1. Information from Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg on the bluetongue situation.

The Belgian representative made a presentation on the situation as of 8 January 2007. In total, 695 sheep and cattle cases were confirmed and 4 cattle cases were suspected. In December 2006, the number of cases was reduced in comparison to the previous months and the last case was confirmed on 14 December. There is no change as regards the affected zones. In comparison to the previous year, the number of dead sheep and goats in Belgium has been increased. Since 16 December, the vector free season has started. The measures applied during the outbreak period are now adapted to the new situation and apply since 8 January 2007. The use of insecticides is no longer mandatory. Animals could be transferred for breeding and production from the infected zone to the protection zone (animals born before the 15th of December should be serologically checked).

The French representative made a presentation on the bluetongue situation in France. There are no new cases since the last meeting of this Committee. At the end of November 2006 the number of trapped culicoides increased but during the first two weeks of December 2006, it decreased. France declared that the date of the 18th of December is the beginning of the vector free period. 9 departments are currently affected and 7 are partially affected by the 150km surveillance zone. France has 26 departments included into the winter 2006-2007 surveillance programme. 300 samples will be taken in each department in the surveillance zone as a protection measure. Movement measures: all animals meant for slaughterhouses and all non-affected animals could move to another than the regulated area after negative serological tests.

The German representative updated the members of the Committee on the bluetongue situation in Germany. As of 9 January 2007, 891 cases were confirmed (575 cattle, 304 sheep and 12 wild ruminants). The last outbreak was confirmed on 8 January. In comparison to the previous months, the number of cases has been decreased. A few new cases were confirmed in the area north-east of the affected zone. Germany proposed the extension of the 150 km surveillance zone accordingly.
Germany declared that the date of the 1\textsuperscript{st} of December 2006 is the beginning of the vector free season.

**The Dutch** representative made a presentation on the situation. To date, 459 holdings (189 cattle, 270 sheep) were infected in the southern part of the Netherlands. Since 11 December 2006, 9 new bovine cases were confirmed. The last case with clinical signs was confirmed on 13 December. The Netherlands declared that the date of the 30\textsuperscript{th} December 2006 is the beginning of the vector free season. Measures applied before the beginning of the vector free season at the restricted zone, have now been amended.

**In Luxembourg**, from the 17\textsuperscript{th} of August 2006 until the 5\textsuperscript{th} of January 2007, 6 outbreaks were confirmed and 3797 animals were tested. The last outbreak was detected on 4 January 2007 at the eastern part of the country adjacent to Germany.

**The conclusions following the discussion of the working party** held on 15 December 2006, co-organised by COPA-COGECA and UECBV with the participation of the Commission and EFSA, regarding the future of the management of the bluetongue situation in the EU, were distributed during the meeting of the Committee. COPA-COGECA and the UECBV concluded that a global, clear and harmonised science-based EU strategy should be urgently established as concerns future measures to be taken in relation to bluetongue in general and the serotypes 1, 4 and 8 in particular in the EU territory.

The Member States agreed that it is necessary to have common criteria in order to ensure the best possible disease preparedness for next year. EFSA is expected to provide by the 31\textsuperscript{st} January 2007, a global epidemiological analysis of the 2006 bluetongue virus serotype 8 epidemic in north-western Europe. EFSA was also requested to deliver a scientific advice on vaccines and on the role of vectors by April 2007.

**Italy** requested the lifting of restrictions in relation to bluetongue in the region of Marche. The Italian representative made a presentation on the bluetongue situation in that region. Since 2000, serological and entomological surveillance activities have been carried out and no clinical outbreaks have ever been recorded in that region. Vaccination campaigns applied in 2004, 2005 and 2006 in the surroundings of the Marche region, using the attenuated vaccine serotypes 2 and 4.

The Italian National Reference Laboratory is still working on finding a vaccine against serotype 1 to be used in Sardinia.

**The Danish** representative stated that a vaccination plan against bluetongue will apply in Denmark despite the fact that no financial support is provided by the EU for this purpose.

