



Organisation
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Organización
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de Sanidad
Animal

25th Conference of the
OIE Regional Commission for Asia,
the Far East and Oceania
Queenstown, New Zealand, 26 - 30 November 2007

FINAL REPORT

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List of Abbreviations

AAHL	:	Australian Animal Health Laboratory
AMAF	:	ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry
APEC	:	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
APHCA	:	Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific
APHIS-USDA	:	Animal and Plant Inspection Service - United States Department of Agriculture
APSED	:	Asia Pacific for emerging Diseases
ASEAN	:	Association of South-East Asian Nations
ASWGL	:	ASEAN Sectoral Working Group for Livestock
AusAID	:	Australian Agency for International Development
BSE	:	Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
CSF	:	Classical swine fever
DLD	:	Department of Livestock Development (Thailand)
EI	:	Equine Influenza
EMPRES	:	Emerging Prevention System for Transboundary Diseases
ECTAD	:	Emerging Centre for Transboundary Diseases
FAO	:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FMD	:	Foot and mouth disease
GF-TADs	:	Global Framework for Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases
GLEWS	:	Global Early Warning System
GREP	:	Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme
HPAI	:	Highly pathogenic avian influenza
HACCP	:	Hazard Analysis for the Control of Critical Points
IFAH	:	International Federation of Animal Health
IICA	:	Inter American Institute on Agriculture
IDF	:	International Dairy Federation
IMS	:	International Meat Secretariat
JSTF	:	Japan Special Trust Fund
LMWG	:	Lower Mekong Working Group
MIA	:	Meat Industry Association of New Zealand
MOU	:	Memorandum of Understanding
OIE	:	World Organisation for Animal Health
PCV	:	porcine circo virus-associated disease
PED	:	porcine epidemic diarrhoea
PMC	:	porcine myocarditis
PPR	:	Peste des petits ruminants
PRRS	:	porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome
PSVS	:	Programme to Strengthen Veterinary Services
PVS	:	Performance of Veterinary Services

RCU	:	Regional Coordination Unit (Bangkok)
SE	:	swine erysipelas
SEAFMD	:	South-East Asia Foot and Mouth Disease
SPC	:	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPS	:	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
TCPs	:	Technical cooperation projects
UMWG	:	Upper Mekong Working Group
VRE	:	vancomycin resistant enterococci
WAHIS	:	World Animal Health Information System of the OIE
WAHID	:	World Animal Health Information Database
WHO	:	World Health Organization
WTO	:	World Trade Organization

Introduction

1. Following the kind invitation of the Government of New Zealand, the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania was held in Queenstown from 26 to 30 November 2007.
2. A total of 113 participants, comprising OIE Delegates and/or nominees of 19 Members and 3 Observer Countries and senior officers from 13 regional and international organisations attended the conference. In addition, representatives of the private sector and private veterinary organisations from the host country were present. Dr Barry O'Neil, President of the OIE International Committee and OIE Delegate of New Zealand, Dr Bernard Vallat, OIE Director General, Dr Gardener Murray, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, Dr Dewan Sibartie, Head of the OIE Regional Activities Department, Dr Alex Thiermann, President of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Dr Teruhide Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific and Dr Karim Ben Jebara, Head of the Animal Health Information Department also participated in the Conference. The speakers of Technical Items I and II, namely, Dr Reildrin Morales, Bureau of Animal Industry, Philippines, Dr Kanarat Sasitorn, Senior Veterinary Expert on Safety and Quality of Livestock Products, Department of Livestock Development, Thailand honoured the Conference by their presence.

Tuesday 27 November 2007

Cultural show

3. Before the opening ceremony, a local Maori Group presented a cultural and ancestral show traditionally offered to foreign guests. The Director General of the OIE, Dr Bernard Vallat, acting as the Head of the 'Foreign Troop', accepted the challenge and successfully 'defended' his troop and all conference participants were welcomed to the Conference by traditional Maori songs and dances.

Opening Ceremony

4. Dr Gardner Murray, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, welcomed honoured guests and participants to the 25th Conference of the Commission. He expressed particular thanks to the Government of New Zealand in general and the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in particular, for hosting the Conference noting that from his previous experience, Queenstown was an outstanding venue for such an important event. The location provided opportunity for reflection, debate and recreation in a beautiful part of the world.
5. Dr Murray said that animal health had in recent years, provided new and additional challenges. These included emerging threats such as zoonoses, trans-boundary diseases and a range of food safety problems. In addition, a number of social concerns on issues such as animal welfare and the environment had required of OIE and Governments that they respond to such matters in a constructive and positive way. He was pleased to see that OIE had a range of policies and processes in place to address all of these concerns including initiatives to strengthen Veterinary Services, to promote animal welfare and food safety and to work in a collaborative way with other organisations such as FAO, WHO, ASEAN and the World Bank.

6. The President of the Commission felt that the agenda of the Conference reflected a number of the issues he had described. There would be major discussions on avian influenza, foot and mouth disease, animal welfare and aquatic animal health. Important consideration would be given to problems and possible solutions to the significant pig disease difficulties being experienced by many countries in the Region.
7. Dr Murray concluded that as animal and public health risks were increasing, OIE had a key role to play in further refining and developing its normative roles; in the coordination of animal health activities where the SEAFMD Campaign had proved an excellent model; by strengthening Veterinary Services; and through constructive collaboration with key organisations such as FAO, ASEAN, WHO, and the Asian Development and World Banks. He anticipated that strong and practical recommendations would emerge from the Conference, and that participants would gain from exchange of information and the camaraderie that exists amongst members of the region.
8. Dr Murray emphasised that interdisciplinary approaches and a “one health” system should be adopted, i.e. for animal, human, environmental and wildlife. He concluded by stating that it was up to individual countries to lead and drive developments in animal health.
9. Dr Teruhide Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of New Zealand and colleagues for their generosity in hosting and preparing this important Conference. He stressed the importance of the meeting for the region as there are currently many challenges regarding animal disease control and capacity building for Veterinary Services.
10. Dr Fujita recalled the various activities that have been organised in line with the implementation of the recommendations on HPAI and BSE adopted during the last Regional Conference held in Seoul in 2005. The special OIE/Japan Special Trust Fund Project on HPAI control at source is proving indeed instrumental in the control of HPAI. Regarding BSE, the regional Workshop on BSE risk analysis and OIE pathway for BSE freedom received much attention.
11. Dr Fujita stressed the importance of the joint OIE/FAO GF-TADS Programme stating that the second Regional Steering Committee meeting held in July 2007 highlighted the importance of working in partnership with other regional partners such as ASEAN, SAARC and SPC for a more coherent approach towards regional control of animal diseases.
12. Dr Fujita concluded by describing the various areas of cooperation amongst Members including disease control and preparedness, strengthening and capacity building of Veterinary Services including hands-on laboratory training workshops, updated animal health information systems, Risk Analysis, WTO-SPS Agreement and Food Safety.
13. Dr Barry O’Neil, President of the OIE International Committee and OIE Delegate of New Zealand welcomed all participants stating that as the current President of OIE, he has attended all four OIE Regional Commission meetings held to date, and it was especially pleasing for him that his country was hosting a Regional Conference during his tenure as President.
14. Dr O’Neil pointed out that animal production, animal health and animal welfare are important components of New Zealand’s economic and social fabric, and therefore OIE as an organisation has a very direct and important relevance to the country which depends on agriculture for nearly 20 % of its GDP. New Zealand exports approximately 90% of the high quality animal products produced from the 40 million sheep, 10 million cattle and over 1 million farmed deer. Each year, New Zealand exports over 800,000 tonnes of sheep and beef meats, and 15 billion litres of high quality fresh milk are produced every year

15. Dr O'Neil highlighted some of the challenges facing Agriculture in the world including water limitations, soil erosion, and poor agricultural production methods that have led to a growing gap between Agriculture and consumption. He mentioned a recently published United Nations study on the status of the planet which indicates very worrying statistics on the world situation. Over 20 years, the world population has increased by 35% to 6.7 billion people while 60% of that population is found in Asia. Every person now requires 22 hectares of earth surface to meet his needs, yet the earth's capacity is just 15 hectares. Intensification of agriculture over the last 20 years has increased production by 40% but has also resulted in water shortages and other problems related to water and soil quality. It is therefore crucial to find more effective ways to produce crops and animals to feed people. This can be achieved by utilising new genetics and avoiding wastage and thus ensure security of the food supply especially from threats of pests and diseases.
16. Dr O'Neil noted that despite all these challenges, some significant achievements have been possible. He quoted the South East Asia Foot and Mouth Disease Programme (SEAFMD) and its goal to achieve freedom from FMD with vaccination by 2020, an achievement that will make a positive difference to the standards of living for many farmers and communities in the countries involved.
17. Dr O'Neil continued by discussing OIE's role in standard setting and indicated that these standards must be based on the best science available in order to protect animal health and ensure food safety. While developing countries have sometimes argued that the standards are too difficult to comply with, OIE has provided ways to help such countries. For example, exporting countries can identify in the OIE Codes, commodities that are safe to trade irrespective of the animal health status. They can also use the concept of compartmentalisation where premises free from diseases and having an enhanced biosecurity will be able to export. On the other hand, importing countries must also ensure that they do not apply excessive trade restrictions which will ultimately undermine their credibility. The OIE now has a trade dispute settlement capacity to try and solve problems at a technical level.
18. Dr O'Neil stated that a specific focus of OIE over the last 5 years has been on strengthening the capacity of member's ability to apply international standards, and for good governance of animal health services including working with colleagues in FAO and donor agencies to assist capacity building.
19. Dr O'Neil recognised the work of the Director General, who is putting a huge amount of his considerable efforts and talents into his lead role in the OIE, and who is absolutely committed to improving the situation of Veterinary Services of members.
20. Finally, Dr O'Neil thanked the Minister for Biosecurity and Agriculture and the Director General of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry for supporting the hosting of this conference.
21. Dr Bernard Vallat, Director General of the OIE, expressed his gratitude to the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry and the Government and People of New Zealand for hosting the conference.
22. Dr Vallat stated that the meeting was very important and timely for the Region of Asia, the Far East and Oceania where agricultural production systems and animal health have witnessed important changes relating to rapid globalisation of movements of goods and services as well as climate change. Animal diseases have not escaped this global environment change and certain diseases such as highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) have dominated the animal health scene of the region and have ended up in endemicity in a few countries.

23. The OIE Director General enumerated the various animal health problems and activities of the region and stressed the importance of collaborative partnership. This collaboration has resulted in the implementation of three major OIE animal health projects; namely (1) OIE SEAFMD Campaign, which created the new road map on FMD control with vaccination for 2020, (2) OIE/Japan Special Trust Fund Project on HPAI Control at Source, and (3) more recently the new OIE/AusAID project for strengthening Veterinary Services. He stated that the SEAFMD Programme has won world acclaim and the model is even being used in other parts of the world not only to control FMD but also other transboundary animal diseases. He expressed his gratitude to all the sponsors particularly the Governments of Japan, Australia, New Zealand and France for their generous financial or technical assistance that have allowed these projects to see the day.
24. Dr Vallat described the frontline role of Veterinary Services in the control of animal diseases including those transmissible to humans also highlighting their contribution towards public health in ensuring the safety of food of animal origin by preventing harmful pathogens, toxins and other contaminants originating from farm animals from entering the human food chain.
25. Speaking on the strengthening of Veterinary Services, he stated the evaluation tool for Veterinary Services called the "OIE Performance of Veterinary Services" (OIE PVS tool) developed by the OIE has already been applied in over 40 countries of the world, including several countries in this Region. The aim of the evaluation is to assist National Veterinary Services to determine their actual capabilities, elaborate strategies, establish priorities and plan the necessary investment programmes. Several countries of the region have already been evaluated and others are in the pipeline.
26. Dr Vallat observed that animal health activities in the region are growing and demands on Veterinary Services are increasing. He announced that in order to serve the region better, the OIE has decided to establish more offices in the region. Negotiations are progressing currently with three countries.
27. Dr Vallat made an appeal for stronger cooperation among countries of the region with regard to animal health by promoting solidarity in combating exotic and transboundary animal diseases in the region.
28. Dr Vallat concluded his speech by thanking Dr Barry O'Neil, President of the OIE International Committee for his constant support and advice in the management of the activities of the OIE and by welcoming the delegation of PR China.
29. Honourable Jim Anderton, Minister for Biosecurity and Agriculture of New Zealand, welcomed all participants and thanked his staff who worked very hard to ensure that the conference is fruitful.
30. The Minister pointed out that New Zealand joined the OIE in 1925 when the organisation was only one year old. Acknowledging the achievements of the OIE over the years, he stated that the success of New Zealand and OIE are linked as New Zealand shares the OIE objectives of transparency, scientific information, international solidarity and the promotion of Veterinary Services, food safety and animal welfare
31. The Minister stated that New Zealand is dependant on earnings from agriculture and fisheries which account for two thirds of its export earnings. A huge value is placed on science based international standards to effectively manage biosecurity risk in a way that interferes least with trade and thus the importance of the work of the OIE to New Zealand's livestock industry

32. The Honourable Jim Anderton recalled the contribution of his country in developing refrigeration technology to ship frozen products around the world. This helped the whole world but also allowed New Zealand to continue making its living from farming by embracing a science based primary production.
33. The Minister stressed that New Zealand is open to the world and wants to participate in the world economy. To allow any fruitful participation, the risks to fragile native species from exotic pests and diseases to which they have never been exposed must be managed. He stated that it was essential to maintain a strict biosecurity focus based on science and added that over the next five years the New Zealand Government will spend \$840 million on biosecurity.
34. The Honourable Jim Anderton emphasised that the Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania contains the greatest human and animal populations of all the OIE's Regional Commissions. He pointed out however, that there are vast animal health challenges and all countries will gain from working together and making decisions on the basis of science.
35. Minister Anderton then declared the Conference open and wished participants productive discussions and an enjoyable time in Queenstown.
36. The texts of the above speeches were made available to all the participants.

