SHORT REPORT
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
(Section Animal health and welfare)
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 10-11 SEPTEMBER 2002

President: Mr. Bernard Van Goethem
All the Member States were present.

1. Exchange of Views of the Committee on the Evolution of Animal Diseases in the Community Including:

Classical swine fever

France

The French delegation distributed and presented an update report as regards the classical swine fever situation in wild boar in the north of France (Meurthe-et-Moselle). Serological testing results showed 25 positive cases out of 188 samples taken during the period April-August 2002. Hunting and battue is being carried out. France also insisted that the policy as regards hunting be harmonised with other Member States concerned.

Germany

The CSF situation in the wild boar remained unsatisfactory. To date, 349 cases have been confirmed, mostly (271 cases) in Rhineland-Palatinate, southwest Germany. Germany requested to include a new affected area (Aachen) in the vaccination programme. No further cases have been detected in domestic pigs.

Luxembourg

The Luxembourg delegate reported a new outbreak in domestic pigs (11/2002) in the centre of the country. There were also still quite a number of cases in the wild boar. Seven new positive virology tests were detected in August 2002, which brings the total up to 55 for 2002.

Swine vesicular disease

Italy

The Italian delegation distributed and presented an extensive report on the swine vesicular disease situation between June and August 2002, period in which 15 outbreaks were recorded in the regions of Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia Romagna and Piemonte. The last outbreak dates back to July 2002. The delegate also distributed an abstract of the 2002 SVD eradication plan in Lombardy.

Italy informed the Committee about its intention to withdraw the provisions taken in respect of trade in live animals to the Member States, except from the regions of Calabria, Basilicata and Campania in the south of the country.
**Bluetongue**

**Greece**
The Greek delegation presented an oral report on the bluetongue monitoring during 2002. The Commission requested to have a more detailed report on serology.

**France**
The French delegation distributed and presented an interim report on the bluetongue situation in Corsica. There have been no outbreaks of bluetongue in 2002. Vaccination has been carried out on 99% of the ovine animals on the island resulting in a good immunity response (91% positive serology on 09.09.2002). On mainland France, no positive serology has been found.

**Italy**
Distribution and presentation of a report by the Italian delegation. Clinical symptoms have been noticed in up to now non-affected provinces (Foggia, Benevento), leading to the conclusion the disease is beginning to spread. Serological and entomological surveillance are still being carried out and the vaccination area has been expanded.

**Spain**
The Spanish delegation had no new information.

**Newcastle disease**

**Denmark**
The Danish delegation distributed and presented an extensive report on the Newcastle disease outbreaks in Denmark. A total of 135 outbreaks have been identified since 15 July 2002. The majority of the outbreaks have been observed in backyard flocks. Only 9 commercial holdings have been infected, all egg producing holdings. A total of 37 protection zones have been lifted since they were established. Currently, 98 protection zones are maintained.

2. **INFORMATION ON EVIDENCE FOR PRESENCE OF INFECTIOUS SALMON ANAEMIA VIRUS (ISAV) IN IRELAND (DOC. SANCO/10425/2002)**

The Commission distributed the above document.

3. **INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE SITUATION OF WEST NILE FEVER**

The French delegation distributed a report on the veterinary surveillance of the West Nile virus in France in 2002. All the examinations carried out in the framework of the clinical and serological surveillance for the West Nile virus showed negative
results. Surveillance of sentinel birds in the *Camargue* region observed 8 cases with positive serology.

In Italy, cases of positive serology have been found in *Tuscany*. A surveillance system to identify risk areas has been set up. This system is also used to monitor mortality in wild birds. The Italian delegate said to be quite certain that the virus is not circulating.

Spain had no information about positive results in neither horses nor birds. An investigation project is underway in two risk areas.

In Greece, one risk area has been identified in the framework of a survey on vectors. There is no evidence for virus circulation.

Portugal had no information on the disease. No survey is being carried out.

4. **INFORMATION ON THE ERADICATION PROGRAMMES FROM MS**

Member States concerned distributed and presented a report on the progress of the approved eradication and monitoring programme for rabies, sheep/goat brucellosis and bovine brucellosis giving an overview of the disease evolution and the measures in place:

- **Rabies**: France (oral report)
- **Sheep/goat brucellosis**: Greece (oral report)
- **Bovine Brucellosis**: Greece (oral report)

The Commission expressed its disappointment about the progress made in the implementation of the Greek bovine brucellosis programme and requested a written confirmation that the programme targets would be totally implemented.


The purpose of the above documents was to provide information (1) on the functions and duties of the designated Community Reference Laboratories (CRLs) in the areas of animal health and zootechnics and on financial contributions provided by the EU, and (2) on the eligibility rules for the financing of CRLs.

The Commission also indicated that it would like to involve candidate countries in ring tests and that it was studying how to fund these activities.

