Chair: Bernard Van Goethem, Alberto Laddomada.

All Member States were present.

Croatia attended the meeting as an observer.

1. **Schmallenberg virus: review of the epidemiological situation and exchange of views on working document SANCO/7012/2012.**

The representatives from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom and France presented the epidemiological situation on the Schmallenberg virus (SBV) in each country reporting the cases and farms affected.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) presented the Technical Report "Schmallenberg virus: likely epidemiological scenarios and data needs" that was requested by the Commission. This is a preliminary report and a more detailed analysis would be made once data are collected from the Member States through the Data Collection Framework (DCF) tool of EFSA. EFSA would contact each Member State to identify the national focal points that will enter SBV-related data through the DCF. The quality and timeliness of the work done by EFSA was acknowledged.

The Commission presented the draft working document SANCO/7012/2012 on "Schmallenberg Virus, Guidance Document on the Priority Actions to be undertaken in the EU in the Next Months". Several delegations provided comments that were integrated in a final version of this document which was unanimously endorsed by the Committee. The Commission clarified its intention to organise a meeting of experts from affected Member States, to better coordinate scientific studies, on 14 February 2012. These studies could be undertaken and co-financed under the framework of the EU expenditure in the veterinary field.

Few Member States requested clarifications on the strategy for addressing the presence of SBV in the EU, indicating that some actions could be eventually needed. It was agreed that before taking any control measure (e.g. restriction of movements, active surveillance plans, undertaking research activities for developing a vaccine, definition of free zones, vector control measures) the impact of the infection and of the control measures would need to be weighted. Up to now the impact on animal production...
appears to be very limited. It was agreed that the collection and analysis of data and the assistance of EFSA, with Member States' collaboration, in this effort was crucial.

Several Member States requested a coordinated approach at EU level for addressing the issue on several fronts: on research activities, exchange of information, coordinated actions vis-a-vis trade issues with third countries. An update was given by Member States on the reactions of trading partners with respect SBV. The number of third countries imposing bans on live animals or animal products was increasing as well as the number of requests for clarifications on the epidemiological situation. The Commission stated its intention to organise a coordination meeting with the Member States for obtaining a common position as regards trade issues with third countries (tentative date 17 February 2012).

2. **Bluetongue situation in the Member States.**

   The Portuguese representative made a presentation, providing an update on the bluetongue situation.

   The Belgian, Dutch, German and Luxembourg's delegations informed the Committee that they intend to lift the restriction measures and revert to freedom from Bluetongue as from 15 February 2012 in a coordinated manner.

3. **Information from Italy on the African swine fever situation in Sardinia.**

   Italy requested that this item is postponed.

4. **Information from Greece on rabies surveillance in the northern part of the country.**

   The Greek representative made a presentation.

   Greece is a country free of rabies since 1987. However, recently, neighbouring countries have reported rabies cases in areas close to the Greek territory. In reaction Greece has set up a plan for reinforced surveillance for rabies in the northern part of the country.

5. **Information on the eradication programmes 2013: more information on the "call for interest" that will be launched by the Commission to draw a list of experts to assist the Commission on the pre-evaluation procedure of the programmes co-financed by the Union.**

   The Commission's representative provided further, more detailed information to the Member States on the "call for interest" to prepare a list of experts that should carry out the first screening evaluation of the 2013 programmes. The "call for interest" will be published in the Official Journal of the Commission by the end of February.
6. **Information on the on-line submission of the 2013 programmes.**

The Commission's representative informed that the pdf templates to submit the 2013 programmes on-line will be sent to the Member States by the beginning of March and those will reflect the modifications to the Annexes to Decision 2008/425/EC that will be discussed during the meeting of this Committee, section Biological Safety, on 22 February. Also, pdf templates to submit intermediate and final reports on the implementation of the programmes are in preparation. Further information will be provided at the next meeting of this Committee.

7. **Updated information on the action plans of Member States to implement Council Directive 1999/74/EC on the protection of laying hens.**

Member States were asked to confirm or correct data in a table presented during the meeting. The list of non-compliant Member States remains unchanged. A few Member States had reduced the number of non-compliant farms considerably, while for the remainder the situation is relatively speaking unchanged. The Commission referred to the ongoing infringement proceedings and strongly urged Member States to take action.

8. **Information from the Commission on the state of implementation of the legislation on group housing of sows.**

The Commission presented the current state of play of the future implementation regarding group housing of sows.

Member States were asked to confirm or correct their data during the meeting.

The Commission reminded the importance for Member States to send data to the Commission and urged them to take all the necessary actions in order to reach full compliance by 1 January 2013.

A meeting with stakeholders and Member States will be organised by the Commission on 19 March 2012 in order to further discuss solutions to achieve compliance by the legal deadline.