Election of the Conference Committee

37. The Conference Committee was elected as follows:

Chairperson:	Dr Barry O'Neil (New Zealand)
Vice-Chairperson:	Dr Li Jinxiang (PR China)
Rapporteur General:	Dr Bandyopadhyay (India)

Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Timetable

38. The Provisional Agenda and Timetable were adopted.

Designation of Session Chairpersons and Rapporteurs

39. Chairpersons and Rapporteurs were designated for the technical items as follows:

Item I: Dr Sin Bin Chua (Singapore), Chairman

Dr Quang Anh, (Vietnam), Rapporteur

Item II: Dr Kawashima (Japan), Chairperson
Dr Ali Qurban (Pakistan), Rapporteur

Animal health situation: Dr Gardner Murray (Australia), Chairperson
Dr Chaheewan (Thailand), Rapporteur

Animal health situation in Asia, Far East and Oceania

40. The OIE Director General apologised for the incorrect use in some documents of the application of Resolution XX regarding “Chinese Taipei” and announced that all such documents would be corrected.
41. The Session Chairman, Dr Gardner Murray, invited Dr Karim Ben Jebara, Head of the OIE Animal Health Information Department, to present the animal health situation of Members in Asia, Far East and Oceania region.
42. The report is based on information extracted from national reports provided by OIE Members and Territories during the first half of 2007 for the Regional Conference. It has been supplemented, whenever necessary, by relevant information from immediate notification and follow up reports of events happening in some countries of the region up to 30 June 2007 and, wherever needed from the World Animal Health publication in 2004 for livestock population.
43. Of the 32 OIE Members of the Regional Commission for Asia, Far East and Oceania, 15 submitted their specific reports in time for the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, Far East and Oceania. These countries are represented in blue in Figure 1.

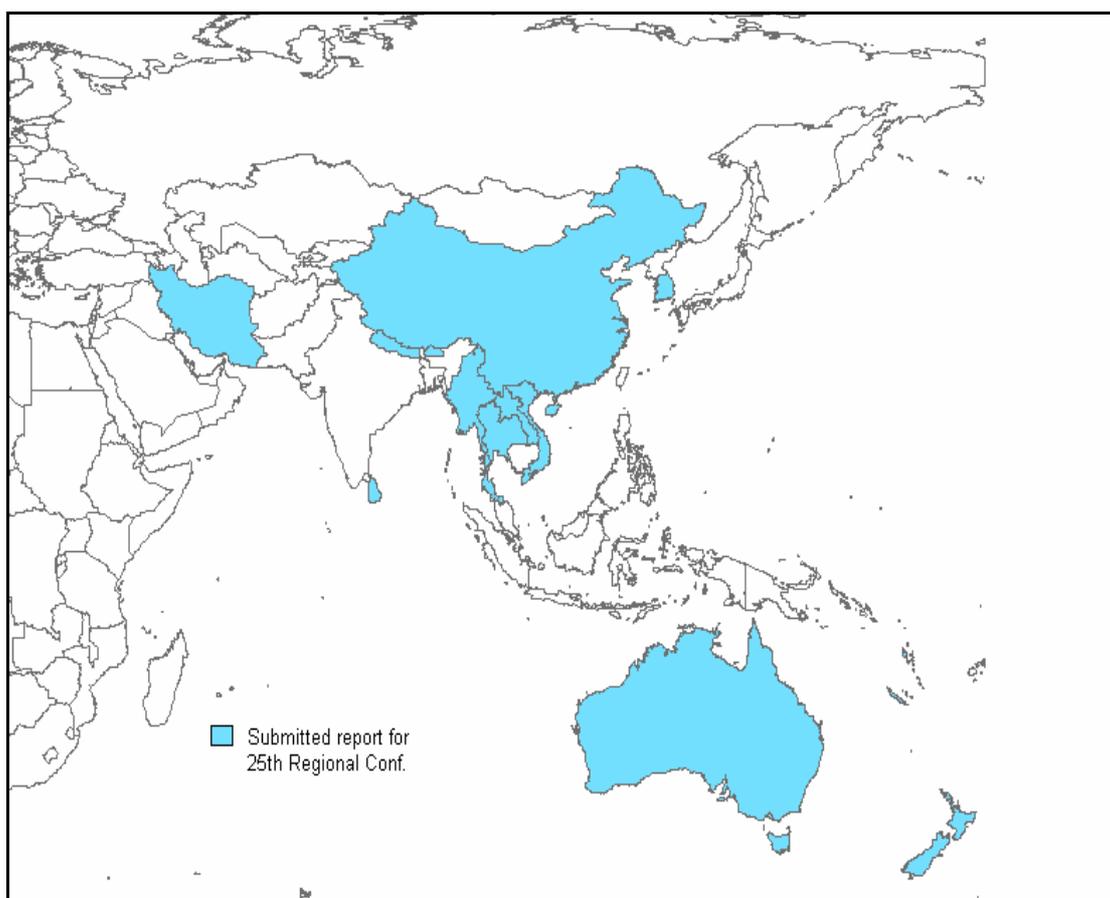


Figure 1: Members that submitted their specific report for the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, Far East and Oceania (in blue).

LIVESTOCK POPULATION IN ASIA, FAR EAST AND OCEANIA

OIE Members	CATTLE	SHEEP & GOATS	SWINE	POULTRY
AFGHANISTAN	3 715 409	16 053 217	-	12 155 846
AUSTRALIA	28 000 000	100000000 (Sheep only)	2 500 000	75 200 000
BANGLADESH	-	-	-	-
BHUTAN	320 509	54 208	41 401	230 728
BRUNEI	1 187	2639 (Goats only)	-	10 302 177
CAMBODIA	-	-	-	-
CHINA (PEOPLE'S REP. OF ~)	-	-	-	-
FIJI	-	-	-	-
INDIA	198 880 000	180 210 000	13 290 000	489 010 000
INDONESIA	11 053 474	21 488 992	6 267 373	1 283 701 504
IRAN	9 690 400	78 318 100	-	578 102 511
IRAQ	1 700 000	15 000 000	-	50 000 000
JAPAN	8 781 968	56 851	19 240 070	353 910
KOREA (DEM. PEOPLE'S REP. OF ~)	585 000	2 907 000	3 194 000	25 498 000
KOREA (REP. OF ~)	2 483 572	-	9 382 039	140,000,000
LAOS	1 270 000	190 000	1 800 000	19 800 000
MALAYSIA (Sabah)	45 170	32 140	120 000	4 184 000
MONGOLIA	17 928 000	2 140 000	20 000	90 000
MYANMAR	12 364 310	2 590 590	6 293 129	-
NEPAL	7 000 000	8 230 000	960 000	23 220 000
NEW CALEDONIA	112 000	10 300	32 000	400 000
NEW ZEALAND	10 123 751	40 584 985	344 252	19 976 974
PAKISTAN	25 550 000	87 150 000	-	386 500 000
PHILIPPINES	2 519 489	3 720 553	13 046 680	134 819 616
RUSSIA	-	-	-	-
SINGAPORE	303	880	-	2 102 460
SRI LANKA	1 185 000	405 000	85 000	20 460 000
CHINESE TAIPEI	143 958	241 027	6 778 799	126 103 000
THAILAND	8 448 860	375 300	7 153 784	-
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	97 003 000	9 119 000	62 149 000	1 816 742 016
VANUATU	142 000	19 900	83 000	412 000
VIETNAM	5 540 700	1 314 189	27 434 895	220 010 600
TOTAL	454 588 060	570 214 871	170 833 383	5 308 757 381

The above table gives an overview of the livestock population in Asia, Far East and Oceania. Data originates from the latest information submitted by countries to the OIE.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (Virus Subtype H5N1)

44. The epizootic of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) due to virus subtype H5N1, which started in South-East Asia at the end of 2003 and remained confined to this region in 2004, spread to other regions and continents in the following years. This situation is deemed unprecedented. Never before has an animal disease achieved such a rapid geographical spread in such a relatively short period of time.
45. Figure 2 shows the distribution of highly pathogenic avian influenza subtype H5N1 in Asia, Far East and Oceania between 1st July 2006 and 1 October 2007 (presence in red, absence in green, no data available in grey).

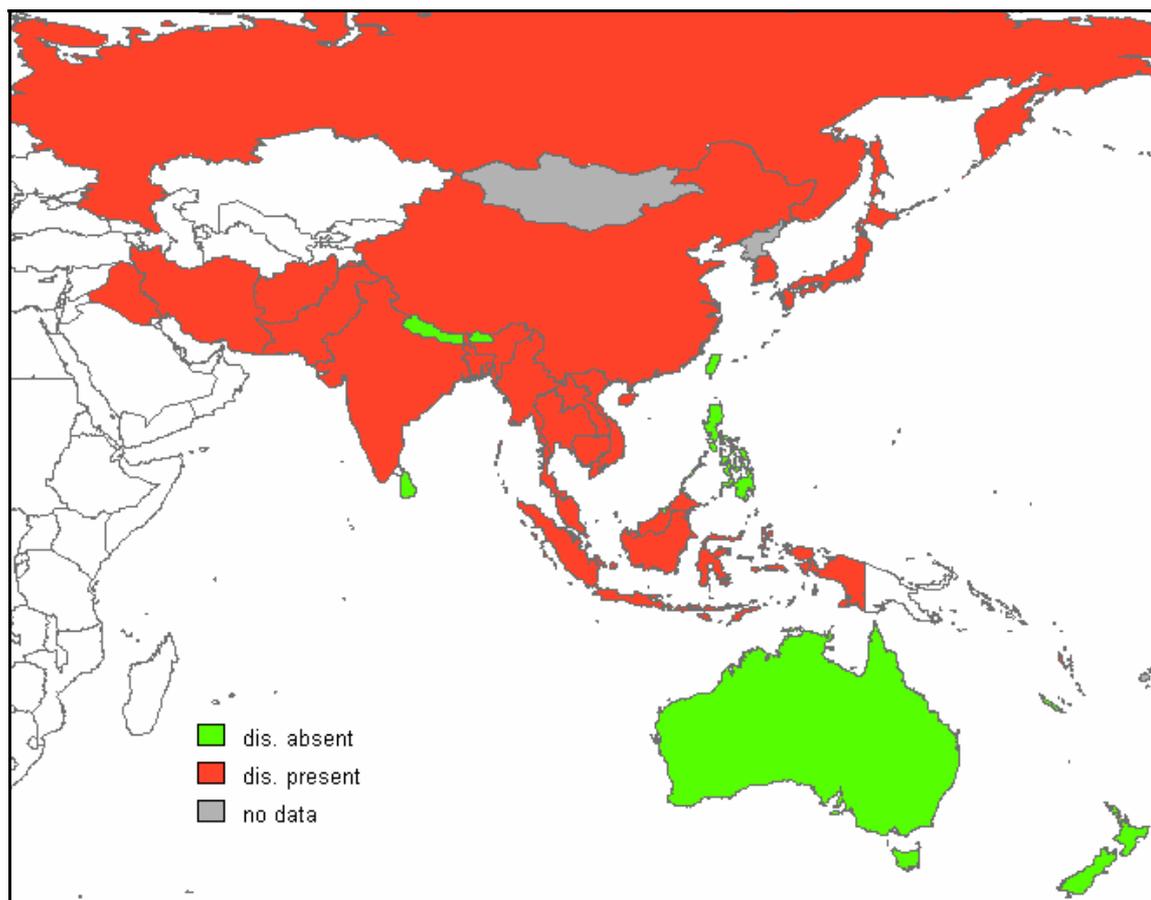


Figure 2: occurrence of highly pathogenic avian influenza subtype H5N1 between 1st July 2006 and 1 October 2007 in Asia, Far East and Oceania.