The Commission informed the Committee that Belgium, Germany, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands are setting up a database as regards epidemiology of classical swine fever in wild boar with the aim of carrying out an examination and subsequently designing a strategy to combat the disease. A first version should be ready in November 2002.

7. **INFORMATION ON THE SERO-SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME FOR AVIAN INFLUENZA IN ITALY**

Monitoring activities at poultry slaughterhouses in Lombardy revealed positive results in 4 holdings. Farm stock has been slaughtered and the animals in turkey farms vaccinated. Monitoring continues and is stepped up.

The Italian delegation made a presentation on the serological monitoring in Lombardy (13000 samples) and in Veneto (8000 samples).

8. **INFORMATION ON THE AVIAN INFLUENZA SITUATION IN CHILE (DOC. SANCO/10436/2002)**

The Commission distributed an O.I.E. report on a mission carried out to Chile from 17-25 July 2002 and additional information on the avian influenza situation in Chile (Doc. SANCO/10454/2002). The document also included follow-up information provided by the Chilean authorities. The report was presented by Dr. Stefano Marangon, head of the Epidemiology Unit of the Instituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale della Venezie (Padova, Italy).

Based on the results of the monitoring measures implemented in all poultry farms on the Chilean territory, he concluded that the spread of the AI virus appeared to be limited. Only two outbreaks of high pathogenic AI (H7N3) have been identified. Nevertheless, the epidemiological situation was not completely clear. AI had been unknown in South America up until now. The presence of LPAI infected poultry flocks could not be ruled out and therefore all efforts should be made to assess the epidemiological situation. With reference to the issue of vaccination, the implementation of this method of control did not appear to be necessary at present on the basis of the data collected in the field. Dr. Marangon also formulated a number of recommendations.

The Commission also distributed and presented information provided by the Chilean CVO during a meeting held on 5 September 2002. The report contained information on the epidemiological situation and guarantees for the marketing of sanitarily safe poultry products from disease free areas in Chile.

*See also point 34.*
9. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON NEWCASTLE DISEASE IN AUSTRALIA (DOC. SANCO/10432/2002)**

The information was distributed and included the Australian response to EC questions on Newcastle disease together with scientific information.

10. **UPDATE INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE VACCINATION PROGRAMMES AGAINST FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN ARGENTINA (DOC. SANCO/10455/2002)**

The Commission distributed the above information.

11. **PRELIMINARY INFORMATION ON A MISSION TO DENMARK 12-14 AUGUST 2002 CONCERNING NEWCASTLE DISEASE OUTBREAK (REF 8722/2002)**

Member States were presented preliminary information on a FVO mission to Denmark. The objectives of the mission were to gather information regarding the Newcastle disease situation and to assess the measures undertaken by the competent authority to the assessment and control of the ND epidemic. The mission also evaluated the measures taken with regard to trade restrictions. The FVO representative concluded that the Danish authorities had overall effectively reacted to this complex ND outbreak.

The Commission requested Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway to reflect on their position of non-vaccination against Newcastle disease.

Denmark applied for further regionalisation and provided information to support the request. The Member States agreed.


The Commission presented the mission report and reported on the main findings. The objectives of the mission were to review and evaluate the measures taken by the Spanish authorities in response to recent outbreaks of classical swine fever in Cataluña.

The Commission presented the conclusions and a number of recommendations.


The Commission presented the draft mission report and reported on the main findings. The objectives of the mission were to assess the competent authority in
respect of animal health controls, with special reference to the classical swine fever situation.

The Commission presented the preliminary conclusions and recommendations.


The Commission presented the mission report and reported on the main findings. The mission was undertaken in order to follow up the response of the Paraguayan authorities to earlier FVO missions which were conducted to assess the veterinary services and the animal health situation.

The Commission presented the conclusions and a number of recommendations.

*See also point 21.*


The information was distributed.

16. **THE FOLLOWING WORKING DOCUMENTS WERE INTRODUCED:**

- Commission working document "CHECKLIST and application form for Community application and approval for the status of approved zone with regard to viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN)" (SANCO/10298/2002 Rev.1)

- Commission working document on Member States’ implementation of Article 4 of Council Directive 95/70/EC introducing minimum Community measures for the control of certain diseases affecting bivalve molluscs - i.e. monitoring and sampling programme in molluscs (SANCO/10347/2002 Rev.1)