2. **Information by France, Germany and Slovakia on the classical swine fever situation in feral pigs.**

**The French** representative made a presentation on the situation until 29/12/2006. In 2005, vaccination was applied in the Northern Vosges area. Epidemiological surveillance in 2006 showed that the virus is still active in that area and 5 new cases were confirmed. At the border with Luxembourg, some seropositive cases of young wild boar were found. The eradication plan for 2007, foresees serological and
virological testing of all animals hunted at the infected and surveillance zones as well as three double vaccination campaigns, aiming to maintain immune pressure to stop the viral movement.

The German representative made a presentation. In Autumn and Winter 2006, the disease reoccurred in the wild boar population in the Eifel Region (in North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatine) with 38 confirmed cases. During the hunting year 2005/2006, vaccination was applied in the area and will be repeated during the hunting period 2006/2007. In southern Rhineland Palatinate, since 12 November 2004, no virus positive cases were found in comparison to previous years (116 virus findings in 2002, 34 in 2003, 3 in 2004). The plan for 2007 is to lift the restrictions if there are no more virus findings but continue the monitoring and vaccination at the border area with France. The German authorities would like a close cooperation with the French authorities coordinating the dates of their planned vaccination campaigns in their borders in an effort of eliminating the disease.

The Commission stressed out the importance of the situation and explained that all efforts should be made in order to cease the disease in the Eifel Region. The situation at the border of Germany and France is improved, but, a common strategy should be established within the concerned areas in order to eliminate the disease. For this purpose, the Commission is planning to organise a coordination meeting between the Member States concerned during the next few weeks.

The Slovakian representative made a presentation. In 2006, positive cases occurred in 3 regions in Slovakia and concerned only wild boars. Following the Autumn vaccination campaign, monitoring surveillance showed new positive cases situated 40 km from the border with Hungary. The most recent cases occurred on December 5th and 13th and concerned animals from the same stock. In 2006, three double vaccination campaigns were applied covering an area of 8000 km². Following the Food and Veterinary Office's recommendations on the eradication of the disease, the Slovakian authorities took various steps to raise public awareness and to keep updated all data in relation to the disease. The Slovakian and Hungarian authorities are closely cooperating in order to characterize, appreciate the situation and exchange information about the vaccination and monitoring system in both neighbouring countries. The results of a special Working meeting of the Technical Group for Pig Diseases held on 22 December 2006 targeting for a solution to the current situation in the affected districts in Slovakia, led to specific measures to be applied from 1 January and until 31 March 2007 within the 20 km zone (monitoring area). Clinical and serological examination of domestic pigs from 37 farms in that zone, held between 5-23 December, showed negative results.

3. Information by Romania on the implementation of the emergency vaccination against classical swine fever.

The Romanian representative made a presentation. In 2006, 35 counties were affected and 21 of them have still active outbreaks. The total number of outbreaks was 803 (21 in feral pigs) affecting 7801 pigs. The vaccination campaign started on 20 December for domestic pigs, using the live attenuated vaccine supplied from the EU vaccine bank. In the professional holdings, all piglets up to the age of vaccination
were vaccinated with the marker vaccine except from sows and boars since there was no sufficient number of doses. To date, 965,267 pigs in non-professional holdings were vaccinated with the live attenuated conventional vaccine and 173,601 pigs in professional holdings were vaccinated with the marker vaccine. The total number of pigs in Romania in professional holdings is 1,390,916 and in non-professional holdings is 3,828,289.

The Commission explained that the emergency vaccination is a temporary measure whilst the Romanian authorities should raise the efforts for the eradication of the disease. The Commission announced that an additional amount of 2,5 million marker vaccine doses will be supplied to Romania. The remaining necessary amount of vaccines will be provided as soon as this can be made available by the producer.

3A. Information by Bulgaria on the classical swine fever situation.

The Bulgarian representative made a presentation on the actions undertaken by the Bulgarian authorities following the two decisions which have been voted during the Committee meeting on 24 November 2006 and concern: a) the ban on the movement of the live porcine animals, semen, germinal products, fresh pork of Bulgarian origin and b) transitional measures as regards the dispatch of certain products of the meat and milk sectors from Bulgaria to other Member States. The provisions taken to implement those measures were presented. The Bulgarian authorities have also prepared posters to be placed at the cross borders points, informing the public about the ban on the export of live pigs, fresh pig meat and products which have not undergone high temperature treatment. The Association of Meat Processors has been informed as well and has been asked to provide training to all its members on how to implement the conditions laid down in the Decisions.

