# PRESS ARTICLE: International partners launch a new International Research Consortium to work together on Animal Health

***Animal diseases can cause serious social, economic and environmental damage, impact on animal welfare and in some cases directly threaten human health. These diseases ignore borders. Livestock provides one third of human protein intake so working together to develop new control methods for the disease problems that are common to countries around the world is essential to protect food security and the livestock industries. Fourteen organisations from 11 countries have so far committed to jointly invest around EUR 1 billion in the next five years through a new international research consortium on animal health. A launch celebration event will take place on 27 January in Brussels.***

An exciting initiative to coordinate animal health research globally will be launched in Brussels on 27 January at 13:15. **Phil Hogan**, the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, **Monique Eloit**, Director General, World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and **Professor Ian Boyd**, Chief Scientific Adviser for the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will speak to celebrate the launch of the International Research Consortium for Animal Health (IRC). This new initiative, which **builds up on several years of research networking on animal health supported by the European Union**, aims to deliver measurable advancements in the control of animal diseases through the alignment of both public and privately funded animal health research programmes around the world.

The Consortium includes research funders and programme owners from Europe, Asia, Australasia, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East as well as international organisations and the representation of veterinary pharmaceutical companies. Together, they have committed a total budget in the region of **EUR 1 billion** to invest over a **five year period** to 2021. Fourteen organisations from eleven countries have signed so far and the consortium is likely to enlarge in the coming weeks and months. These partners have agreed to coordinate their research programmes to address agreed research needs, share results and together deliver new and improved animal health strategies for at least 30 priority diseases, infections or issues, including candidate vaccines, diagnostics, therapeutics and other animal health products, procedures and/or key scientific information and tools to support risk analysis and disease control.

To achieve these goals Working Groups consisting of researchers will be established for each of the priority topics and, guided by a Scientific Committee. These groups will perform research gap analyses. The Scientific Committee, consisting of independent experts, will present the gap analyses to the IRC partners and advise them on how their programmes might be aligned. A Scientific Secretariat will be established to provide the Working Groups with literature reviews and support them in their gap analyses, support the Scientific Committee and Executive Committee logistically and facilitate information exchange within and between all three levels.

## More information:

***Event venue and dates:*** 27 January 2016 – Brussels, Charlemagne building, Press corner, Ground floor, 13:15 to 13:45 (As part of the conference "Designing the path: A strategic approach to EU agricultural research and innovation").

***Websites:*** STAR-IDAZ: http://www.star-idaz.net/

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STAR-IDAZ
International Research
Consortium on Animal Health

European Commission

## Background:

**History in a nutshell:**

The history of this IRC initiative started with a European network of public research funders within the EU Standing Committee on Agriculture Research (SCAR). It then led to two successive and successful European Research Area networks (so called 'ERA-NETs') supported by the EU Framework Programme on research. A comparable global network of research funding organisations, STAR-IDAZ, was then launched with the support once again of the EU framework programme. Convinced of the importance of strengthening cooperation on this matter, the European Commission proposed the creation of an International research consortium to the scientific community.

**Signatories to date of the Letter of Intent to join the IRC include:**

- Danish National Veterinary Institute (DTU Vet), Denmark
- The French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES), France
- National Institute of Agricultural Research (INRA), France
- Ministry of Health, Italy
- Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC), UK
- Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK
- National Institute of Agriculture Technology (INTA), Argentina
- Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation (MINCYT), Argentina
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Canada
- Agriculture Research services, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA ARS), US
- National Institute of Animal Health, National Agriculture and Food Research Organisation (NIAH), Japan
- International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya
- Kimron Veterinary Institute, Israel
- Tanzania Veterinary Laboratory Agency (TVLA), Tanzania

**Observers**:

- European Manufacturers of Veterinary Diagnostics (EMVD)
- HealthforAnimals

**The priority topics identified for initial collaboration include:**

- Immunology/vaccinology (tools and technologies)
- Diagnostics (tools and technologies)
- Innovative anti-infective approaches, including alternatives to anti-microbial agents
- Influenza
- Bovine Tuberculosis
- Foot and Mouth Disease
- Brucellosis
- African Swine Fever
- Emerging issues
- Vector-borne diseases
- Coronaviruses
- One Health (including food-borne pathogens and AMR)
- Mastitis
- Animal genetics/genomics for animal health
- Foresight
- Epidemiology
- Helminths
- Rabies
- Respiratory Diseases of Pigs