46. In February and March 2007 **Afghanistan** reported the re-occurrence of HPAI in poultry in Nangarhar (5 outbreaks), Kunar (3) and Kabul (1) provinces. At that time border and interprovincial quarantines were strictly established, affecting also chicken markets in Jalalabad, Kunar and Kabul city.
47. Between February and May 2007 **Bangladesh** reported 28 outbreaks of HPAI in the Provinces of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna and Chittagong. 5 of these outbreaks are still continuing while 23 outbreaks are now resolved. Movement control was implemented within a 10-km-radius zone around the outbreaks. Although further outbreaks have occurred and were not notified to the OIE; the latest one notified to the OIE on 29 October concerned the district of Dinajpur. No updates have been provided since that time.

48. One outbreak of HPAI was reported in April 2007 by **Cambodia** in the province of Cham. Stamping out was undertaken on 11 April 2007. Surveillance in the villages around the outbreak is on-going. Up to 5 November 2007 1 human fatal case related to H5N1 has been reported by WHO in the country.
49. From January to June 2007, there were 2 outbreaks of HPAI in the **Chinese** provinces of Tibet and Hunan. 13160 birds were affected, 11852 birds died and 59864 birds were destroyed. A third outbreak was reported in September 2007 in the province of Guangdong. In January 2007, 2 outbreaks in wild species were reported in the province of Hong Kong (SAR). Up to 5 November 2007, 3 human cases related to H5N1 have been reported to WHO by the country. Of these cases, 2 were fatal.
50. In July 2007 one outbreak of HPAI was reported in the province of Manipur, **India**. Stamping out of all domestic poultry was applied in a 5-km-radius zone around the outbreak followed by compensation of the owners. An intensive surveillance campaign was launched in a 10-km-radius zone. The authorities stated that restocking would be applied in accordance with a specific protocol. Final culling operations were completed on 02 August, 2007 followed by disinfection and cleaning up operations. Surveillance around the areas of outbreaks since completion of operation (including culling, disinfection and clean up) and surveillance in the rest of the country has shown no evidence of the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. India declared that it has regained its Notifiable Avian Influenza free country status.
51. In **Indonesia** the disease has become endemic and 227 outbreaks have been reported by this country in 2006. No six-monthly report has yet been provided for the first half of 2007. Up to 5 November 2007 37 human cases related to H5N1 have been reported to WHO by the country. Of these cases, 32 were fatal.
52. In January 2007 **Japan** reported 4 outbreaks of HPAI in poultry and one in a wild bird. It was demonstrated later on that the wild bird found dead was infected before the domestic birds. On 13 January 2007, immediately after the presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza was identified, stamping out was applied to all poultry in all the affected farms in Japan. The disinfection of the last affected farm was completed on 7 February 2007, and no additional cases were recognised through the surveillance in accordance with Appendix 3.8.9 of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code in Japan. Japan declared that it has met the requirements for the recognition as a country free from avian influenza in its notifiable form (NAI) from 8 May 2007.
53. During the first 3 months of 2007 3 outbreaks of HPAI were reported by the **Republic of Korea**. These outbreaks related to the serotype H5N1 and occurred in poultry in the provinces of Kyonggi-Do and Ch'ungch'ong-Namdo. The Korean government applied stamping-out policy (about 2.8 millions of chicken and ducks) without vaccination against HPAI to all poultry in the all affected and related poultry farms. The stamping-out and disinfection of the last affected farm was completed on March 2007. There has been no more outbreak of HPAI or evidence of HPAI infection through the nationwide surveillance in accordance with Appendix 3.8.9 of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code in Korea so far. The Republic of Korea declared that it had met the requirements for the recognition as a country free from Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) as of 18 June 2007.
54. From the beginning of January till the end of June 2007, the main outbreak of the transboundary animal disease that occurred in the country was the highly pathogenic avian influenza that broke out in February 2007 in five provinces of **Lao People's Democratic Republic**; namely Vientiane Capital, Vientiane Province, Savannakhet, Champasak and Xiengkhouang. These outbreaks resulted in 345,632 dead and culled poultry. The control of HPAI infection included the control of the movement of poultry and poultry products,

enforcement of the notification and decrees, mass stamping out of poultry in 221 villages in the Vientiane Capital, cleaning and disinfecting the premises, and raising public awareness. All these measures successfully contained the spread of infection. Active and passive surveillance for HPAI are continuing. Two fatal cases of human H5N1 were reported in Lao PDR during the HPAI outbreak in 2007.

55. In June 2007, **Malaysia** reported one outbreak of HPAI in backyard poultry in the province of Selangor. Culling and disinfection were completed on 10 June 2007. A nationwide clinical and virological surveillance has been conducted. No evidence of clinical HPAI infection was observed in the following three months. Malaysia declared itself free from HPAI in September 2007.
56. Some new outbreaks of HPAI were detected in Yangon province in **Myanmar** in 2007. These followed the first outbreaks of HPAI that occurred in Sagaing and Mandalay Division. There were 7 outbreaks in 5 townships in Yangon Division, between 27th February and 31st March 2007. During the post outbreak surveillance, one layer farm in Minglardon/Insein Township, Yangon Division and one layer farm in Bago Township, Bago (East) Division were detected for HPAI virus. The numbers of birds that died of HPAI were 3,322 and the numbers of destroyed poultry were 47,843. Stamping out of infected farms, quarantine and movement restriction are applied for the control measure for HPAI. Vaccination is prohibited. Another outbreak started on the 19 October 2007 in Thanatpin. Thanatpin is considered as a high risk township because it is situated very close to Lake Moeyungyi occupied by wild birds. It also has a high population of ducks (nearly eight hundred thousands) and a rapidly increasing number of raised quails. The source of infection is probably transmission from seropositive ducks, infecting quails or chickens and other fomites.
57. Between February and July 2007, 28 outbreaks of HPAI were reported in **Pakistan**. This event caused the deaths of 40,139 birds and the destruction of 71,192 birds. Culling and disposal of birds were carried out under the supervision of State veterinarians. All the infected premises were disinfected and then kept fallow for one month. Ring vaccination in a 3-km-radius zone around the outbreak has been initiated.
58. According to the information received from **Russia**, 15 outbreaks of HPAI occurred in poultry between January and February 2007 in the provinces of Krasnodarskiy Kray, Moskovskaya Oblast', Kaluzhskaya Oblast' and Respublika Adygeya. In August 2007 another outbreak was reported in the region of Krasnodarskiy Kray.
59. In January 2007, **Thailand** reported an outbreak of HPAI in the province of Phitsanulok that involved free range layer Khaki Campbell ducks. The outbreak was resolved in April 2007. In January and March 2007 2 more outbreaks involving poultry occurred in the provinces of Nongkhai, and Mukdahan; these were resolved as well in the month of January and June. In January 2007 an outbreak involving fighting cocks was reported in the province of Angthong (that outbreak has not been notified through WAHIS).
60. Starting from January up to October 2007, **Vietnam** reported 70 outbreaks of HPAI. Testing of 8,278 swabs collected from 78 facilities (namely poultry farms, live bird markets, and slaughter houses/points) reveals the HPAI H5N1 prevalence rate is of 7.96%. This proves that HPAI H5N1 virus is still circulating in many areas of the country. Vietnam also reports that during the current wave of infection it is observed that ducks seem to become more susceptible to the virus. This is seen as a new trend as during the three earlier epidemic waves, ducks were incriminated as the natural reservoirs of HPAI H5N1 and not as victims. By sequencing the genes of HPAI viruses isolated in recent outbreaks, it has been proved that the pathogenicity of the virus has changed and become more virulent for ducks. Up to 5 November 2007 7 human cases related to H5N1 have been reported by the country to WHO. 4 were fatal.

Foot and Mouth Disease

61. Many countries in Asia, the Far East and Oceania reported the occurrence of foot and mouth disease (FMD). This involved virus serotypes O, A and Asia 1.
62. Figure 3 shows the distribution of FMD in Asia, Far East and Oceania between the 1st of July 2006 and 1st October 2007 (presence in red, absence in green, no data available in grey).

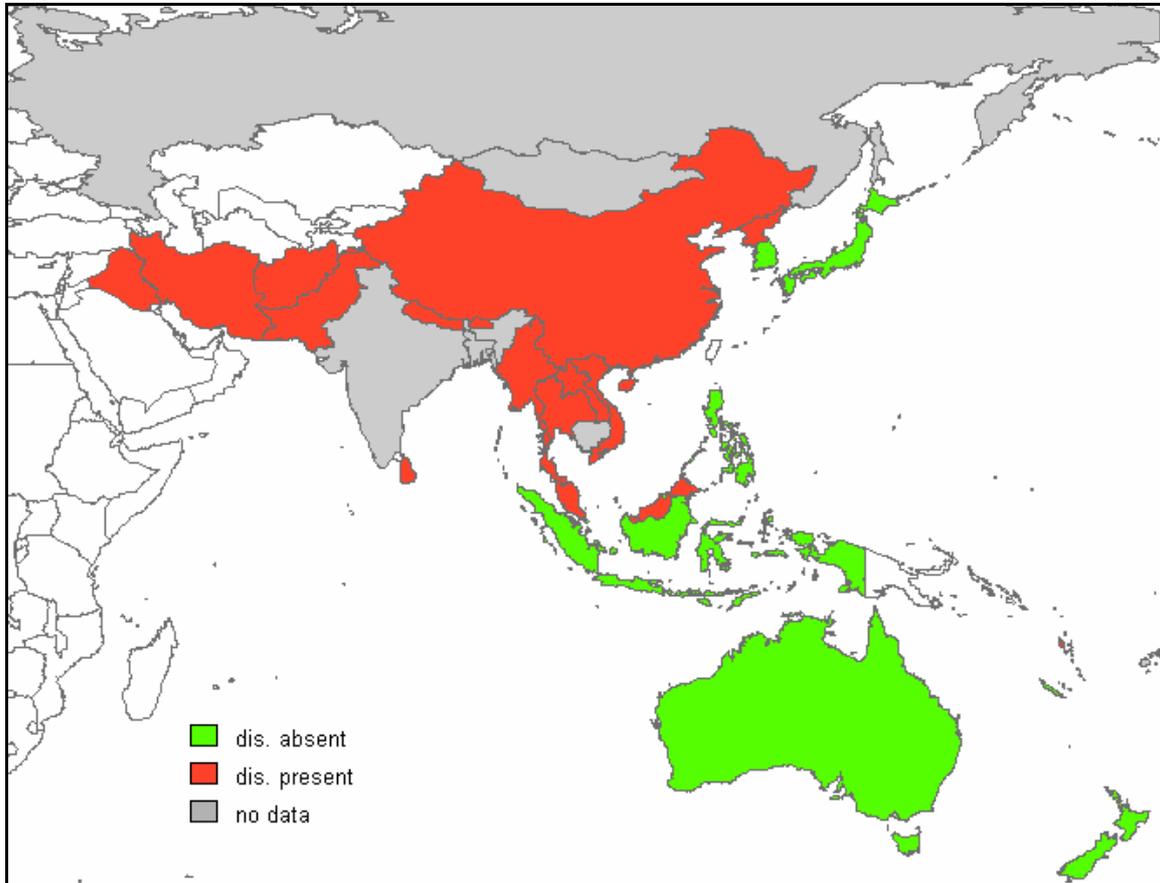


Figure 3: distribution of foot and mouth disease in Asia, Far East and Oceania between the 1st of July 2006 and 1st October 2007.

63. FMD is endemic in many parts of **Bhutan**. Control measures implemented at the times of disease outbreak include control of movement of animals and animal products from infected places and ring vaccination using trivalent FMD vaccine containing serotypes O, A and Asia 1. The disease has subsided in Bumthang and Wangdi-Phodrang following the implementation of control strategies. However, FMD is not yet controlled in Sarpang district, a border district in the south, despite the measures taken by the authorities.
64. During the period January to June 2007, the **People's Republic of China** reported 7 outbreaks of FMD Asia 1, with 132 cattle affected, 0 dead, and 1019 cattle destroyed. Regarding surveillance, 675,656 samples were tested for FMD, including 585347 serum samples and 90309 pathological samples. All animals with positive results have been destroyed and disposed of using bio-safety methods. In October 2007, another FMD Asia 1 outbreak was reported in the province of Qinghai affecting cattle and sheep.

