Request for a common short report on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) focussed on zoonotic infections based on the information currently available

1. BACKGROUND

In June 2008, the Council adopted conclusions on AMR. The conclusions call upon the Commission and Member States to act in the area of healthcare associated infections, monitoring and control of AMR in humans and animals/food. As regards food- and animal-borne resistance, the Council calls upon the strengthening of surveillance on AMR and on the use of antimicrobials in the veterinary sector, the promotion of prudent use of antimicrobials, the promotion of mutual cooperation between all Directorates General and concerned agencies and cooperation with Member States, the application of risk management strategies and the consideration of further control options when appropriate. AMR is indicated as a priority for the current and next presidencies.

Several scientific reports have been recently published by European and international scientific bodies, on the subject.

This mandate may be considered as part of preliminary risk management activities and its impact relative to other sources, of AMR to humans, as described in the "*Principles and guidelines for the conduct of microbiological risk management*" of the Codex alimentarius committee (CAC/GL 63 – 2007, available at : http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/standard_list.jsp) and in the WHO/FAO Guide on Food Safety Risk Analysis (FAO Food and Nutrition Paper 87/2006, available at ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/009/a0822e/a0822e00.pdf). The Commission is in need of a scientific state of play in the area of AMR.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

For the purpose of this reply, an antimicrobial is defined as an active substance of synthetic or natural origin which destroys bacteria, suppresses their growth or their ability to reproduce in animals or humans, excluding antivirals and antiparasites.

The EFSA, EMEA, ECDC and SCENIHR are requested to provide a common scientific report on the questions below based on the information currently available. The replies should be concise but references may be added supporting the statement.

(1) On the basis of the available scientific data on AMR in general, please provide a state of play and identify which additional data would be necessary to gain a proper understanding of the public and animal health problems linked to AMR, differentiated according to the source of resistance:

- Use of antimicrobials in humans
- Use of antimicrobials in animals
- Others (if possible further differentiation might be considered e.g. may include antimicrobials used in plant protection, biocides, disinfectants, food preservatives, cosmetics, …)

(2) Based on the existing data on AMR in zoonotic agents, which animal species/agent/antimicrobial combinations are considered of high concern and should be considered as a priority for the Commission?

For each of the combinations identified, indicate:

(a) To what extent the prevalence of resistance to different antimicrobials is comparable between animal/food thereof and human isolates of the agent;

(b) Has cross-resistance with other antimicrobials been demonstrated? If so, with which antimicrobials?

(c) The burden of disease of resistant infections in humans, e.g. in comparison with sensitive infections, if not covered by term of reference (1) ("consequence estimate");

(d) To which extent humans are exposed to the resistance agent through food or contact (e.g. pets) with the relevant species ("exposure estimate");

(e) To which extent a link between the use of antimicrobial substances in human medicine and the emerging/increase of AMR in humans exists

(f) To which extent a link between the use of the antimicrobial in animals and the emerging/increase of AMR in humans exists ("release estimate");

(g) To what extent alternative antimicrobials are available to prevent or treat animal diseases?

(3) Which are the areas where innovation and research should be encouraged in order to address existing problems caused by AMR?

In order to meet the deadline, parallel but coordinated discussions for different terms of reference or species/agent/antimicrobial combination might be considered.

3. DEADLINE

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