Chair: B. Van Goethem, A. Fuessel, F. Reviriego.

27 Member States were present. Greece and Malta were partly absent but represented.

A.1 Information from Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Spain on the bluetongue situation.

The Spanish representative made a short presentation on the Spanish findings related to the first indications of circulation of a BTV-14 vaccine-like strain.

The Latvian representative made a presentation on the bluetongue surveillance activities and laboratory result obtained in the last months. The laboratory results indicate that the BTV-14 vaccine-like strain had circulated in Latvia.

The Lithuanian representative informed the Committee on the chronology of findings in Lithuania associated to the BTV-14 vaccine incident and explained that as a precaution, Lithuania was implementing additional guarantees on animals dispatched from Lithuania to other Member States or third countries based on testing of all susceptible animals moved out of the country.

The Polish representative informed that a single region in the north-eastern part of Poland is concerned as regards the BTV-14 vaccine incident. Poland explained their findings based on surveillance in place.

The Estonian representative reported that only a single seropositive result to BTV-14 had been found in Estonia and that by 22/11/12 a positive PCR result had been found.

The Commission's representative concluded after a short discussion that, on the basis of the information available, namely the absence of clinical signs, the genotype (as indicated by the EU Reference Laboratory for bluetongue) of the isolates being homologous to the vaccine reference strain and the low intra-herd seropositivity reported, the affected Member States were facing a vaccine incident and not an outbreak of Bluetongue.
The French representative made a presentation on the final results of the surveillance activities implemented in France in the last three years demonstrating the absence of bluetongue virus circulation in continental France. This information supports the removal of this area from the bluetongue restricted zones.

A.2 Information from Italy on the African swine fever situation in Sardinia.

The Italian representative made a presentation on the African swine fever epidemiological situation up to 30/11/2012 with emphasis on the intensified activities implemented in the last two months and informed that by 31 December 2012 it is expected that all swine herds will be controlled.

A.3 Information from Latvia on the classical swine fever situation in wild boar.

The Latvian representative made a presentation on the recent cases in wild boar and three outbreaks in pigs of classical swine fever identified close to the Russian and Belarus borders of Latvia. The Latvian authorities informed on the control measures implemented in accordance to Union legislation and the efforts on surveillance carried out in the last weeks.

A.4 Applications and declarations from Member States to achieve a health status with regard to the diseases listed in Directive 2006/88/EC.

The following applications and declarations from Member States to achieve a health status with regard to the diseases listed in Directive 2006/88/EC were presented:

- Declaration from Belgium of a VHS and IHN free compartment “Piscivair – La Girgaine”
- Declaration from Slovenia of a surveillance programme on VHS and IHN in the compartment “Radece”, stream Pihovec and streams Loški potok, Malnarjev graben, Sopota.
- Declaration from Italy of a surveillance programme on VHS and IHN in the compartment "LA PESCHIERA" in Velo d'Astico (VI), Via Lago di Sotto.
- Submission of a surveillance programme on VHS and IHN for approval from Italy on a compartment (“Servizio Faunistico, Canova di Sotto Abbiatigrasso (Mi)"

For 60 days, information on the applications can be obtained via the link on the Directorate's General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) web page [http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/aquaculture/declarations_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/aquaculture/declarations_en.htm)

A.5 Applications and declarations from Member States to achieve a health status with regard to the diseases listed in Directive 2006/88/EC.

The following declaration from Slovenia to achieve a health status with regard to the diseases listed in Directive 2006/88/EC was presented:

- Declaration from Slovenia of an individual farm officially free of VHS and IHN, Hatchery LIBO Boris Pirih, lat: 46.058702, long: 13.826193.
For 60 days, information on the applications can be obtained via the link on the DG SANCO's web page 
http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/aquaculture/declarations_en.htm


The few remaining Member States that still have holdings keeping hens in unenriched cages were asked to confirm or correct data presented in a table during the meeting. One Member State had made progress in achieving compliance. The number of holdings with non-compliant cages and the number of hens kept in such cages was reduced by around 5.5 million hens.

The Commission thanked the Member States for the efforts they had made during 2012 to achieve compliance and asked that the message is passed on to the staff at national, regional or local level who had been involved.


Member States were asked by the Commission to confirm or update data regarding the state of implementation of group housing of sows presented in a table during the meeting. According to these data, five Member States are already fully compliant with group housing of sows.

Two letters of interpretation regarding slatted floors in pig holdings were distributed by the Commission during the meeting.

A.8 Information from Italy on the low pathogenic avian influenza situation in poultry.

The Italian representative gave a presentation on the disease situation as regards low pathogenic avian influenza. During 2012, sixteen outbreaks of low pathogenic avian influenza - predominantly of the H5(N2) subtype - were identified in Italy in rural farms and some commercial poultry holdings including those keeping fattening turkeys.