65. During the first four months of 2007 in **Iran**, FMD caused 381 outbreaks in cattle and 197 outbreaks in sheep and goat. 5,263 cattle and 15,095 small ruminants were respectively affected.
66. One outbreak of FMD Asia 1 was reported by the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea**. This event took place in January 2007 in the province of P'yongyang-Si. The authorities planned a vaccination programme covering 100,000 susceptible animals within a 70-km-radius zone.
67. The FMD virus serotype O predominates in **Lao People's Democratic Republic**. However, FMD virus serotype A was isolated in Bokeo province in 2003, and later a big outbreak occurred in Vientiane capital in 2006.
68. A surveillance and monitoring programme for FMD was carried out in **Myanmar**. Out of 2131 serum samples collected, 18 were positive with non-structural protein tests. No evidence of FMD outbreak in Thanintharyi Division has been observed since 1999.
69. **Nepal** reported that during the first half of 2007, FMD continued to be the major transboundary livestock disease of large ruminants. 324 outbreaks were reported throughout the country, but the majority of outbreaks were concentrated in the Hills and Terai districts. All outbreaks were associated with the uncontrolled movement of animals inside the country and across the international borders. The outbreaks were controlled by ring vaccination using polyvalent FMD vaccine imported from India. FMD virus serotypes O and Asia 1, were the incriminated serotypes of the disease.
70. In **Sri Lanka**, only one serotype, namely serotype O, has been recorded in the country since 1985. Disease surveillance against foot and mouth disease depends mainly on clinical surveillance through the state Veterinary network. Seven outbreaks have been detected during the period January to June 2007. Four of these outbreaks have been observed in the North and East Province where disease control measures are limited. The other three outbreaks have been reported in the North-Central Province at the boundary of Northern and Eastern Provinces. In total, 136 cattle and 18 buffaloes became clinically sick. 7 calves died in these outbreaks.
71. Between January and June 2007, **Thailand** reported 4 FMD outbreaks (in two outbreaks serotype A was incriminated). These outbreaks occurred in the provinces of Roi-et, Kalasin, Chiangmai and Ratchaburi. Although vaccination is not compulsory in Thailand, serological monitoring of vaccination in pigs is conducted. Pig farmers usually vaccinate their animals to reduce the risk of outbreak occurrence.
72. **Vietnam** reported 15 outbreaks of FMD Asia 1 in the province of Quang Tri in June 2007. The National FMD control and eradication plan started in 2006 but the circulation of FMD Types O, A and Asia 1 viruses in many parts of the country is complicating the issue of selecting a proper vaccine.

Classical Swine Fever

73. During the first half of the year 2007 in the **Republic of Korea**, a total of four farms involving 56 pigs were confirmed with classical swine fever (CSF). Control measures including stamping-out of infected animals, movement restrictions, cleaning and disinfection of infected premises were implemented. Nationwide vaccination has been in practice except for JeJu province (this is an island).

74. Between 2002 and 2006, few outbreaks of CSF were reported in **Lao People's Democratic Republic**. In 2006, an outbreak of CSF in a pig farm in the peri-urban of Vientiane Capital has been confirmed by the Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory of the National Animal Health Centre. In this outbreak, about 20 weaned pigs died. The pen and the surroundings were cleaned and disinfected. The locally produced vaccine against CSF has been applied to control the spread of the disease.
75. Surveillance and monitoring programmes for CSF were carried out in **Myanmar**. Between January and June 2007, one outbreak was reported in swine.
76. During the first half of 2007, 24 outbreaks of CSF were reported in 15 different districts of **Nepal**. These outbreaks involved 833 cases with 292 deaths. 3044 animals were vaccinated.
77. In the period between February and September 2007, 5 outbreaks of CSF were reported in **Russia**. These occurred in swine populations located in the provinces of Krasnodarskiy Kray, Volgogradskaya Oblast', Stavropol'skiy Kray and Primorskiy Kray. A routine epidemiological investigation was undertaken in the 3-km-radius zone around the outbreaks and no more cases were observed. Unvaccinated 45-day-old pigs were introduced. Vaccination of all pigs at the national level is being applied this year.
78. Figure 4 shows the distribution of **CSF** in Asia, Far East and Oceania between the 1st of July 2006 and 1 October 2007 (presence in red, absence in green, no data available in grey).

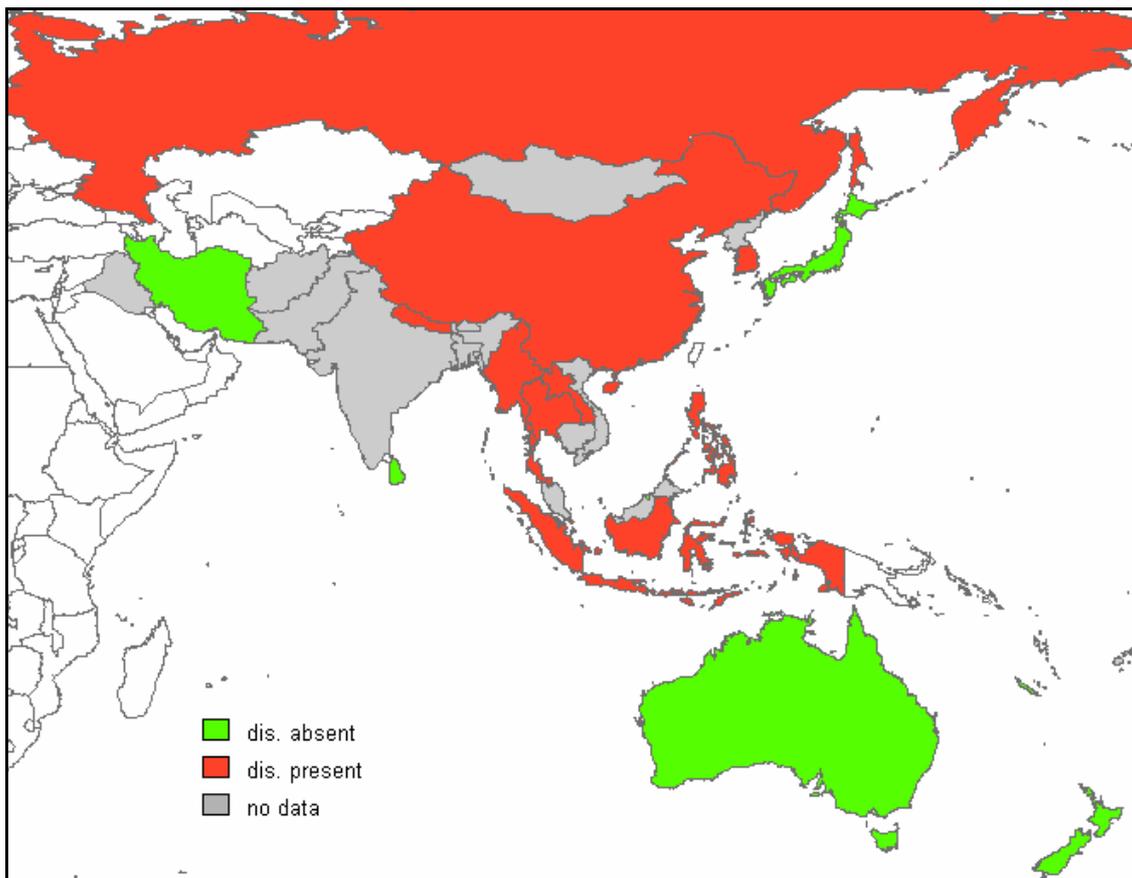


Figure 4: occurrence of classical swine fever in Asia, Far East and Oceania between the 1st of July 2006 and 1st October 2007.

Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome

79. During the period January to July 2007, the **People's Republic of China** reported outbreaks of porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) in 26 provinces. 189,719 pigs were affected, 52,301 died and 85,214 were destroyed. A PRRS highly pathogenic strain was identified as the causative agent.
80. There were suspected case of PRRS in the northern part of **Myanmar** in June 2007. According to the information from the local field staff of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, the sign and symptoms were very similar to PRRS. A request was made to the Chinese Veterinary Services to provide Myanmar with information on this disease, as well as diagnostic equipment and other relevant testing procedures for PRRS.
81. Two outbreaks of PRRS occurred in the province of Irkutskaya in **Russia** in August 2007. Both occurred in the province of Irkutskaya Oblast'. The PRRS North American genotype was identified as the causative agent.
82. An unidentified disease with high mortality in pigs in **Vietnam** was first discovered on 12 March 2007 in Hai Duong province in Northern Vietnam, bordering PR China. The disease is suspected to be PRRS. It has spread to 6 other provinces in the North. In July 2007, the disease has occurred in five additional provinces in Central Vietnam and one province in the South. Samples collected from cases in Central Vietnam were shown to be positive for PRRS but other pathogens had not been ruled out. Tentative results show that CSF, African swine fever, FMD and swine influenza were all ruled out. Further work is continuing at Ames, USA, especially for sequencing.

Peste des Petits Ruminants

83. On July 2007, 4 outbreaks of Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) occurred in **People's Republic of China**, Ali prefecture in Tibet Autonomous region, affecting Geji and Ritu counties. As at 09 August, 913 animals had died and 1318 were destroyed. It was the first time that PPR occurred in China. According to reports received, epidemiological investigation and virus gene sequence analysis demonstrated that the disease was introduced from abroad.
84. Between January and April 2007, **Iran** reported 18 outbreaks of PPR. Of the 520 cases, 258 animals died.
85. During the first half of 2007 **Nepal** reported 223 outbreaks of PPR involving 1096 cases and 230 deaths. All outbreaks were controlled by ring vaccination (1,391,650 vaccinated animals).
86. **Thailand** has been on a process to prepare a self-declaration of "Country freedom from PPR disease and PPR infection". Serum samples from sheep and goat have been collected since October 2004 in accordance with epidemiological principles for laboratory testing in order to provide scientific evidence to support such declaration

Equine Influenza

87. In August 2007, an outbreak of equine influenza (EI) started in **Australia** and the event is still ongoing. The disease was first detected in Eastern Creek Quarantine Station in New South Wales (NSW) on 17 August, 2007. The virus was subsequently detected in multiple locations in NSW and Queensland (Qld). Prior to this, EI had never been reported in Australia. By the end of October 2007, there were over 7000 Infected Premises in NSW and Qld. Although the number of infected premises was increasing, the rate of increase was declining. The Australian Animal Health Laboratory has determined that the virus is H3N8 and is almost identical to the Matrix gene sequence of the Wisconsin strain of EI.
88. In October 2007 EI virus A subtype H3N8 was reported in **People's Republic of China**. The virus was identified in several outbreaks occurring in seven counties, namely Altay, Burqin, Fuhai, Fuyun, Habahe, Jemnay and Qinghe. Of the 130,000 equidae present, there were 5,515 cases.
89. Between August and October 2007, 84 outbreaks due to Equine influenza virus A were reported in **Japan**. The result of genome sequencing of RT-PCR products demonstrated that one sample was derived from the group of equine influenza A H3N8 virus of the Florida sub-lineage.
90. Most recently, **Mongolia** has reported the disease in BAYAN-ULGII and KHOVD, near the border with China. The incriminated virus was Equine influenza virus A subtype H3N8.

Other Diseases

91. In May 2007, a case of **brucellosis** due to *Brucella abortus* in a pig was reported in the **Republic of Korea** in a farm located in Gyeongnam province. Although, no clear route of infection was identified, introduction by the farmer was assumed to be most likely. The affected farm has been placed under movement restrictions according to Brucellosis Control Guidelines.
92. **New Zealand** reported **bovine tuberculosis** in the first half of 2007. The disease was reported in cattle, buffaloes and cervidae. A national pest management strategy for the control of *Mycobacterium bovis* was approved by the Government in 1998 and amended in 2004. It is managed by the Animal Health Board. The national pest management strategy provides for measures to control tuberculosis in cattle and deer herds, which include surveillance, testing and slaughter, movement restrictions and reservoir control.
93. 35 abortions due to **brucellosis** caused by *Brucella abortus* have been recorded among cows reared under extensive management system in **Sri Lanka** (mainly at Anuradhapura district) during the first half of year 2007. Although vaccination is carried out against Bovine Brucellosis in the country, it has been limited only to herds in which adequate recording is effective. 390 animals have received brucella vaccine during the period under report.
94. In **Chinese Taipei** the nation-wide **bovine tuberculosis** scheme involving test and slaughter and restriction of cattle movements from farms that test positive has continued. In total, 118 cattle (positive reactors) have been destroyed during the first half of 2007.