4. Information by Italy on the situation as regards swine vesicular disease.

The Italian representative made a presentation. In Italy, 51 outbreaks were detected in 2006 and 8 in 2007. Outbreaks were observed in the Northern Regions (Veneto, Emilia Romagna and Lombardia) as well as in the Southern Regions (Sicilia, Calabria, Campania and Molise). There is no link between the outbreaks in the Southern Regions and the ones in the Northern Regions since the virus identified in the South differs from the one identified in the North. Following the outbreaks, all necessary control measures applied, including a ban of movement of live animals to other Member States and third countries.

5. Russian import conditions for animals and products of animal origin.

The Commission representative announced that following a meeting held before the Christmas break in Russia, a pre-agreement was signed and a solution has been found regarding exports of products of animal origin from Member States to Russia, as of 1
January 2007 in view of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU. The final agreement will be signed during the meeting to be held on 17-19 of January in Berlin.

The above agreement does not include lifting of the ban on export of Polish meat to Russia. This issue will be discussed in the framework of the meeting to be held on 17-19 of January in Berlin.

As regards the new revised veterinary certificates for exports of animals and products of animal origin to Russia, Member States should send to the Russian authorities as soon as possible a set of specimens of the new models if this is not done yet.


This document has been distributed to the Members of the Committee several times in the past. It provides an overview of the classical swine fever cases and outbreaks in the EU from 1996 until 2006 with the main emphasis on the occurrence of classical swine fever in feral pigs. The situation as regards the disease from 2004 on is described more in detail. This is also the case for the recent respective additional Community measures.
The information on wild boar is now updated and the Commission asked the Member States to send any comments on this urgently.

7. Information from the Commission on reports received from the Member States in accordance with article 8 of Council Directive 64/432/EEC on the details of the occurrence of diseases listed in Annex E (I) thereof and of any other diseases covered by the additional guarantees provided for by Community legislation and of monitoring or eradication programme (not covered by Decision 2002/677/EC) in the territory of the Member States. (Doc. SANCO/10615/2006-Rev.4)

The Commission again urged those Member States which have not already sent their contribution to provide the required information as soon as possible in order to finalise the document.

8. Distribution of the application from Malaysia for inclusion in Part C of Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 laying down the animal health requirements applicable to the non-commercial movement of pet animals.

The Commission has received an application submitted by Malaysia to be listed in Part C of Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 as third country with a favourable situation with regard to rabies. Member States were invited to assess the dossier in view of the next Committee where a draft Decision will be presented by
the Commission. The purpose of such a draft would be to allow pets coming from Malaysia to travel to any of the EU countries without quarantine as long as they meet certain conditions.

8A. Information on import of heat treated bone-in lamb product from South Africa.

The report of an assessment on heat processing of bone-in lamb product from an establishment in South Africa was distributed during the meeting; the report was carried out in November 2006. An evaluation of the thermal processing of lamb shanks in batch retort systems was carried out in this study. Temperature distribution test in retorts operating in raining-water mode were carried out at two retorts holding different temperatures for different packing formats. The results showed that the distribution of all retorts was excellent in all cases, with small hold deviations occurring in a few locations within the retort chamber. Also, heat penetration tests were carried out on lamb shank products vacuum packed in 1kg retortable pouches to establish the nature and consistency of the heating profiles under the appropriate retort cycles. Overall, the study demonstrates that the thermal process used at the establishment is effective in delivering a safe heat preserved product with a temperature of more than 80 degrees being reached throughout the product including the bone.

The Commission representative explained that an additional certification on BSEs and TSEs will be required for the import of such products. A list of the establishments that are approved for the treatment of such meat and then import it into the Community will be sent to the Member States. A footnote will be added to the establishments approved for this product describing the product and that the process for it has been agreed. If different weight etc was used for other products then additional heat penetration test would be required.

