



**COUNCIL OF
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Subject : Council Conclusions on a European Response to Emerging Zoonotic Disease
- Outcome of proceedings

The Council conclusions annexed hereto were adopted at the EPSCO Council on 6 December 2004.

**Council Conclusions on a European Response
to Emerging Zoonotic Diseases**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. NOTES that zoonoses and in particular emerging zoonotic diseases may present a grave threat to health.
2. NOTES FURTHER that scientists indicate that an influenza pandemic is likely to occur.
3. RECOGNISES that factors which increase the risks to emerging zoonotic diseases include increasing global travel, international movements of animals, climate change, the encroachment of expanding human and animal populations on previously wild habitats, and the close daily proximity of people and animals in several parts of the world.
4. RECOGNISES also that because of free movement of people, services and goods within the European Union, the public health risks from emerging zoonotic diseases can not only be regarded as a national problem.
5. RECOGNISES the efforts by the Member States and the Commission to take effective measures at national level and to coordinate such measures at European level, including additional surveillance and control of major zoonoses.
6. RECALLS the relevant legislation and the work accomplished in that context including:
 - Decision 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 1998 setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community.

- Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002, laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety.
 - Directive 2003/99/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 November 2003 on the monitoring of zoonoses and zoonotic agents and Regulation n° 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and the Council of 17 November 2003 on the control of salmonella and other specified food-borne zoonotic agents.
 - Regulation (EC) No 851/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004, establishing a European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.
7. ACKNOWLEDGES the conclusions for Europe of the report of the WHO/FAO/OIE joint consultation on emerging zoonotic diseases (3-5 May 2004 Geneva Switzerland) stating among others that:
- there is a need for integration of public health and animal health policies with respect to disease surveillance, early warning and response and control;
 - there is a need for more support for building public health and veterinary core capacities, including basic training and education, database templates and standards and risk-assessment, -management and -communication skills.
8. WELCOMES the initiative of the Netherlands' Presidency for a policy conference on a European Response to Emerging Zoonotic Diseases on 16 and 17 September 2004.
9. CONSIDERS that there should be more widespread recognition that emerging zoonotic diseases are an important national, European and global problem.

10. RECOGNISES that there is a sense of urgency for the strengthening of the European approach both from the Community point of view as well as in relation to the worldwide problem of zoonoses and that support at global level is necessary to the efforts of WHO, OIE, FAO and Codex Alimentarius to develop effective responses.
11. AGREES that public health risks from emerging zoonotic diseases require an integrated strategy and a coordinated response of all Member States, capable of facing the scale and complexity of this threat.
12. CONCLUDES that a European Action Plan for zoonoses preparedness and control should be established in order to implement an inter-sectoral and responsive Community strategy to emerging threats from zoonotic diseases. Such a Plan should include integrated public health and animal health policy measures and related instruments, taking account of the recommendations of the Netherlands' Conference in the fields of risk assessment, risk management and risk communication.
13. WELCOMES the intention of the Commission to propose a European Action Plan for zoonoses preparedness and control.
14. INVITES the Commission and the Member States to make full synergistic use of existing agencies such as the European Food Safety Authority, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the European Environment Agency, ensuring coherence of their work, in the implementation of such a Plan.
15. CALLS ON Member States and the Commission to review where appropriate the legal and financial obstacles to properly address emerging zoonotic diseases and develop an approach in such manner that, on a day to day basis, risk assessment, risk management and risk communication - including intersectoral cooperation and networking of laboratories - are guaranteed in an integrated way.

16. CALLS ON the Member States and the Commission to coordinate research activities aiming to address challenges in the prevention and management of zoonotic diseases, in particular for the purpose of the seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development.
17. INVITES the European Food Safety Authority, in close cooperation with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, to present on the basis of the annual Community report on zoonoses a detailed analysis about risk factors.
18. CALLS ON the Member States and the Commission to intensify the cooperation with the relevant international and intergovernmental organisations, in particular the WHO, the OIE, the FAO and the Codex Alimentarius, to ensure effective international coordination of activities in the area of zoonotic diseases, including, where appropriate, in the framework of the International Health Regulations. To this aim there should be more focus on technical and financial support in capacity building of developing countries for the control and eradication of zoonoses in animals.