Contingency Plans and Simulation Exercises for Animal Diseases

95. As expected, countries in Asia, the Far East and Oceania being close to the epicentre of HPAI epizootic, have recently developed, tested, implemented or simulated contingency plans for avian influenza.
96. The **Australian** Government, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry informed the OIE that a simulation exercise of highly pathogenic avian influenza, called "LESTER@AAHL1", was conducted at the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) on 20 June 2007. The aim of LESTER@AAHL1 is to evaluate the capacity of AAHL to support a response to an avian influenza outbreak in poultry. The control team and observers would come from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Emergency Management Australia and State government primary industry and human health agencies.
97. A simulation exercise for HPAI control programme in **Myanmar** (State/Division, District and Township level) was published on 1st January 2006. Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department established in each township, a committee and inspection teams for the control of AI. The inspection teams were constituted by personnel from various Departments. In October 2006, a Table Top Simulation Exercise for HPAI was conducted under the guidance of an international consultant supported by FAO.
98. An HPAI exercise, EX Amazona II, was carried out in **Singapore** on 19 March 2007 at a local zoological collection to test its contingency operations involving an infected exhibit following a review of its standard operating procedures. Observers from the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore were present and noted that the concept of operations was familiar to key staff and that the operations were satisfactorily executed.
99. The table below gives an overview of the OIE Members that performed a simulation exercise between 2004 and 2007 in Asia, Far East and Oceania.

2007-2004 simulations for avian influenza	
OIE Member	Date
Australia	June 2007
Myanmar	January 2007
Singapore	March 2007
Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China)	October 2006
Singapore	October 2006
Brunei Darussalam	April 2006
Singapore	February 2006
Chinese Taipei	October 2005
Australia	December 2005
Australia	November 2004
Singapore	September 2004
Singapore	February 2004
Philippines	February 2004

Transparency of the Animal Health Situation in the Region

100. One of the main missions of the OIE is to inform on the global animal health situation. In order to fulfil its mandate in this respect, the OIE manages the world animal health information system (WAHIS), based on the commitment of OIE Members to notify to the OIE the main animal diseases, including zoonoses. Adopting Chapter 1.1.2. of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code and Chapter 1.2.1. of the Aquatic Animal Health Code, OIE Members recognised their obligation to notify to the OIE their animal health situation in a timely manner.
101. OIE Members are requested to provide to the OIE immediate notifications, six-monthly reports and annual reports documenting the evolution of the sanitary status. The figure and the table below summarise the submission of data by OIE Members in relation to the six-monthly and annual reports since 2005. The table also documents the means of transmission of data: P=data submitted by fax, letter or e-mail; W=data submitted through WAHIS; -= no information submitted to the OIE.

COUNTRY	2005			2006			2007 1 ST SEM.
	1 ST SEM.	2 ND SEM.	ANNUA L	1 ST SEM.	2 ND SEM.	ANNUAL	
AFGHANISTAN	P	P	-	P	P	P	P
AUSTRALIA	W	W	W	W	W	W	-
BANGLADESH	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BHUTAN	P	P	-	P	-	-	-
BRUNEI	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
CAMBODIA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CHINA (PEOPLE'S REP. OF ~)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FIJI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
INDIA	W	-	P	-	-	-	-
INDONESIA	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
IRAN	P	P	P	P	P	P	-
IRAQ	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
JAPAN	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
KOREA (DEM. PEOPLE'S REP. OF ~)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
KOREA (REP. OF ~)	P	P	P	W	W	W	-
LAOS	W	W	W	-	-	-	-
MALAYSIA (SABAH)	W	W	W	-	-	-	-
MONGOLIA	P	-	-	-	-	-	-
MYANMAR	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
NEPAL	W	W	W	W	W	-	-
NEW CALEDONIA	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
NEW ZEALAND	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
PAKISTAN	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
PHILIPPINES	W	W	W	W	W	W	-
RUSSIA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SINGAPORE	P	P	W	W	W	W	W
SRI LANKA	P	P	P	P	P	P	-
CHINESE TAIPEI	W	W	W	W	W	W	-
THAILAND	P	P	W	W	W	W	W
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
VANUATU	P	W	W	W	W	W	W
VIETNAM	W	W	W	-	-	-	-

P= report submitted in format other than WHAIS W= report submitted through WAHIS = no reports submitted

102. This data indicates that although many countries are actively updating the OIE on their animal health status there are still blank areas. It also indicates that more and more countries are accessing WAHIS directly, thereby reducing delays between the submission of data and its publication.

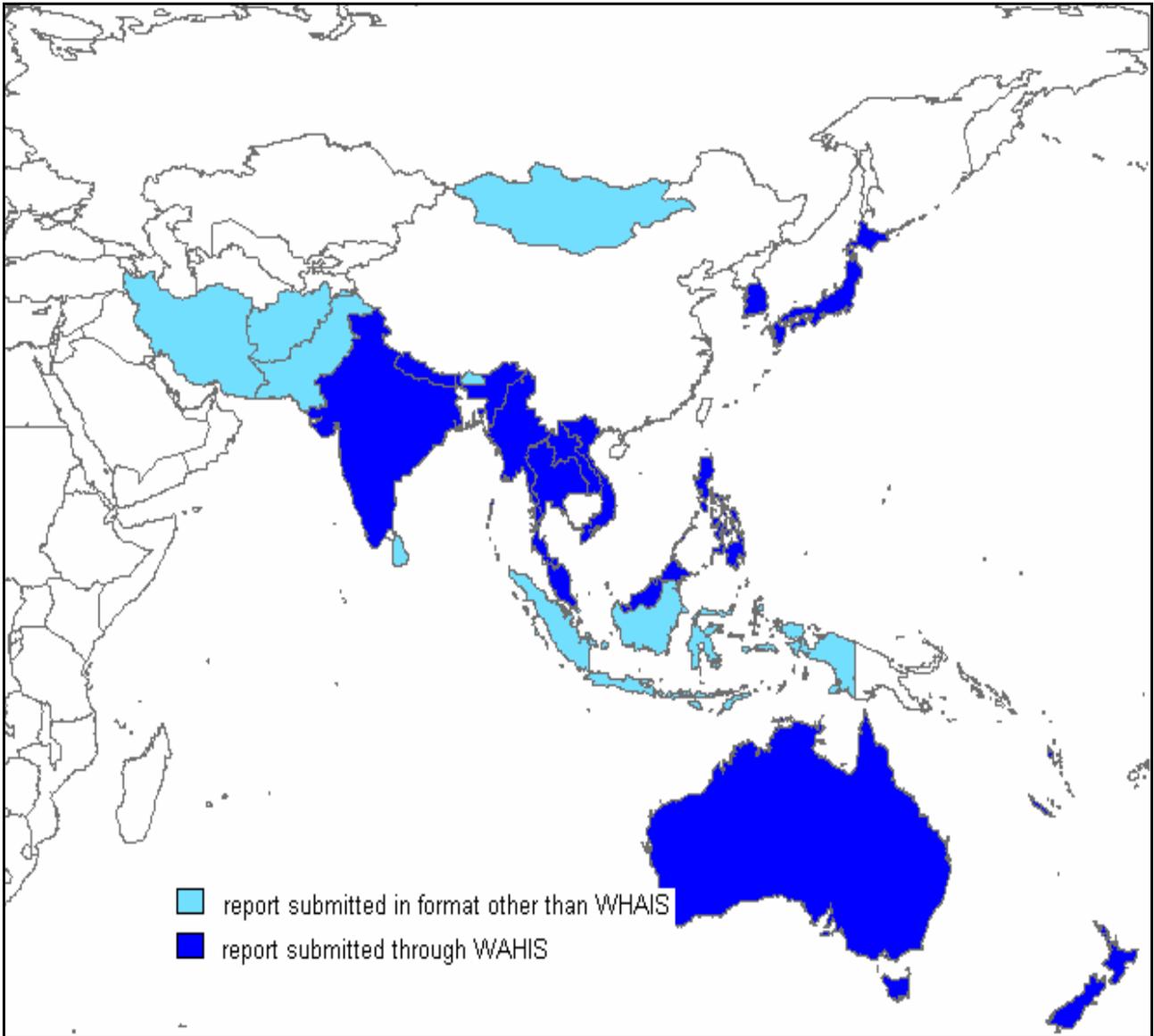


Figure 5: submission of data by OIE Members in relation to the six-monthly and annual reports since 2005.

Discussions

103. The Session Chairman congratulated Dr Karim Ben Jebara on his clear and informative presentation and invited comments from the floor.
104. The representative of Hong Kong, SAR China, informed that research on HPAI particularly involving wild birds continues in Hong Kong. Advanced molecular analysis of isolates from wild birds indicates that the genetic sequence of the HPAI virus has so far remained unchanged.
105. The representative of India highlighted the seriousness of PRRS in pigs and enquired whether the OIE would consider issuing new standards on the disease especially regarding diagnostic tests. Dr Vallat replied that PRRS will be covered in a technical item and it would be considered in the recommendation. The Chairman added that the technical item was in fact selected because of the importance of pig diseases in the region.
106. A member of the Australian delegation made a brief expose on the outbreak of equine influenza (EI) in Australia. He stated that the peak of the EI outbreak is over judging from the average number of daily infected premises (IPs) which has fallen from 200 during the peak period to approximately 10 at the moment. The disease remains geographically contained to parts of New South Wales and South East Queensland. Zoning, movement restrictions and biosecurity measures continue to be major tools used in the disease response. The strategic use of vaccination, mainly in buffer zones surrounding infected areas is a further tool assisting disease containment and eradication. Sound progress is being made and epidemiological forecasts point to good prospects for eradication of the disease from Australia within a few months. Success is however heavily dependant on socio-economic considerations and in particular, upon the continual support of all horse owners in adhering to biosecurity and movement control measures. Additional zoosanitary measures have been imposed as a temporary measure on the importation of horses into Australia.
107. A member of the delegation of PR China informed that the domestic animal health information system is being developed in his country and he hoped that very soon PR China would be in a position to report animal diseases in accordance with the OIE WAHIS system. Dr Ben Jebara pointed out that he was aware of the work being carried out in PR China and acknowledged the participation of members of PR China in the WAHIS workshop held recently in New Delhi, India.
108. Dr Vallat recalled the obligations of OIE Members regarding reporting of terrestrial and aquatic animal diseases. He stated that the list of OIE notifiable diseases is proposed by an expert Group endorsed by an elected Commission and adopted democratically by the OIE International Committee. Members are free to propose changes to the list on an annual basis. Dr Vallat explained the new system of reporting which consists of 1) emergency reports, 2) follow up reports until the disease ends and 3) the six monthly reports. Regarding the situation of listed diseases, annual reports contain additional information on livestock such as livestock population, vaccine production and other matters. The information received is analysed and presented in the on line World Animal Health Information Database (WAHID). He strongly encouraged Members to report electronically to the new system but for those countries that cannot do so at the moment, paper reports will be accepted. Dr Vallat also pointed out that the OIE will continue to organise training workshops on WAHIS for focal points on animal disease information systems in collaboration with the OIE Regional Representations. Regarding the report of Dr Karim Ben Jebara, he pointed out that it was also a specific report designed for the Conference in accordance with the questionnaire distributed and not the annual or biannual report which is only received at the end of the prescribed period. The specific report required for the Regional Conference thus allows the reporting of certain epidemiological events in advance.

109. Dr Barry O'Neil suggested that in view of the increasing importance of aquaculture in the region, future reports should include aquatic animal diseases. This suggestion was supported by the Session Chairman who pointed out that 85% of aquaculture production of the world came from the region.
110. The Session Chairman asked the speaker whether he had any specific recommendations to make to Members concerning animal health reports. Dr Ben Jebara recommended that all Members provide timely, accurate and transparent animal health information using WAHIS on line notification not only for exceptional epidemiological events but also for regular six monthly and annual reports. This recommendation was endorsed by the Conference.

Activities of the OIE Sub-Regional Unit in Bangkok

111. The Conference Chairman invited Dr Ronello Abila, Coordinator of the Sub-Regional Unit in Bangkok to make his presentation.
112. Dr Abila stated that starting this year (2007) the OIE Sub-Regional Unit in Bangkok will be implementing two projects namely; the **SEAFMD Campaign** and the **Programme to Strengthen Veterinary Services (PSVS)**.