17. **Distribution for Information (on CD-ROM):**

- Final report of a mission to Estonia from 15/04/02 to 19/04/02 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO)/8560/2002)
- Draft report of a mission to Malta from 17 to 19 June 2002 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO)/8667/2002)
- Final report of a mission carried out in Slovenia from 18 to 22 March 2002 in order to evaluate food safety controls (food hygiene, contaminants, and pesticide residues) (DG(SANCO)/8604/2002)
- Draft report of a mission carried out in Estonia from 27 May to 7 June 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Estonian authorities for the upgrading of certain classes of food processing establishments and to review associated live animal controls (DG(SANCO)/8548/2002)
- Draft report of a mission carried out in Poland from 5 to 14 June 2002 in order to evaluate food safety controls (food hygiene, contaminants, and pesticide residues) (DG(SANCO)/8610/2002)
- Draft report of a mission to Latvia from 13 to 17 May 2002 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO)/8561/2002)
- Draft report on a mission carried out in the Slovak Republic from 21 to 25/01/2002 in order to carry out a general evaluation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and BSE-related measures (DG(SANCO)/8517/2002)
- Final report on a mission carried out in the Slovenia from 26 to 30 November 2001 in order to carry out a general evaluation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and BSE-related measures (DG(SANCO)/3350/2001)
- Final report of a mission to Lithuania from 18 to 22 February 2002 concerning import controls (DG(SANCO)/8558/2002)
- Draft report of a mission carried out in Poland from 15 to 26 April 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Polish authorities for the up-grading of certain classes of food processing establishments and to review associated live animal controls (DG(SANCO)/8541/2002)
- Draft report of a mission carried out in Slovakia from 27 May to 7 June 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Slovakian authorities for the up-grading of certain classes of meat processing establishments and to review associated live animal controls (DG(SANCO)/8642/2002)
- Draft report of a mission carried out in Latvia from 21 May to 31 May 2002 in order to review the plan submitted by the Latvian authorities for the up-grading
of certain classes of meat, milk, poultry, fish processing establishments (DG(SANCO)/8641/2002)

18. **EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND POSSIBLE OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION ON THE EVOLUTION OF ANIMAL DISEASES IN THE COMMUNITY AND IN THIRD COUNTRIES.**

No items raised.


In the light of the evolution of the epidemiological situation as regards classical swine fever in feral pigs in the bordering areas of France and Germany, the Commission proposed to add certain areas in the Member States concerned to the regions for which protection measures already apply.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

In addition to the above proposal, the Member States were presented a draft Decision extending the areas of North Rhine-Westphalia where vaccination against classical swine fever would be applied (Doc. SANCO/10458/2002)

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**


The Member States were presented a draft Decision aiming to include Botswana in the list of third countries allowed to export live ratites or hatching eggs thereof to the Community.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

Member States considered a proposal to regionalise Paraguay in order to allow exports of deboned and matured bovine meat slaughtered after 01 September 2002 from the Chaco central and San Pedro areas.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

22. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Commission Decision 98/371/EC concerning the animal health conditions and veterinary certifications for import of fresh meat from certain European countries to take into account some aspects in relation with the Slovak Republic (Doc. SANCO/10360/2002-Rev.1)**

The point was withdrawn from the agenda, awaiting additional guarantees from the Slovakian authorities.


The Commission presented a proposal to amend the animal disease notification form to extend the list of notifiable diseases to include viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious salmon anaemia (ISA) in the ADNS system.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**


The purpose of the draft Decision was to add Switzerland and extend the list of notifiable diseases to include viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) and infectious salmon anaemia (ISA) in the ADNS system. The proposal also intends to separate outbreaks of classical swine fever in feral pigs from outbreaks in domestic pigs and allow for the sub-typing of classical swine fever in the reporting system.
Vote: unanimous vote in favour.


The proposal intended to include a date of application of Regulation (EC) No 1282/2002. This had been omitted during the adoption process.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

26. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending for the 11th time Decision 2000/284/EC establishing the list of approved semen collection centres for imports of equine semen from third countries (Doc. SANCO/10150/2002-Rev.2)**

The Member States considered a draft Decision updating the list of approved semen collection centres for imports of equine semen from third countries.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

27. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision laying down interim safeguard measures with regard to imports of products of animal origin for personal consumption (SANCO/10148/2002 rev 8)**

In the light of further preventing the introduction of infectious animal diseases, the Member States were presented a draft Regulation to specify and to restrict further the types and quantities of products of animal origin that, introduced into the Community under non-commercial traffic, can remain exempted from the veterinary controls and without posing a significant animal health risk. It is also proposed to lay down rules for the controls to be carried out at the points of entry into the Community, and for the information about these rules provided to travellers in support for these controls.

Delegates considered a revised draft Regulation. It appeared from the discussion that further consideration of the text was needed. Consequently, the vote was postponed.

Outbreaks of VHS have occurred in certain coastal areas in Finland. The Member States were presented a draft Decision approving amendments to the eradication programme against viral haemorrhagic septicaemia (VHS) in the affected coastal areas in Finland, with the final view to obtaining approved zone status as regards VHS and IHN.

