

## **Conclusions for the OIE Expert Group Meeting on Surveillance of Migratory Wild Birds and Domestic Animals in Asia**

**(Tokyo, 16 October 2008)**

- (1) The OIE Expert Group Meeting on Surveillance of Wild Birds and Domestic Animals along migratory flyways in Asia was held in Tokyo, on 16 October 2008. The meeting was attended by 36 participants of various organizations such as Veterinary authorities, Environment authorities and Ornithology organizations from the 9 selected countries/territories, OIE Reference Laboratory (Hokkaido University) and the International organization of OIE.
- (2) Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) caused by H5N1 virus is still a major worldwide concern, due to reoccurrences of the disease in some countries and endemic conditions in some areas, which cause economic losses and a negative impact on sustainable poultry production systems as well as human health risks. Human infections with HPAI/H5N1 virus are still reported, in particular in Asia.
- (3) Under these conditions, the special OIE Regional Project on HPAI Control at Source in Southeast Asia, where HPAI was focused in term of geographical distribution of the disease, was implemented in strong collaboration with the Government of Japan in the 2006 and 2007 fiscal years.
- (4) In addition to Southeast Asian countries where the OIE/Japan Special Trust Fund Project on HPAI control was extended, the disease has spread to other regions. Under such changing circumstances, OIE regional activities on HPAI control were expanded geographically to Asian countries including East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia, and the scope of assistance also expanded to other technical areas of strengthening Animal Health Information Networking, particularly for HPAI, of Surveillance of Wild Birds together with Domestic animals. Such activities will support further strengthening of data-base on Avian Influenza, which will provide useful information for all the participating countries in this new Project in Asia.
- (5) The new OIE/JSTF Project starting from 2008 will also contribute to the strengthening of Veterinary Authorities, especially in capacity building of laboratory diagnosis and surveillance of HPAI, which includes two major areas of training programmes for laboratory staff members for HPAI diagnosis and procurement of modern laboratory

equipment and materials.

- (6) The OIE/JTF Project will continue for 5 years; the concept and collaborative ways of which were discussed at the Inception Meeting for the OIE/Japan Trust Fund Programme for strengthening Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Control in Asia, held in Tokyo, in April 2008.
- (7) The meeting addressed one component of the new Project; namely Surveillance of Wild Birds and Domestic Animals along migratory flyways, under the OIE/JTF Project for Strengthening HPAI Control in Asia. Wild birds are considered to be one of the potential mechanisms for spreading Avian Influenza and there are still uncertainties as to the actual role they play.
- (8) Surveillance of wild birds and domestic animals is important to contribute to the understanding of epidemiology of Avian Influenza and for studying on interaction between wild birds and domestic animals.
- (9) The Purpose of Surveillance is to develop the effective HPAI preparedness and control measures, and to provide supportive information for enhancing awareness of risks on HPAI in Asia, through epidemiological studies on flying routes of migratory birds as well as on domestic animals.
- (10) The Project consists of three elements; Sub-programme I for surveillance and analysis on flying routes of wild birds, Sub-programme II for Surveillance on AI viruses in wild birds as well as domestic animals, and Sub-programme III for Database of isolated AI viruses.
- (11) The meeting recognized that technical advice from the Expert Group Meeting is the most important for effective and smooth implementation of Surveillance of Wild Birds and Domestic Animals under the new OIE Project.
- (12) Surveillance activities will be supported by tracking wild birds and monitoring their flying routes, studying AI viruses circulating in wild birds and in domestic animals, strengthening the Database of isolated AI viruses and feeding back of data/information from the Project through the OIE Reference Laboratory at Hokkaido University to Asian Member Countries/Territories.

- (13) Criteria for selection of countries/territories for surveillance require some conditions including outbreaks of HPAI in poultry or wild birds since 2004, along the major flyways of East Asia/Australian Flyways and Central Asian Flyways, Member countries/territories of OIE in Asia, High level of interest in joining the OIE Project and Possibility to provide OIE Reference Laboratory (Hokkaido University) with collected samples/viruses and/or information.
- (14) The Expert groups consist of two different groups; Advisory Group (AG) to provide technical advice to OIE for smooth and effective surveillance implementation, and Working Groups (WGs) including Wild bird surveillance Group and Domestic animal surveillance Group to advise to AG.
- (15) Surveillance will be implemented in Hong Kong and Vietnam as the first selected sites in 2008-2009 and those two will be nominated as the Members of Advisory Group (AG) as well as Working Group (WG) for the surveillance. And other countries including Mongolia, Laos and PR China will be considered for joining the Project after 2009.
- (16) Targeted animals for surveillance are *Anseriforms* such as ducks, geese, swans and other relevant species which are believed to have a greater risk of carrying AI viruses, and domestic animals in which Veterinary authorities are engaged.
- (17) Collection of samples will be carried out during November - March in Hong Kong and Vietnam, while July -September is the most appropriate season for sampling in Mongolia.
- (18) Organizations implementing Surveillance on the selected sites are Veterinary authorities and relevant organizations such as Environment authorities in the selected countries/territories, the OIE contracted public institute for ornithology and OIE Asia-Pacific.
- (19) Surveillance should be effectively implemented through regional cooperation extended from the relevant Members and Organizations and other relevant partners, and OFFLU; OIE/FAO joint network of expertise for Avian Influenza, can also be accessed

for AI information.

- (20) Considering wild bird capturing may have implications for animal welfare and conservation, this needs to be accounted for through consultation of the Working Group on site, since conditions differ in countries/territories.
- (21) Duplication of surveillance activities should be avoided as far as possible and rather maximize synergy to complement each other.
- (22) Collecting dead wild birds is a more effective way to isolate AI viruses in comparison with live wild birds, based on the past experience in Hong Kong SAR.
- (23) The Model case of sampling shown in the Power Point slides including the number of samples will be reviewed and elaborated in the very near future.