SEAFMD Campaign

113. One of the highlights of the 2007 activities was the 13th Meeting of the OIE Sub-commission for FMD in South-East that was successfully held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 12 to 16 March 2007. Among the outcomes of the meeting were the progress reports of Members, advances in progressive zoning including signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Cambodia and Vietnam for Lower Mekong Working Group (LMWG), and endorsement of the SEAFMD 2020 Roadmap. The last day of the meeting discussed progress on the control and prevention of HPAI and the forthcoming OIE/AusAID project on Strengthening Veterinary Services in Southeast Asia
114. Meetings of the Upper and Lower Mekong Working Groups were organised to draft recommendations and action plans to achieve progressive zoning for FMD and improve animal movement control in these areas. The Upper Mekong Working Group (UMWG) meeting was held on 22-24 January 2007, in Oudomxay, Lao PDR to draft plans and recommendations to establish a FMD control zone and manage animal movement along the boundaries of Lao PDR, Thailand, Myanmar, Viet Nam and PR China. The Lower Mekong Working Group (LMWG) meeting was held on 24-26 October 2007 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Among the major outcomes of this meeting are the greater involvement of the private sector in this zone and the progress on the implementation of outbreak investigation trainings in Vietnam and Cambodia.
115. The MTM Tri-State Commission meeting was held in Kota Bharu, Malaysia from 4 to 6 June 2007. The MTM Campaign has progressed a long way since the signing of the MOU in 2003. Recent successes of the Campaign in 2007 are the reduction in FMD outbreaks in the Thailand and Malaysian part of the MTM Zone and the maintenance of Myanmar part free of outbreaks since 1999. It was noted that the re-opening up of official trade between Thailand and Malaysia in September 2006 could be a factor that would contribute to a better management of risks related to animal movement across the border.

116. Through the technical advice given by the RCU, Members of the region continue to develop better approaches to control FMD. The Regional Coordinator and staff carried out missions to Cambodia (assist in developing National FMD Strategic Plan, meeting with Chief veterinary Officer (CVO) and Secretary of State) Indonesia (participated in the National FMD Seminar, meeting with CVO and visit to ASEAN secretariat), Lao PDR (assist in FMD investigation and in revising National FMD program), Malaysia (meeting with traders and other stakeholders in the Malaysia-Thailand border), Myanmar (assist in updating National FMD Plan, traders and stakeholders meeting in Thai-Myanmar border, the Zoning Working Group meeting in Mandalay) and, Philippines (meeting with BAI FMD Task Force and participate in the mid-year assessment on FMD Task Force and veterinary quarantine).
117. It was noted that missions to engage the Ministers and high ranking government officials lead to better recognition of FMD control as priority programme by the national government. Dr Gardner Murray, President of the OIE Sub-commission for FMD Control in SEA, and Dr Abila held meetings with the Minister of Livestock and Fisheries of Myanmar in April 2007 and the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Agriculture in Lao PDR in January 2007.
118. The SEAFMD 2020 Roadmap was endorsed by OIE Sub-Commission in March 2007, by the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group for Livestock (ASWGL) in April 2007 and by the OIE Regional Commission during the OIE General Session in May 2007, Paris. The SEAFMD Roadmap 2020 will provide a long-term strategy on how to effectively control FMD in the region. This will act as a living document that will be regularly refined to attune to the needs of the situation. A glossy publication of the SEAFMD 2020 was released last September and distributed to all Members, international organisations, donors and other key partners.
119. The RCU continues to monitor outbreaks of FMD in the region and regularly disseminates this information to Members. This includes monthly reports sent by Members which are analysed and entered into SEAFMD Access database, spatial analysis using ArcView GIS and uploaded to the website for public access.
120. Among the major changes noted during the period under review are:
- the outbreak of Serotype A in Vientiane, Lao PDR that started in November 2006, affecting 6 municipalities. With support from the RCU providing some funding for disease surveillance and public awareness, coupled with the vaccine donated by Thailand, the outbreak was controlled in February 2007.
 - Vietnam continued to have a number of outbreaks due to Type O until March, which was mainly a continuation from the epizootic that started last year. However, the situation improved remarkably in May 2007, with only 2 provinces having active cases.
 - Sporadic outbreaks were reported in Malaysia and Myanmar.
 - The number of outbreaks in Thailand is significantly lower this year compared to last year during the same period.
 - There's a significant improvement in eradicating the FMD Serotype O Cathay topotype, the only FMD virus serotype found in the Philippines in the past 10 years. No outbreak has been reported since December 2005 until this time, and active surveillance is going on to locate possible foci of infection.
 - Indonesia remains an FMD-free country.
121. The RCU continues to strengthen the capacity of the SEAFMD members to conduct FMD surveillance and reporting. Several trainings on sero-surveillance, outbreak investigation and reporting for field officers were conducted in Vietnam and Cambodia. Another training is scheduled for Lao PDR in December 2007.

122. A meeting of the FMD Laboratory Network was held in Pak Chong on 8-9 March 2007. The outcome of the meeting was presented at the 13th Sub-Commission Meeting. Among the highlights of the meeting are discussion to harmonise diagnostic procedures particularly dealing with false positive results, agreement to conduct an inter-laboratory quality testing, further strengthening of collaboration to share samples and tests results, and collaboration for future researches.

Programme on Strengthening Veterinary Services

123. A workshop to launch the OIE/AusAID Project on Strengthening Veterinary Services (PSVS) in South-East Asia was held at Siam City Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand on 26 and 27 September 2007. The project is aimed at helping countries in Southeast Asia to initially improve their current capacities in terms of veterinary legislation, early detection and rapid response, emergency preparedness and risk communication. It also aims at assisting VS to comply with OIE international standards in terms of governance and encourage the implementation of programmes including active partnerships with the private sector. Further, it will provide technical support for evaluation of VS which will be primarily based on the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code and the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (OIE PVS) tool.
124. Several presentations were made during the launching ceremony including the OIE Fourth Strategic Plan and standards on the quality of VS, introduction to OIE PVS tool and country reports on the status of VS in the Southeast Asia. The meeting also identified priorities for the region namely strengthening HPAI laboratories network and workshops to provide inputs for the development of a 3-year work plan of the project.

Discussions

125. The Conference Chairman congratulated Dr Abila for an excellent presentation. He acknowledged the importance of the work being carried out by the Regional Coordinator and his team. He wished the Road map to free the region from FMD by 2020 plenty of success.

TECHNICAL ITEM I
Emerging and reemerging diseases of swine in the region with special emphasis on porcine epidemic diarrhoea

126. The Session Chairman, Dr Sin Bin Chua, briefly introduced the speaker for this Technical Item, Dr Reildrin Morales National Coordinator, Foot and Mouth Disease Eradication Program, National Foot and Mouth Disease Task Force, Bureau of Animal Industry, National Focal Person for Animal Health Information System, Phillipines.
127. Dr Morales stressed the importance of animal diseases in the lives of man pointing out that almost 75% of known diseases of animals are zoonotic, i.e. transmissible to humans. The impact of animal health on food safety provides further evidence of the importance of disease monitoring in animal population.
128. Questionnaires were distributed to different countries in Asia, Far East and Oceania Region to identify emerging and re-emerging animal swine diseases, with particular emphasis on porcine epidemic diarrhoea (PED). Eleven countries namely; Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Republic of Korea, Nepal, New Zealand, Peoples' Republic of China, Philippines, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Vietnam responded to the questionnaire and the data was consolidated and analysed.
129. A total of eight diseases namely ascariosis, classical swine fever (CSF), foot and mouth disease (FMD), porcine circo virus- associated disease (PCV), porcine epidemic diarrhea (PED), porcine myocarditis, porcine respiratory and reproductive syndrome (PRRS), and swine erysipelas (SE).were cited by the respondents as emerging diseases. PED was considered an emerging disease in the Philippines and Vietnam, while it is considered already endemic in Korea and China. Information on how PED entered the country and on the actual economic impact of the disease on countries where it exists is limited.
130. Dr Morales described PED as a highly contagious viral disease of swines caused by a corona virus and characterised by anorexia, vomiting, diarrhoea followed by dehydration. Although all ages are affected, mortality can reach 100% in neonatal piglets but remain less than 10% in piglets aged 10 days or over. Older pigs recover in about a week but re-infection may occur in 5 months time. Transmission is mainly by the faeco-oral route and can occur throughout the year although the disease is more commonly seen during the cold season. On post mortem examination, thinning of the small intestine is characteristic and in younger pigs, the presence of undigested milk in the stomach is common. The disease is more commonly diagnosed by direct immunofluorescence and by enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay but other diagnostic tests are also available. Control measures are generally directed at biosecurity but vaccination can also be applied although it is doubtful whether it is cost-effective.
131. Among all the emerging diseases mentioned, only three are included in the OIE list of notifiable diseases. Most of the countries suggested that no additional diseases should be included to the list.
132. Only seven out of the eleven respondents said that they regularly report on the status of notifiable diseases to the OIE.
133. The presentation of Dr Morales clearly pointed out the underlying challenges as well as the major obstacles regarding animal disease control in the region.

Discussions

134. The Session Chairman congratulated Dr Morales on his informative and interesting presentation. He then invited comments and questions from the participants.
135. The Delegate of Australia remarked that pig diseases have become very significant in the region and this situation could be due to pressures coming from a variety of factors such as the environment, vaccinations etc. Some countries may require more technical guidance in management and biosecurity in pig farms. He suggested that the OIE play a leading coordination role in the understanding of the nature of disease and disease syndromes including emphasis on the submission of samples for laboratory analyses.
136. A member of the Australian delegation provided an update on the continuing research into the causation of the disease syndrome commonly referred to as porcine myocarditis (PMC). The association of a novel pestivirus (which has been shown to be phylogenetically distinct from all known members of this virus group and is named Bungowannah virus), with this disease syndrome was recently described in the scientific literature. It was stressed that research efforts had yet to establish the role of Bungowannah virus as the causative agent of PMC. The considerable complexity attached to proving the aetiology of disease syndromes in intensively raised livestock is outlined as causation is frequently shown to be multifactorial.
137. At the request of the Session Chairman, the representative of PR China shared some of the experience gathered in his country regarding recent PRRS outbreaks. He stated that epidemiological and laboratory investigations have revealed the presence of a more virulent PRRS virus that could explain the elevated mortality observed. A combination of vaccination and biosecurity measures assisted in bringing the disease under control. He concluded by emphasising the need for samples to be analysed in approved laboratories.
138. A representative of New Zealand acknowledged the difficulties in determining the causative agents of disease syndromes in pigs and enquired whether reference laboratories could provide some assistance. Dr Morales pointed out that as regards the Philippines, some samples were collected for analyses at Plum Island. He added that Industry including some pharmaceutical companies was also assisting in the despatch of samples to diagnostic laboratories but such assistance was selective and irregular. Some support has also been received from APHCA-FAO.
139. The representative of India supported the observations made by the Delegate of Australia and stressed the importance of pigs which are also involved in the epidemiology of other animal diseases. He suggested that OIE consider developing new Chapters in the OIE Code and Manual regarding husbandry practices and biosecurity in pig farming.
140. Dr Eva Bernoth, President of the OIE Aquatic animal Health Standards Commission, acknowledged the difficulties in determining causative agents of disease. She drew a parallel with aquatic animals such as molluscs and crustaceans where disease causing viruses cannot be readily grown on cell lines. She explained the rapid disease spread that can occur in aquatic environments and stressed the need for further research. She added that disease syndromes need to be communicated to all stakeholders including trading partners. There was also a need for stronger cooperation between people involved with terrestrial and aquatic animal diseases in order to learn from each other.

141. Dr Vallat agreed with the observations of Dr Bernoth and conceded that the OIE was not yet ready to address all the threats as most of its time has been devoted to transboundary animal diseases. Situations such as those resulting from the new form of PRRS represent important challenges and thus the need to acquire more knowledge and skills. This can be achieved by encouraging candidate laboratories to act as centres of expertise on these diseases which may or may not appear on the OIE list of notifiable diseases.
142. Dr O'Neil congratulated the speaker for an excellent presentation on a very complex topic. He stated that the complexity of the situation could have resulted from genetic changes taking place over time in search for higher productivity that encouraged greater animal density and intensive farm management. Vaccination failures could have contributed to further aggravate the situation which now represents a real challenge that could take years and years to resolve. In the meantime, solutions need to be sought. Risk factors need to be reduced and centres of expertise in the form of Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres need to be developed.
143. Dr Alex Thiermann, President of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission suggested that with respect to these complex situations, more focus be placed on management rather than the search for the specific causative agent. Dr Morales agreed with the comments of Dr Thiermann and pointed out that in the Philippines diseases are often attributed to poor biosecurity.
144. The Session Chairman who is the Delegate of Singapore pointed out that pig rearing is no longer carried out in his country but recalled the rapid spread of transmissible gastro enteritis in Singapore at one time. He stressed the importance of biosecurity in the prevention and control of pig diseases.
145. The Delegate of Thailand also supported the view that good management was important in the prevention and control of animal diseases.
146. The Session Chairman concluded by thanking all the participants, and then requested a small group comprising the speaker, Dr Reildrin Morales, as well as Dr Sin Bin Chua (Singapore), Dr Choon Nghee Tay (Singapore), Dr Derek Belton. (New Zealand), Dr Bob Biddle (Australia), Dr Yong Joo Kim (Republic of Korea) and Dr Sun Yan (PR China) to draft a Recommendation on this item to be considered by the meeting.