Some Member States made comments on the proposed text. The Commission asked Member States to send their comments by email. The document is published on the Directorate's General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) following website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/animalbyproducts/faq_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/animalbyproducts/faq_en.htm)
9A. Applications and declarations from Member States to achieve a health status with regard to the diseases listed in Directive 2006/88/EC.

- Declarations from Germany, Poland and Slovenia of VHS and IHN free compartments in accordance with Article 50 of Council Directive 2006/88/EC.

In accordance with Article 10 of Decision 2009/177/EC the information can be found in the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/aquaculture/declarations_en.htm

The Commission informed about declarations from Germany, Poland and Slovenia of compartments free of VHS and IHN.

10. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the evolution of animal diseases in the Union and in third countries.

No item raised.

11. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision approving certain amended programmes for the eradication and monitoring of animal diseases and zoonoses for the year 2012 and amending Decision 2011/807/EU as regards the measures eligible for Union financial support in scrapie eradication programmes and the pre-financing by the Union of rabies programmes for the year 2012. (Legal base: Art. 27 (5) and (6) of Council Decision 2009/470/EC) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure) (Doc. SANCO/13080/2011 – Rev.1)

The Commission's representative presented the proposal whose purpose was threefold:

a. Approve amendments to certain approved co-financed programmes for 2012 submitted by Member States.

b. Modify Implementing Decision 2008/807/EC to make eligible for EU funding the compensation paid for animals sent for compulsory slaughter in the framework of scrapie eradication programmes. Currently only compensation for animals culled and destroyed was eligible under these programmes.

c. Modify Implementing Decision 2008/807/EC to enable the payment of advances for rabies programmes upon the request of interested Member States. This has proved necessary as certain Member States are facing difficulties in securing funds for the pre-financing of their oral vaccination campaign for rabies, resulting in some cases to the cancellation of planned activities.

Vote: unanimous in favour.
12. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of emergency surveillance measures for rabies in northern Greece. (Legal base: Art. 8(2) of Council Decision 2009/470/EC) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure) (Doc. SANCO/10070/2012 – Rev.1)

The Commission's representative presented a proposal with which it is intended to provide financial support to Greece for rabies surveillance measures. These measures funded under the rabies programmes approved annually for all Member States, however, as the need for reinforced rabies surveillance in Greece occurred after the deadline for the submission of these programmes for EU funding for the year 2012, the "emergency fund" is used to support Greece in this respect.

Vote: unanimous in favour.


The Commission's representative presented the Revision 2 of document SANCO/7005/2011. This document had previously been thoroughly discussed at working group level and also in this Committee on 1-2 March 2011 (see item 13 of the agenda of that meeting) and on 4 April 2011 (see item 10 of the agenda of that meeting) and it is intended to be presented for a vote following the expected adoption of the amendment of Directive 2000/75/EC that is in second reading at the European Parliament and the Council. The delegations from some Member States asked for some clarifications and made remarks. The Member States were invited to provide further comments in writing.

14. Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision laying down standard requirements for the submission by Member States of national programmes for the eradication, control and monitoring of certain animal diseases and zoonoses for Union financing. (Legal base: Article 27(5) of Commission Decision 2009/470) (Opinion of the Committee via the examination procedure) (Doc. SANCO/10313/2011)


This draft Commission Implementing Decision lays down standard requirements for the submission by Member States of national programmes for the eradication, control and monitoring of certain animal diseases and zoonoses for Union financing and amends Commission Decision 2008/425/EC.
The aim is to simplify the submission of the programmes and make the revised annexes consistent with the modified relevant Union legislation.

The participants attending this meeting were informed that the same item will be discussed at the next meeting of this Committee, section Biological Safety, on 22 February.

The Commission's intention is to present this document for vote at the meeting of this Committee, section Animal Health and Welfare, in March.

Miscellaneous

Issues raised by the Commission:

- The Commission informed the Member States that the Commission Work Programme of 2012 has included for the year 2013 the animal cloning for food production. An impact assessment on all aspects of cloning for food production has been launched in order to deliver a Commission proposal in 2013.

Issues raised by the Member States:

- The Portuguese representative gave a presentation informing about the preventive vaccination plan against low pathogenic avian influenza implemented from March 2010 until July 2011 in one holding keeping valuable breeding mallard ducks in Portugal. A monovalent vaccine protecting against avian influenza H5 subtype was used. The results for the antibody response and the accompanying surveillance were reported.

Issues raised by observing countries:

- The Swiss representative gave a presentation informing about the Newcastle disease outbreak in the Kanton of Neuchâtel in a laying hen holding which was confirmed on 2 December 2011. All birds present in the holding were culled. Extensive epidemiological investigations of direct and indirect contacts and in holdings located in the established protection and surveillance zones did not reveal any further spread of the virus. The last restrictions in relation to this outbreak were lifted on 10 January 2012.