8B. Distribution for information of the revised reporting protocols for 2007 – Avian influenza surveillance reporting in poultry and wild birds in Member States. (Doc.SANCO/10818/2006 – Rev.2)

The Commission presented the revised protocols for the quarterly reporting of the surveillance results in poultry and wild birds. This document was discussed during the previous meeting of this Committee held on 11 December 2006, when Member States were asked to send their comments on the documents and therefore allow the Commission to finalise them and further to set up at Community level an online reporting system to have an easier and more precise collation of the avian influenza data results. The issue of setting up an online reporting system and the timetable to put this into operation will be further discussed during the next few weeks in working groups specifically organised for this purpose.

Member States were asked to send the results for the wild birds surveillance carried out from 1 September to 31 December 2006 latest by 31 January 2007. The quarterly reporting of surveillance results in poultry and wild birds must be sent no later than within one month after the end of the three months reporting period (i.e. from
January until March 2007, the results should be reported latest by 30 April 2007 etc.).

9. 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 item was raised.


With this proposal: a) the restriction zone in France will be adapted following the request of the French authorities after the cessation of the vector's activity in the affected area, b) the affected area of the administrative district of Burgas in which certain protective measures against bluetongue are apply, in relation to the import into the Community, should be included in Annex I to Decision 2005/393/EC since Bulgaria is a Member State as of 1 January 2007, c) the demarcation of the restricted zone in Germany should be amended following the new outbreaks of bluetongue in Lower Saxony and d) following Italy's presentation (see point 1 above)on a report which concludes that the surveillance system in place in Italy has proved that no seroconversion has occurred in the Region of Marche since April 2005, so, consequently, that region should be considered free of that disease and on the basis of the substantiated request submitted by Italy, deleted from the Italian regions listed under Zone B in Annex I to Decision 2005/393/EC.

Vote: unanimous in favour.

11. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Decision 2000/666/EC on the requirements for import of captive birds. (Doc. SANCO/10776/2006 – Rev.3)

This document has been presented and discussed in previous meetings and has now been amended following the comments made by the Member States. The proposed Regulation will repeal and replace Commission Decision 2000/666/EC and will lay down the animal health requirements and the veterinary certification for the import of birds, other than poultry, and the quarantine requirements for such birds. The Commission requested the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to provide a scientific opinion on the risks posed by imports of birds caught in the wild and captive bred birds from third countries, in order to draw up an inventory of the risks posed by the import of those birds. The requested opinion was adopted by the EFSA Panel on animal health and welfare on 26 and 27 October 2007 and it identifies possible tools and options which can reduce any identified animal health risk related to imports of birds other than poultry. Based on the EFSA opinion the requirements currently in place have been revised.
The Commission furthermore distributed during the meeting the following written statement:

"Certain categories of birds are excluded from the scope of this draft Regulation (SANCO/10776/2006 Rev.7, Article 2). However, this does not create derogation from Community import rules. This Article takes into account the scope of other legislation – namely Council Directive 92/65/EEC and Decision 2005/759/EC – whereby Member States will continue to implement the appropriate measures for the categories of birds covered by the said legislation. The Commission has the intention to lay down clarifying measures in the near future in relation to the derogations covered by Council Directive 92/65/EEC".

Vote: unanimous in favour.

12. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the committee on a Draft Commission Decision concerning a financial contribution by the Community to Italy for the implementation of a system for collection and analysis of epidemiological information on bluetongue. (Doc. SANCO/10785/2006)

Vote: postponed.


All animal products imported from third countries must be examined by an official veterinarian working in a border inspection post. All consignments are described according to their Combined Nomenclature (CN) code, an internationally recognized coding system for goods of all types, including animal products.

This proposal lays out in table form the combined nomenclature code in numerical order as used by customs services, alongside certain relevant veterinary legislation. This will clearly demonstrate to customs and other authorities those products identified by their CN code that must be passed to the competent veterinary authority for them to be examined under veterinary checks procedures. This proposal sets uniform conditions for the whole Community, therefore, avoiding the differences in interpretation of import requirements currently set in National Rules for composite products that could lead to trade distortion and present a potential animal health risk to the Community. This document has already been discussed with the Member States in a working group and following their comments and suggestions, has been amended accordingly.