Activities of the OIE regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific

147. The Conference Chairman invited Dr Teruhide Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia based in Tokyo, Japan to deliver his presentation on the activities of the Representation.
148. Dr Fujita stated that the Representation in Tokyo has assisted OIE Members in the Region in the improvement of animal health, mainly in the control and prevention of animal diseases including zoonotic diseases, and capacity building of Veterinary Services. It has also tried whenever appropriate to harmonise animal health activities of various partners such as FAO, WHO, ASEAN, SAARC, SPC, Donors and other Stakeholders.
149. The various programmes for animal health in the Region that received support include Animal Health Information Systems, WTO-SPS Agreement, Risk Analysis and Disease Surveillance, Standardisation of Veterinary Drugs, Aquatic Animal Diseases, BSE/TSEs, Transboundary Animal Diseases particularly HPAI and FMD and Safety of Food of Animal Origin. Several meetings/workshops including hands-on workshops have been organised at the regional and national levels.

150. HPAI reported in the region since 2003, has continued to progress and has resulted in endemicity in a few countries. In order to enable an efficient control of the disease at source, the OIE/Japan Special Trust Fund (JSTF) Project is being implemented and comprises 4 major components; (1) Development of HPAI Control Strategies, (2) Development of HPAI Information Systems, (3) Capacity Building on diagnosis and surveillance with provision of laboratory equipment and materials and (4) Training of field veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals.
151. The 2nd FAO/OIE Global Framework for progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) Regional Steering Committee Meeting held in Bangkok, Thailand, in July 2007, has developed the work plan of relevant Sub-regional Organisations including ASEAN+3 (Japan, RO Korea and PR China), SAARC and SPC+2 (Australia and New Zealand).
152. Draft work plans for 2008, some of which are still in the pipe-line, include (1) Development of HPAI Information Regional Core, (2) Workshop on Aquatic animal disease Information systems and Standards, (2) Workshop for new OIE Delegates, (3) Workshop on Emerging Diseases, (4) Workshop on harmonisation of veterinary drugs, (5) the 3rd GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee Meeting, and (6) New OIE/JSTF HPAI Control Project for Asia.

Discussions

153. The Conference Chairman thanked Dr Fujita for his informative presentation and congratulated him and his team for the excellent achievements of the Representation. He requested the Delegate of Japan to convey the gratitude of the OIE to the Government of Japan for the generous financial assistance provided to Veterinary Services of the Region.

OIE Rinderpest accreditation scheme-Situation in Asia

154. The Conference Chairman invited Dr Dewan Sibartie, Head of OIE Regional Activities Department to make his presentation on the new OIE accreditation scheme for rinderpest and to describe the actual rinderpest status in Asia.\
155. Dr Sibartie briefly reviewed the history of rinderpest that has inflicted untold damage for several centuries to farmers. He also described how the causative agent was used as a biological weapon in Europe.
156. Nevertheless, rinderpest prompted the creation of veterinary schools and state veterinary services across the world and also laid down the basic principles of animal disease control comprising restriction of animal movements and stamping out as methods of reducing the spread of animal diseases.
157. The OIE Pathway for rinderpest accreditation that has been used until recently required in general a six to seven year period starting with a planned vaccination period (2 years) to eliminate clinical disease followed by cessation of vaccination and a declaration of provisional freedom, a period of no vaccination and no clinical disease (3 years) to gain the status of free from rinderpest disease and a further period of (1-2 years) of continuous sero surveillance to be declared free from infection.

158. In view of the virtual disappearance of rinderpest disease in susceptible domestic and wild animals, the almost total cessation of vaccination and the relative absence of antibodies in non vaccinated animals, the OIE Ad hoc Group of experts have recommended that the OIE Pathway for recognition of country freedom from rinderpest be restricted to 2 years of sero-surveillance demonstrating the absence of virus circulation. A new Chapter on Rinderpest and a revised Appendix in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code have been adopted in May 2007 and these will greatly facilitate certain countries to acquire the free status.
159. Some doubts still exist about possible residual infections in the Somali ecosystem in Africa but latest sero-surveillance results indicate that the virus may no longer be circulating in that area. Evidence of absence is almost certain for Ethiopia and Kenya but some further work is on-going in Somalia.
160. In Asia, many countries have embarked on the old OIE Pathway but follow up has been limited as rinderpest is no longer viewed as an economically important disease. Some countries have made no declaration to the OIE and need to be encouraged to embark on the new pathway with the hope of demonstrating absence of viral circulation within the next two years. This is considered largely achievable.
161. In view of the OIE objectives and the FAO's Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme (GREP) to declare the world free from rinderpest in the next few years, the FAO and the OIE need to work together to help countries that are not recognised free by the OIE to submit dossiers to that effect. FAO may assist countries with the implementation of Technical cooperation projects (TCPs) in needy countries of the region.
162. For countries in the Pacific or the Americas, the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Disease will consider simplifying further the procedures for countries with a proven history of rinderpest absence to be declared free.
163. It is hoped that with concerted FAO/OIE efforts, the world may be declared free from rinderpest shortly and if possible by 2010 as originally stated in the GREP strategy making it the first animal disease to be eradicated in the world.

Discussions

164. The Conference Chairman congratulated Dr Sibartie for an excellent and lively presentation and invited countries of the region to be in touch with the OIE Central Bureau in order to submit the required dossiers to be declared free from rinderpest.
165. Dr Vallat stated that the OIE will consider increasing the number of meetings of the OIE Ad hoc Group responsible for the evaluation of country dossiers for rinderpest. He said that the OIE is prepared to accept dossiers from non OIE Members pointing out that the evaluation of dossiers for rinderpest is carried out free of charge by the OIE. He invited SPC countries to apply for recognition under the historical freedom rule and other countries where the disease has occurred to apply under the new OIE Pathway. He was confident that the whole region could be declared free within two years.

FAO/OIE Collaboration in animal disease control during the past two years in the region

166. The Conference Chairman invited Dr Joseph Domenech, Chief Veterinary Officer of the FAO to deliver his presentation on the FAO/OIE Collaboration in the prevention and control of animal diseases in the Region during the past two years.
167. Dr Domenech reviewed the various areas of collaboration in Asia, the Far East and Oceania between the two organisations in the field of animal health pointing out that the activities were carried out under the umbrella of the FAO/OIE GF-TADs initiative.
168. The revised chart of complementarities and synergies between the two organisations as agreed by the two Directors General in February 2007 was presented.
169. The FAO Emergency prevention system for transboundary animal diseases (EMPRESS) Programme and the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Diseases (ECTAD) continued their activities in support to the prevention and control of major animal diseases, HPAI remaining the main issue.
170. Joint FAO/OIE tools such as the OFFLU network of Reference Laboratories, the FAO-OIE-WHO Global Early Warning System (GLEWS) and the FAO-OIE Crisis Management Center/Animal Health (CMC-AH) were established.
171. A number of joint conferences and workshops as well as country missions were organised.
172. The preparation of disease guidelines and the review of strategic documents such as the FAO-OIE Global strategy for the control of HPAI (last reviewed in March 2007) continued.
173. A lot has been achieved during the past two years but there is still room for improvement in the FAO-OIE collaboration. HPAI has put all international organisations involved in animal health under heavy pressure coming from politicians, the media and civil society in general. This has accelerated FAO-OIE collaboration and helped the organisations in their efforts to advocate for more long term support in the improvement of animal health systems with a focus on animal disease prevention through better surveillance and detection systems and early warning and response to the occurrences of new disease outbreaks.
174. Dr Domenech highlighted other FAO activities carried out in collaboration with OIE in the region such as those related to the prevention and control of FMD (strongly linked with the SEAFMD Programme), CSF and the new PRRS which occurred in PR China and Vietnam. He also mentioned the participation of the FAO in the field of animal production food safety alongside the Codex Alimentarius Commission and WHO.
175. Dr Domenech concluded his presentation by mentioning FAO activities in the field of animal production and health carried out under the aegis of the FAO Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia (APHCA) based in Bangkok FAO RAP office.

Discussions

176. The Conference Chairman congratulated Dr Domenech for his clear presentation and also for explaining how FAO and OIE were utilising the combined strengths of the two organisations for more efficiency by avoiding duplication of activities. He thanked the FAO for the implementation of the impressive list of animal health activities in the region.

ITEM II

Poultry Production Food Safety in Thailand's Poultry Industry

177. The Session Chairman, Dr Toshiro Kawashima, briefly introduced Dr Sasitorn Kanarat and invited her to give a presentation on this topic.
178. Dr Sasitorn Kanarat briefly presented the poultry industry of Thailand highlighting the rapid growth of the industry since 1978 particularly to meet the growing demands and exigencies of the export market. However, the export of fresh poultry meat ceased since the outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza but Thailand continued to export cooked chicken and duck meat to the European Union, these exports in 2006 amounting to 272,630 and 7,237 metric tons respectively.
179. 90% of the poultry industry is fully integrated. Parent farms work with contract farmers but all the operations including the supply of feeds, drugs and veterinary care are under the supervision of the main company. Veterinarians involved in poultry health are registered with the Department of Livestock Development (DLD) of the Ministry of Agriculture and cooperatives of Thailand.
180. Farm food safety on poultry farms depends on several factors such as farming practice, water and feed quality, farm hygiene and pharmaceutical drugs and chemicals used throughout the production chain. These are ensured in Thailand by the enforcement of appropriate legislations, disease surveillance and monitoring and traceability systems.
181. In November 1999, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives issued a Notification on "Livestock Farm Standard" which is mandatory for farms sending birds to export-approved abattoirs. The notification is enforced by the DLD which has in turn issued various regulations to ensure transparent and successful implementation.
182. DLD has also issued Standard Operating Procedures on requirements for standard farm accreditation for farmers, Inspection of Broiler Standard Farm for DLD Farm Inspectors and Supervision over Broiler Standard Farm for DLD-registered farm veterinarian.
183. Farmers are encouraged to apply for farm accreditation. Training courses are organised for farmers by the DLD and the private sector on good agricultural practice to upgrade the farming system. Training courses are also organised for farm inspectors and farm veterinarians on regulatory aspects by DLD.
184. The Government of Thailand declared 2004 as "Food Safety Year". A Food Safety Road Map was initiated and necessary measures have since been applied throughout the food chain from farm to table. Under the national strategic plan, more stringent measures are being applied especially after the outbreak of HPAI in Thailand.

185. Surveillance and monitoring are carried out at various levels namely:
- At Broiler Standard Farms Level: Regular inspection is carried out by DLD and this also involves checking farm production records including laboratory results on feeds, water and cloacal swabs to ensure the absence of harmful bacteria, chemicals and toxins as well as absence of HPAI virus.
 - At Feed Mills and shops selling feed and pharmaceutical products: These are regularly inspected by the DLD but also by Thai FDA officers. Samples of feeds and pharmaceutical products are regularly tested to ensure compliance with the Feed Quality Control Act and the Drug Act.
 - At Slaughterhouses: Both ante mortem and post mortem inspections are carried out. Samples are collected to check for avian influenza and Newcastle viruses, organochlorine pesticides and antimicrobial residues.
186. Since the European Union is an important export market for Thailand, an annual residue monitoring plan is in place to comply with Council Directive 96/23/EC for residue control. Tests samples include animal feed, drinking water for animals and animal tissues collected from farms and slaughterhouses.
187. DLD has also issued the 'Measures on the Control of Salmonellae' enforced on the Poultry production chain. These measures require both government and industry to take samples from farms and hatcheries and to apply corrective action whenever results indicate non compliance with measures.
188. In addition to Government checks, exporting companies conduct their own checks not only to ensure compliance with Thai legislation but also with the requirements of the Governments of importing countries and importing companies. Some importers also carry out their own inspection audits on exporting companies.
189. Traceability is an important key to food safety to enable effective investigation, corrective actions and preventive measures. DLD issued the Regulation on Traceability of Livestock Products in 2003. This regulation is strictly enforced.
190. Dr Kanarat concluded by stating that a clear knowledge and understanding of the legislations, regulations and standard operating procedures are necessary to successfully achieve farm food safety. Training and education provided by Government and the private sector are therefore essential prerequisites. However, a well equipped and efficient testing laboratory is considered to be a *sine qua non* tool for an effective surveillance, monitoring and traceability system.

Discussions

191. The Session Chairman thanked Drs Kanarat for her comprehensive presentation. He briefly described some aspects of food safety in his country (Japan) explaining the application of the concept of Hazard Analysis for the Control of Critical Points (HACCP) at the production stage. He also described the improvement of hygiene in food processing plants and abattoirs in order to ensure high quality products and consumer confidence. He then opened the floor for discussions.