The Italian authorities have implemented the control measures for avian influenza as laid down in Directive 2005/94/EC. The location of some of the affected farms in areas with a high density of poultry holdings have prompted the Italian authorities to also take extraordinary national measures such as additional pre-movement controls and laboratory testing and the temporary ban of restocking for certain farm types.

The last outbreak was confirmed on 22 October 2012. The extraordinary measures were revoked and the last restrictive measures according to the EU legislation were lifted by 21 November 2012.

A.9 Applications and declarations from Member States to achieve a health status with regard to the diseases listed in Directive 2006/88/EC.
The following declarations from Member States to achieve a health status with regard to the diseases listed in Directive 2006/88/EC were presented:

- Declaration from Germany on a compartment, “Störaufzucht Kortmann” in Hohenwestedt, Schleswig-Holstein, free of VHS and IHN.
- Declaration from Germany on a zone, Bodetal, Sachsen-Anhalt, free of VHS and IHN.

For 60 days, information on the applications can be obtained via the link on the DG SANCO's web page http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/liveanimals/aquaculture/declarations_en.htm

**B.1 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.

**B.2 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Regulations (EC) No 180/2008 and (EC) No 737/2008 as regards the period of designation of certain laboratories as EU reference laboratories.**

The Commission's representative presented a draft Implementing Regulation aiming at extending to five years the period for which, the EU reference laboratories for equine diseases other than African horse sickness (ANSES-Maisons-Alfort, FR) and for crustacean diseases (CEFAS-Weymouth, UK) were designated as EU reference laboratories.

**Vote taken:** unanimous in favour.


The Commission's representative circulated a new version of the draft Regulation aiming at laying down in the same act the additional responsibilities and tasks for the EU reference laboratories for rabies (ANSES-Nancy, FR), bovine tuberculosis (VISAVET-Madrid, ES) and bee health (ANSES-Sophia-Antipolis, FR).

**Vote taken:** unanimous in favour.

The Commission's representative presented revision 5 of the draft Regulation. Previous versions of the document were presented and discussed at the meeting of this Committee during the last few months. Member States were asked to send their comments to the Commission by email.

C.2 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 926/2011 of 12 September 2011 for the purposes of Council Decision 2009/470/EC as regards Union financial aid to the EU reference laboratories for feed and food and the animal health sector

The objective of the document is to amend the current Regulation (EU) No 926/2011 concerning expenditure eligibility in order to reduce the administrative burden linked to the management of workshops, training activities and meetings.

At the moment, an EU reference laboratory (EURL) can receive two grants a year: one for the activities and one for the organization of workshops. As the administrative and financial procedure is considered heavy by the labs and by the Commission when relating to workshops, the Commission services propose to include “workshops” within activities and consider them like any other item of the activities. Consequently, the current procedure regarding workshops will be given up. This will also have an impact on training activities and meetings which are managed like workshops. The current procedure will therefore be given up as well.

C.3 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the purchase and storage of foot-and-mouth disease virus antigens.

The draft Implementing Decision was introduced, a hard copy was distributed to Member States and the Committee was informed that the document, after finishing Commission inter-service consultation procedure, will be presented for an opinion at the meeting of this Committee on 13-14 December 2012.

C.4 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the harmonisation of the standard form for the annual report on inspections on animal welfare during transport carried out under Article 27 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport

The Commission's representative presented the changes that had been introduced to document SANCO/12503/2012, since it was presented at the meeting of this Committee on 5-6 November 2012 (see item C.1 of the agenda of that meeting). The changes had been made based on input from the Member States.

Member States were invited to give further comments during the meeting and also to provide written comments before 12 December 2012.

M.1 The following document was distributed by the Commission during the meeting:

M.2 The following document was distributed by Denmark during the meeting:

Animal Health in Denmark 2011.

M.3 Principles for defining the Commission's response in cases of unsatisfactory implementation of EU co-financed veterinary programmes.

The Commission's representative presented a working document (SANCO/12785/2012) on the principles for defining its response in cases of unsatisfactory implementation of EU co-financed veterinary programmes.

Each year, following the submission of the final reports on the implementation of co-financed programmes, the Commission evaluates the activities and results of the programmes. In some cases, the implementation of the programmes is judged to be unsatisfactory and the Commission could send a warning letter to the Competent Authorities or apply a financial correction on the eligible costs of the programme.

Aiming to provide transparency on how the Commission is handling these cases, the document describes the failures in the implementation of programmes that merit a reaction by the Commission, the available options, as well as the criteria used to define the level of possible financial corrections.

M.4 Latvian bulls at the Turkish border.

The Commission informed the Committee on the situation regarding a transport of animals that has been delayed at the border between Bulgaria and Turkey for around two weeks. The Commission highlighted the importance to properly enforce animal welfare and the obligation for the competent authority under Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, to only approve realistic journey logs and on the responsibility of the operator to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made in advance to minimise the length of the journey and to meet animals’ needs.