*Vote: unanimous vote in favour.*


The proposal intends to lay down sampling and diagnostic methods for the detection and confirmation of bonamiosis and marteiliosis in molluscs in the case of abnormal mortality and for the recognition of approved free zones and farms.

*Vote: unanimous vote in favour.*

30. **EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND POSSIBLE OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION AMENDING ANNEX D TO COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 95/70/EC INTRODUCING MINIMUM COMMUNITY MEASURES FOR THE CONTROL OF CERTAIN DISEASES AFFECTING BIVALVE MOLLUSCS (SANCO/10123/2002)**

In order to take into account the OIE most recent publication, the Member States were presented a draft Decision to update the list of molluscs diseases, pathogens and sensitive species in Annex D to Directive 95/70/EC.

Member States considered that experts from the National reference laboratories at their meeting later in September should consider the classification of mollusc diseases where provisions for monitoring and disease control are applicable. The Commission agreed. The vote was therefore postponed.

31. **EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON A DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION DRAWING UP A LIST OF THIRD COUNTRIES AND LAYING DOWN THE ANIMAL HEALTH CONDITIONS AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTS OF LIVE MOLLUSCS, THEIR EGGS AND GAMETES FOR FURTHER GROWTH, FATTENING OR RE-LAYING AND LAYING**
DOWN THE ANIMAL HEALTH CONDITIONS AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTS OF LIVE MOLLUSCS INTENDED FOR IMMEDIATE HUMAN CONSUMPTION OR FOR FURTHER PROCESSING BEFORE HUMAN CONSUMPTION (SANCO/10078/2002 REV. 1)

The document was distributed, but the discussion was postponed.

32. **Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision drawing up a list of third countries and laying down the animal health conditions and certification requirements for imports of live fish, their eggs and gametes for further growth, fattening or re-laying and laying down the animal health conditions and certification requirements for imports of live fish intended for immediate human consumption or for further processing before human consumption** (Doc. SANCO/10145/2002)

Postponed.


The Commission distributed and presented the proposal for study and observation. The purpose of the draft Decision is to harmonise the certificates and import conditions for live animals and meat products and consolidate the existing legislation into one Decision. Member States suggested a number of amendments to the text.

The Commission requested to have the Member States’ remarks in writing by 20.09.2002


Although not foreseen for a formal opinion, Member States considered a proposal to regionalise Chile in order to allow exports of poultry and poultry products from those areas which had not been affected by avian influenza. Exports had been suspended due to outbreaks of highly pathogenic AI.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour.**

The Commission distributed and presented the proposal for study and observation. The draft Decision lays down the Community’s financial contribution for the production, storage and distribution of standard sera used in laboratory tests for the detection of antibodies against structural and non-structural proteins of the foot-and-mouth disease virus. These tests, which can distinguish between sick and vaccinated animals, could substantiate freedom from infection in the case of vaccination.

36. **Exchange of Views on a Draft Commission Decision for the Purchase by the Community of Foot-and-Mouth Disease Antigens and for the Formulation, Production, Bottling and Distribution of Vaccines against Foot-and-Mouth Disease (Doc. SANCO/10441/2002)**

The Commission distributed and presented the proposal for study and observation. The draft Decision arranges for the purchase by the Community of additional quantities and strains of foot-and-mouth disease antigens and their storage, and for the formulation, production, bottling and distribution of vaccines of foot-and-mouth disease.


The point was withdrawn from the agenda.

The Member States were however presented the following proposal for study and observation:

*Draft Commission Decision on a Community financial contribution to emergency measures to control foot-and-mouth disease in certain parts of Transcaucasia and amending Decision 2001/300/EC (Doc. SANCO/10448/2002-Rev.1)*

The proposal aims to increase the total Community obligation to Trust Fund 911100/MTF/INT/003/EEC by the resources necessary to carry out the joint EC/EUFMD/OIE programme for the control of foot-and-mouth disease in certain third countries bordering Turkey in order to prevent the spread of the virus into Turkey and further to Europe.
THE FOLLOWING POINT WAS ADDED TO THE AGENDA:


The purpose of the proposal is to update the above list of establishments and laboratories, authorised to manipulate live foot-and-mouth disease virus.

38. MISCELLANEOUS

(1) Germany requested to be informed about the timing for a Decision concerning the classical swine fever refund application for 2001.

(2) Germany also asked the Commission to co-finance a vaccination programme for rabies in Poland, although this was not initially included in the original eradication plan.

(3) The German delegate enquired about the state of play in respect of the aquaculture Directive.

(4) France reported the presence of bluetongue in Bosnia Herzegovina and asked if the Commission intended to take measures. The Commission replied that there was no export from the area and that therefore measures were not appropriate.

N.B. The proposals on which the Committee expressed an opinion are subject to a defined procedure in relation to the formal adoption by the Commission.

Mission reports are available on the Internet at the following address: http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/inspections/vi/reports/index_en.html

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