Vote: unanimous in favour.

This proposal concerns certain protective measures in respect of Infectious Salmon Anaemia in the Faroe Islands. The disease was first reported in the Faroe Islands in 2000 and since then certain protective measures apply according to Decision 2000/574/EC. In 2003 the Decision was replaced by Decision 2003/71/EC, which relaxes the measures as regards eggs disinfected in accordance with the recommendations laid down in the International Aquatic Animal Health Code of the OIE and it is applicable until 31 January 2007. The Commission approved the contingency plan for certain fish diseases, including fish infected with infectious salmon anaemia, submitted by the Faroe Islands and which includes a withdrawal scheme and a vaccination procedure. To prevent the spreading of the disease to non-infected areas, the protective measures provided for in Decision 2003/71/EC should remain applicable as long as vaccination is applied. In the Faroe Islands, vaccination is still used as a control strategy. This Decision should therefore be amended in order to extend its period of application until 31 July 2008.

The occurrence of infectious salmon anaemia in Norway led to the adoption of Commission Decision 2003/70/EC of 29 January 2003 on certain protective measures in respect of infectious salmon anaemia in Norway. The Decision was applicable only until 1 February 2004. The Decision has now no legal effect and can therefore be repealed.

Vote: unanimous in favour.


The Commission asked the Member States to communicate by email any comments they might have on the document.
Vote: postponed.

15A. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the committee on a Draft Commission Decision on emergency measures applying to fishery products imported from Guinea and intended for human consumption. (Doc. SANCO/10829/2006)

The Commission representative explained to the Member States that the document SANCO/10829/2006 was not ready and therefore will be discussed during the Biological Safety of the Food chain committee to be held on 17 and 18 January.

Vote: postponed.


Directive 92/119/EEC lays down measures for the control of certain animal diseases. In addition to the general provisions of that Directive, specific provisions for swine vesicular disease are laid down in Annex II. These specific provisions for swine vesicular disease do not provide for an authorisation to remove the animals from a holding within the protection zone in case the removal prohibition is maintained beyond 30 days because of the occurrence of further cases of the disease. It is appropriate for such derogation for holdings in which the keeping of animals for longer period than 30 days would cause problems. This proposal also provides for a specific solution with respect to the marking of meat of pigs from a holding in a protection zone as well as the destination of the processed products, where the swine vesicular disease health situation so permits, provided that this is done in such a way that the degree of protection from swine vesicular by intra-Community trade or international trade is not impaired. Certain Member States have informed the Commission that the identification mark provided for in Annex II is poorly accepted by operators and customers in the industry so, it is appropriate to provide for an alternative identification mark that Member States may decide to apply. Member States however should inform the Commission beforehand if they decide to apply the alternative identification mark.

The Commission representative explained that this proposal has been presented to the members of the Committee following the request of Italy. Italy is facing problems in the pig meat sector deriving by the application of the Directive 92/119/EEC.

Member States expressed their views and made comments as far as concerns the type of the alternative identification mark, and they all agreed to have a uniform one. Member States should do the necessary provision in their national laws to comply with this Directive by 1 January 2008.
Revision 1 of the document SANCO/10828/2006 which was amended to include the comments made by the Member States during the morning session was presented to the Member States for an opinion during the afternoon session of the meeting.

Vote: unanimous in favour.

15C. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2006/805/EC as regards classical swine fever control measures in Germany. (Doc.SANCO/10831/2006 – Rev.1)

Commission Decision 2006/805/EC establish certain disease control measures concerning classical swine fever in certain Member States where outbreaks of the disease in feral pigs appeared. Germany has informed the Commission that the disease situation in certain areas of the Federal State of Rhineland-Palatine has significantly improved. The Commission proposed that the measures provided for in that Decision concerning those areas should no longer apply.

Vote: unanimous in favour.

