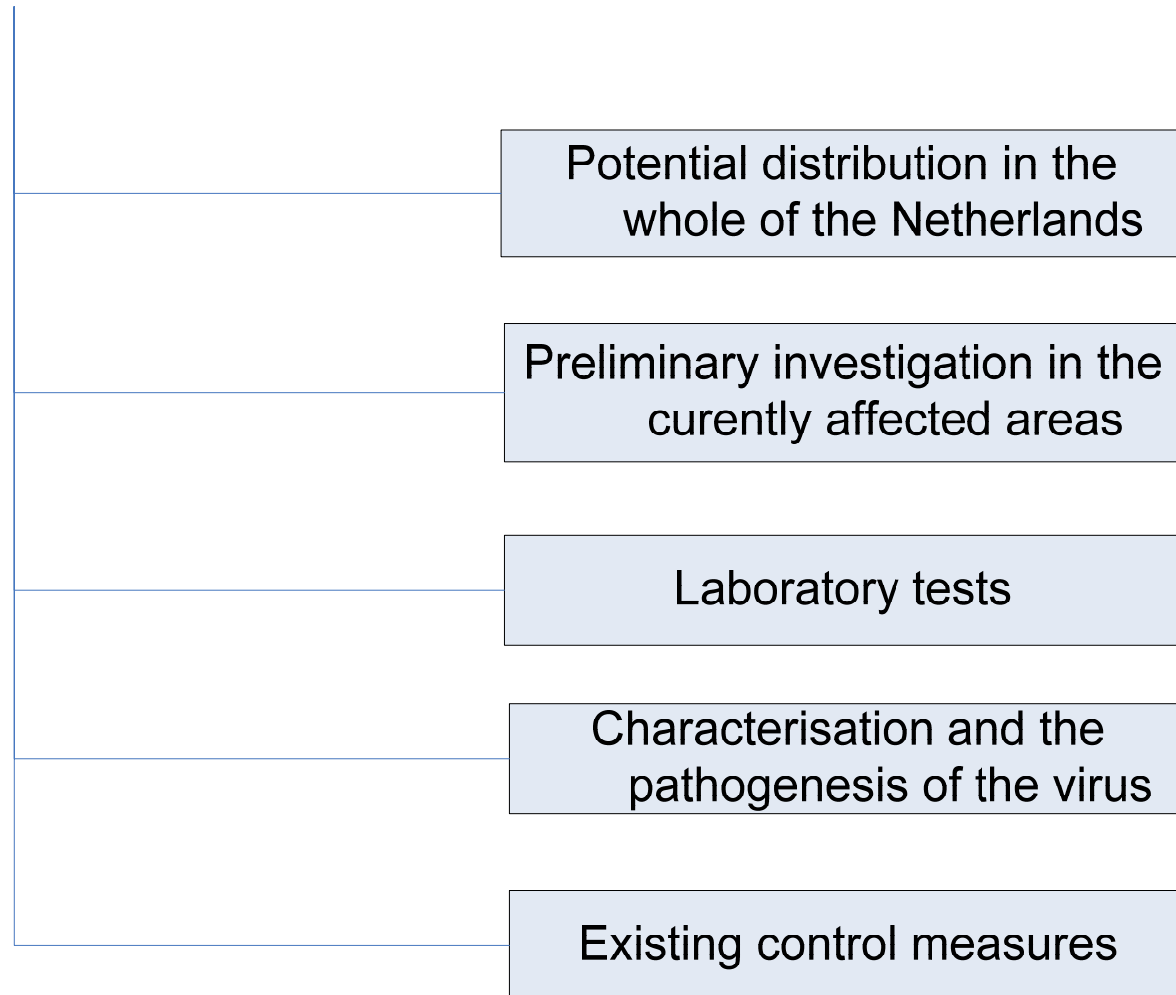
- Currently not possible to determine - investigations underway (and should take into account that could have happened a while ago);

### Collaborative approach

- The Netherlands-German collaboration.



## BTV-6 infection





## Preliminary conclusions:

### The virus

- BTV-6 VP2 segment sequencing – the virus is more likely to be a vaccine strain for the time being;
- Still not possible to determine whether the first introduction may have occurred to the Netherlands or to Germany;
- Disseminated over relatively large area although at apparently low level; able to cause clinical signs in cattle; no clinical signs in sheep observed;
- Full sequencing underway (BTV- 6 virus isolate – NL; South African BTV-6 vaccine strain; BTV-6 reference strain);
- Further genotypic and phenotypic studies planned/underway.



## Preliminary conclusions:

### Surveillance

- No active continuous BT surveillance is currently carried out in the Netherlands, as yet;
- Under the current circumstances - no further benefit from random surveillance in the currently affected area;
- Serological testing – sera already collected (i.e. suspect cases; samples from affected and neighbouring herds within the Controlled zone);
- A “step-wise” approach – from the affected herds and neighbouring herds first (approx 3300 samples), need for further testing to take into account evolving epidemiological investigation;
- Collaboration between the Netherlands and Germany continues;
- In-house developed tests to be validated/harmonised.



## **Preliminary conclusions:**

### **Existing control measures**

- Existing precautionary measures in the Netherlands (and Germany) seem to be adequate and proportionate;
- Collaboration between the Netherlands and Germany continues;
- Review current measures in light of new epidemiological information.



## Preliminary conclusions:

## Potential for further spread:

- At this stage difficult to ascertain whether BTV-6 incursion will follow a similar pattern to BTV-8 incursion in 2006;
- Short-term developments with BTV-6 likely;
- Early stages - many uncertainties remain - further assessment of potential spread on the basis of:
  - field investigations,
  - surveillance,
  - genetic and phylogenetic studies,
  - meteorological and entomological studies;
- Collaboration between the Netherlands and Germany continues;
- Discussion on appropriateness of the measures in place, eventual review of EU rules, if required.



## **Acknowledgement:**

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