15D. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2003/135/EC as regards the amendment of the plans for the eradication of classical swine fever in feral pigs and the emergency vaccination of feral pigs against classical swine fever in certain areas of the Federal State of Rhineland-Palatinate (Germany). (Doc.SANCO/10830/2006-Rev.2)

The German authorities have informed the Commission about the recent evolution of the disease in feral pigs in certain areas of Rhineland-Palatinate bordering North Rhine-Westphalia as well as in areas of Rhineland-Palatinate bordering areas in France. This information indicates that classical swine fever in feral pigs has been successfully eradicated in certain areas on the German territory and the vaccination of feral pigs and the eradication plan do not need to be applied anymore in those areas on the German territory. This proposal Decision amends Decision 2003/135/EC on the approval of the plans for the eradication of classical swine fever and the emergency vaccination of feral pigs against classical swine fever in Germany accordingly.

Vote: unanimous in favour.

16. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision concerning measures to prevent the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza caused by influenza A virus of subtype H5 or H7 to birds kept in zoos and approved bodies, institutes or centres in the Member States and repealing Decision 2006/474/EC. (SANCO/10654/2006)
Commission Decision 2006/474/EC approved 17 preventive vaccination plans against avian influenza for birds kept in zoos submitted by Member States including provisions for movements of vaccinated birds. Vaccination plans have been implemented by 14 Member States and in general, no adverse reactions in almost 35000 vaccinated birds were observed and most bird species produced a significant immune response. The Commission presented a proposal replacing Decision 2006/474/EC and intending to ease the administrative requirements for preventive vaccination plans in zoos provided they do not endanger disease control.

Member States discussed the proposal and made comments to be introduced into the document and presented in a future meeting of this Committee.


This proposal concerns part 2 of Annex E to Directive 92/65/EEC, which lays down the model certificate for intra-Community trade in live bees (Apis mellifera). In this health certificate, there are no animal health requirements as regards the small hive beetle (Aethina tumida) or the Tropilaelaps mite (Tropilaelaps spp.), as these infestations have never been recorded in the Community. However, to reflect the potential threat of these pests, protection measures on the importation of live bees from third countries have been laid down in Decision 2003/881/EC. Despite these measures, should these pests be introduced into the Community, it is important that additional precautionary measures are in place to limit the spread of the disease throughout the Community. It is therefore proposed to review the certificate for intra-Community trade of live bees in order to introduce animal health requirements concerning the small hive beetle and the Tropilaelaps mite infestations. According to this draft proposal, in case of an outbreak, the movements of live bees (Apis mellifera) from infected areas will be limited and the restricted area should have a radius of at least 100 km around the infected premises. In addition, the models for the certificates for intra-Community trade should be compatible with the electronic Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES). Therefore, the current certificates should be amended in order to facilitate the operation of TRACES.

This document has been discussed during the previous meeting of this Committee on 11 December 2006. Member States then agreed with this proposal and commented on some technical parts of the certificate. This new version of the proposal includes the modifications proposed by the Member States. Member States discussed the proposed changes and made further comments.

The Commission representative asked the Member States to send any further comments by email.


With this proposal, the measures adopted to safeguard the health and welfare of Community equidae population will be reinforced by laying down a specific regime
for the movement and trade in equidae which originate in areas affected by equine infectious anaemia.

In addition, while equine infectious anaemia has been a sporadic disease in Member States of EU25, it is endemic in Romania. As a result of repeat failures to properly test and certify equidae exported from Romania to the Member States, the Commission adopted Decision 2004/825/EC on protection measures with regard to imports of equidae from Romania. This Decision is no longer in force since the accession of Romania to the EU and therefore should be repealed.

Member States discussed the proposal and expressed concerns as regards the difficulties in tracing the movements of horses within the Community. Although national measures are in place to control the disease and tracing the movement of equidae remains difficult for the authorities due to lack of information. Member States welcomed article 6 of the proposal, which gives the possibility to keep foals born to infected dams under isolation until their infection free status has been confirmed. As the proposed measures would have a serious impact on the equine industry of the affected Member States, Member States' representatives requested some time to discuss it with their authorities and then to send any comments to the Commission services.

Miscellaneous

- Points raised by Member States

1. The Belgian representative requested the Commission to provide an overview on the situation of avian influenza in third countries.

The Commission representative then informed the Members of the Committee that according to the information, until 11 January, the situation on avian influenza in third countries is as follows:

- Asia:
  - Vietnam: 32 outbreaks were confirmed since 7 December 2006 in poultry and surveillance results for wild ducks were positive. The ban on live chicken markets is not respected.
  - China: a human case with recovery, but no outbreaks in poultry have been detected and a ban on live chicken markets was introduced.
  - Hong Kong: A wild bird (scaly breasted Munia) tested positive.
  - Indonesia: to date, 58 human cases, deaths in poultry.
Africa:

- **Nigeria**: ongoing outbreaks.

- **Egypt**: 3 new human cases were reported and several outbreaks mainly in backyard flocks but in different governorates.

Eurasia:

- **Azerbaijan**: On 9 January massive death in poultry and wild ducks was reported close to the border with Iran. 50 samples were sent to the CRL in Padova, which gave negative results.

- **Russia**: On 10 January there was a suspicious case in the Amur Region for which the results are not known yet. Samples taken from animals in St Petersburg zoo proved negative.

- **Ukraine**: No infection reported.

- **Belarus**: there is no high pathogenic avian influenza outbreak. The authorities carried out surveillance in wild birds in 2006 and they will continue in 2007. Vaccination of commercial farms, but not backyard flocks is carried out.

2. The **Austrian** representative requested more information on Decision 1990/424 which provides that, under certain epidemiological situation, financial support could be given to the Member States in order to establish Bluetongue surveillance. More specific, Austria asked the Commission to inform the Member States on the conditions for granting such financial support. The Commission informed on the scope of Art 3.2a of Decision 90/424 that limits this possibility to affected Member States where, on the occurrence of bluetongue two or more Member States collaborate closely to control the epidemic, particularly in carrying out an epidemiological survey and disease surveillance measures.

3. **Greece** has reported an outbreak of capripox (sheep and goat pox) on the island of Lesvos. The disease occurred in a sheep farm with 50 animals. The Greek authorities received information on the suspicion of the disease on 4 January. On 10 January the results confirmed the occurrence of the disease and all infected animals were killed on 11 January. The Commission was informed by the Chief Veterinary Officer and a press release was also sent to its services for information.

4. The **French** representative expressed concerns about the evaluation of active substances used for the disinfection of the premises following outbreaks. Although this is an issue for which the responsibilities fall under the Directorate General for the Environment, the French authorities would like to let the Member States and the Commission know that they worry about it.
5. The Bulgarian authorities informed the Commission on 9 January about an outbreak of the Newcastle disease in poultry, located in the village of Gigen, municipality of Guliantsi in the administrative district of Pleven. The information note sent by the Director General of the National Veterinary Service of Bulgaria addressed to the Commission, was distributed during the meeting. On 5 January the Bulgarian authorities were informed about the increased mortality rates in poultry in 120 hens, kept in five backyards in the village of Gigen. Samples were sent for examination, to the Reference Laboratory for diagnostics of Newcastle disease and avian influenza in Sofia. Immediate culling/destruction applied to all the hens kept in the affected and the neighbouring backyards. All necessary measures in case of appearance of the Newcastle disease applied. On 8 January, the results of the laboratory examination confirmed the appearance of Newcastle disease. Since then, there is no information for further infected backyards and mortality in the village of Gigen or positive poultry farms in the municipality of Guliantsi.

**Points raised by the Commission:**

1. The Commission representative informed the Member States on the notification of foot and mouth disease in Turkey, close to the Greek borders. In an effort to assist the Turkish authorities, the Commission had supplied 1.6 million doses of trivalent vaccine from the EU antigen bank to the Turkish authorities. Unfortunately, those were not used but kept in store for emergencies likely to arise after the religious festival. The Greek authorities plan to take preventive measures. A meeting with both the Turkish and Greek authorities is organised by the Commission to assess the situation and if needed, immediate vaccination will begin.

2. A working group meeting is going to be held on 23 January 2007 on emergency killing methods for poultry. The Commission is organising the meeting with Member States' experts in dealing with outbreaks of AI in the field, representatives from OIE and EFSA to exchange their experiences, scientific view and latest methods developed.