192. The Delegate of New Zealand congratulated the speaker for her excellent and comprehensive presentation. He asked whether the farm accreditation system was driven by Government or by Industry and how well it has been accepted by the farming community. He also enquired about the costs of the Programme. The Speaker replied that the initial drive came from Government but there was active participation by Industry. Almost 90% of producers are now accredited. HACCP is widely applied but its application is mandatory only in abattoirs and processing plants. Costs of the programme are met by Industry.
193. The Session Chairman confirmed that in Japan as well, HACCP application is not compulsory in farms but in processing plants.
194. The Delegate of Singapore asked whether Thailand was using virus isolation methods or the rapid tests with respect to cloacal swabs. Dr Kanarat replied that real time PCR test is used and positive cases are followed by virus isolations.
195. The representative of India enquired whether health checks are in place for workers. The speaker replied that these are indeed carried out and all farm and abattoir workers were tested annually for salmonella infections.
196. The representative of Hong Kong sought clarifications on the 60 cloacal swabs that have to be analysed regularly from each farm enquiring about the costs involved. He also asked about salmonella tests carried out in feeds and the actions taken in case of salmonella detection. He finally enquired about the toxic substances that are routinely tested and the corrective actions that are applied in case of positive results. Dr Kanarat answered that pooled samples (5 being pooled to 1) are tested to reduce costs. When salmonella is detected in feeds, the infected feeds are removed but the animals having consumed the feeds are not condemned. However, investigations are ordered to find out the source of the contamination. Testing for toxic materials is carried out in accordance with EC Directives regarding particularly organochlorines and other pesticides. Whenever a prohibited substance is identified, recall and trace back systems are set in place. The farmer involved must stop production for 2 crops and his licence withdrawn. Fresh animals are sent to the abattoirs only after testing of samples and certification by DLD accredited veterinarians.
197. Dr Fujita congratulated Dr Kanarat on her presentation and commended Thailand on the progress achieved in the field of Food safety. He noted however, that wide disparities exist amongst countries of the region pointing out that the Government agency responsible for food safety varies with countries. He stressed the need for good coordination amongst the various Government agencies and Industry. Training of producers and training of trainers are also essential. A manual should also be produced for the staff of Veterinary Services and farmers especially those wishing to follow export requirements.
198. The Delegate of Australia supported the views of Dr Fujita on coordination of the activities of different agencies. He drew attention to discussions of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum on food safety this year, recognising that leaders must work together to ensure effectiveness of the system.
199. Dr Karim Ben Jebara complimented the speaker on her well structured presentation and asked about the fate of food products that fail to comply with export requirements. Dr Kanarat answered that it depended on the reason for non compliance. The products may be destroyed or reprocessed. She added that standards and rules (generally based on Codex standards) also exist for the domestic market but these may differ from export requirements as very often the exporting countries set the rules.

200. A member of the New Zealand delegation commented that Thailand has all the essential elements to demonstrate disease free compartments and enquired whether Thailand intends to declare HPAI free compartments. Dr Kanarat replied that Thailand is planning to apply compartmentalisation but conceded that the concept is still new in the country.
201. The Delegate of Singapore enquired about screening for Campylobacter and vancomycin resistant enterococci(VRE). Dr Kanarat replied that screening for Campylobacter is carried out while ensuring that cooked products are free from the bacteria. Vancomycin is not allowed in feeds and a regular screening mechanism is in place. Actually, VRE is detected in less than 4% of samples tested.
202. Dr Vallat summed up the discussions noting that most of the conclusions of the speaker are in line with what is being promoted by the OIE. These comprise enforcement of strong legislation accompanied by sanctions, capacity building for farmers and veterinarians and on-farm activities regarding food safety. He commented about the activities of the OIE Working Group on Food safety that will propose new standards on food safety ensuring that surveillance and other on-farm control mechanisms fall under the responsibility of Veterinary Services.
203. The Session Chairman concluded by thanking all the participants, and then requested a small group comprising the speaker, Dr Sasitorn Kanarat, as well as Dr Sin Bin Chua (Singapore), Dr Neil Mcleod (New Zealand) and Dr Toshiro Kawashima (Japan) to draft a Recommendation on this item to be considered by the meeting.

Fourth OIE Strategic Plan, Strengthening of Veterinary Services and Good Veterinary Governance

204. Dr Bernard Vallat, OIE Director General made a presentation on the OIE Fourth Strategic Plan and good veterinary governance and the application of the OIE PVS tool for the evaluation of Veterinary Services in Asia.
205. The Fourth Strategic Plan builds on the success of the Third Strategic Plan. The global vision of the OIE enunciated in the Third Strategic Plan has been globally retained and the Fourth Strategic Plan is, in fact, an organic development of the preceding Plan.
206. The following three strategic elements from the third Strategic Plan have been reinforced: a) improving the dissemination of timely and accurate information on animal diseases including zoonoses, by making the best use of modern information technologies and non official information tracking systems; b) strengthening the role of the OIE as a reference organisation for setting science-based standards on all matters concerning animal health, animal welfare, diagnostic methods and control of diseases, animal production food safety and the facilitation of international trade of animals and animal products with minimal sanitary risks and c) the provision of scientifically-based standards, guidelines and recommendations on measures for the prevention and control of animal diseases including zoonoses, taking into account the economic, social and environmental impacts of such measures, and the provision of services for the determination of animal health status in relation to specific diseases.
207. Dr Vallat described in detail the two new strategic elements that have been added to the Fourth Strategic Plan. The first of these is the support to capacity building for Veterinary Services. In addition to its role as a catalyst for major capacity building activities, the OIE will also provide support to Members wishing to be more engaged in the work of the Organisation, in the form of educational training materials and training programmes for

official Delegates, especially to those who assume office for the first time. The second new element identified in the Fourth Strategic Plan deals with strengthening of the OIE's involvement in national and international governance related to decision-making in animal health and welfare including capacity building (mainly using PVS tool), applied research, communication, and the 'mediation' of potential disputes.

208. With regard to institutional arrangements and funding of the Fourth Strategic Plan, Dr Vallat emphasised that the visibility of the OIE to the general public, media, decision-makers, veterinary professionals and farmers will be enhanced. The Plan had foreseen adjustments to the design and scale of assessed contributions in order to facilitate the recovery of contributions from all Members. He added that he has received a mandate from the OIE International Committee to prepare a new mechanism allowing direct funding of the activities of OIE Regional Representations through compulsory contributions of Members of the OIE Regional Commissions. This new mechanism was adopted by OIE Members in May 2006.
209. Since the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) crisis, the front line role of Veterinary Services (VS) in the prevention and control of animal diseases and zoonoses has been clearly recognised by all national policy-makers as well as by the international donor community. To fulfil their functions efficiently, VS especially in developing and in transition countries need to be strengthened and provided with the necessary human, technical, financial and legislative means. This can be achieved if the VS are properly evaluated for compliance with OIE international standards on the quality of VS. The OIE has in this respect developed in collaboration with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Performance of Veterinary Services tool (OIE PVS) to evaluate VS in order to identify gaps and weaknesses in VS that can subsequently be remedied through resources from national budgets or international aid.
210. Three seminars have been held so far at the OIE Headquarters in collaboration with the 'Ecole Nationale des Services Vétérinaires' of Lyon to train veterinary experts in the harmonised application of the PVS tool. Over 80 experts including some from the region have thus been trained and certified by the OIE to carry out evaluations of VS. These experts are also recognised by the World Bank and other main donors. An Ad hoc Group comprising internationally renown experts has been set up to continuously review the OIE PVS tool including the critical competencies and the indicators regarding Veterinary Services. In addition, a manual for use by evaluators has also been produced.
211. 53 developing and in transition countries have requested the OIE to evaluate their VS and 40 surveys have been completed. In Asia, 6 requests have been received namely from Cambodia, Fiji, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Mongolia and Vietnam and all the evaluations have been completed. Four reports have already been peer reviewed and forwarded to the countries concerned. One country has given its consent to release the report in the public domain.

Discussions

212. The Conference Chairman congratulated Dr Vallat for his comprehensive presentation. He thanked the OIE Director General for his enormous contribution towards strengthening of Veterinary services worldwide but more particularly in developing and in transition countries. He stated that the development of the PVS tool by the OIE represented a major breakthrough in the performance of Veterinary Services and their contribution to society and expressed the wish that all countries of the region request the OIE to assess their Veterinary Services.

213. Dr Thiermann commented on the Washington Conference stating that it was the first time in such an international forum that economic data was available to quantify the impact of disease crises versus the benefits of prevention. Regarding the reluctance of insurance companies to insure livestock, he thought that this could serve to convince ministers further about the importance of investing on veterinary Services.

Activities of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania

214. The Conference Chairman invited Dr Gardner Murray, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania to give an account of the key activities of the Commission.
215. Dr Murray referred to some key work carried out including a visit by Dr Vallat to Australia to deliver the Snowdon Lecture at the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL), meet with High Level Officials in Canberra and discuss the establishment of an OIE Sub Regional Office with Thai Government Officials in Bangkok.
216. He referred to recent meetings of ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) and ASEAN PLUS 3 held in Bangkok, Thailand in November 2006. Accompanied by Drs Fujita and Abila, he attended those meetings when agenda items of relevance were discussed. AMAF endorsed the implementation of a regional framework for HPAI which is consistent with the global framework for the control of transboundary animal diseases. Importantly, AMAF endorsed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on technical cooperation with OIE. He complimented Drs Fujita and Abila for their efforts in developing and gaining agreement to the MOU.
217. Dr Murray referred to other activities such as the SEAFMD Programme, approaches to strengthening Veterinary Services in Asia and key meetings such as the OIE/DAFF Animal Welfare Workshop in Thailand in November 2007.
218. The President of the Commission announced the appointment of Dr Ronello Abila as the Regional Coordinator for a new OIE/AusAID Project. In that capacity Dr Abila would also supervise SEAFMD activities.
219. Dr Murray also presented a summary of the outcome of the OIE/DAFF Animal Welfare Workshop, Bangkok, held on 6 and 7 November, 2007.
- The Workshop was a great success with 37 participants from 15 countries attending including representatives from ASEAN, the World Society for the Protection of Animals and the OIE Regional Representation of the Middle East.
 - The main objectives of the Workshop were to discuss OIE standards and guidelines, exchange information, identify problems and consider strategies for improving animal welfare.
 - The key outcome from the Workshop was agreement that a Writing Group be formed to draft a broad based regional animal welfare framework, including ideas on implementation, to be put to OIE for consideration. Another key outcome was a request that OIE consider training arrangements for designated focal points.

220. Dr Murray tabled the recommendations from the Workshop and sought endorsement from the Regional Commission. He noted that, should the Regional Commission agree, Australia would fund the Writing Group meeting as a contribution towards the improvement of animal welfare in the Region and that a draft strategy would be put to the Regional Commission Meeting during the OIE General Session in May 2008.

Discussions

221. The Conference Chairman supported the recommendations of the Workshop and asked the Commission to approve the proposal for the Writing Group to submit draft recommendations to the OIE. The recommendation was approved by the Commission.
222. Dr Vallat explained the procedures to be followed. He stated that the recommendations of the Writing Group will be submitted to the Regional Commission meeting during the annual General session in May 2008 and subsequently submitted for examination by a relevant OIE Specialist Commission before seeking final approval by the International Committee.

Application of the Australian Animal Health Laboratory to become an OIE Collaborating Centre for Laboratory Enhancement

223. Dr Murray presented the application of the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) to become an OIE Collaborating Centre for Laboratory Enhancement for endorsement by the Commission. He outlined the high level facilities and the international expertise available at AAHL. The proposal was unanimously adopted.
224. Dr Vallat explained the procedures to be followed. After endorsement by the Regional Commission, the application will be examined by the Biological standards Commission and subsequently referred to the Administrative Commission before final endorsement by the International committee.

Aquatic Animal Health: an update

225. The Conference Chairman invited Dr Eva-Maria Bernoth, President of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission, to make a presentation on an update in aquatic animal health.
226. Dr Bernoth recalled that at its 23rd Conference in Nouméa, New Caledonia, in 2003, the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania discussed aquaculture and aquatic animal health services in the region, responsible authorities, aquatic animal disease reporting and cooperation with OIE. The Commission adopted a number of recommendations (the "Nouméa Recommendations") that were subsequently endorsed by the International Committee at the 72nd General Session in May 2004, acknowledging that while the recommendations were based on the situation in Asia, they were globally applicable. The recommendations were addressed to the OIE as well as its Members and focussed on roles and responsibilities for aquatic animal health.
227. The first part of Dr Bernoth's presentation provided an update on actions taken since the Nouméa meeting by the OIE and its Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission to implement the recommendations.

228. The second part of the presentation explained the implications of some important aquatic animal health decisions made by the International Committee at the 75th General Session in May 2007, for example, the in-principle agreement to include amphibians in the OIE's remit.
229. In the third part of her presentation, Dr Bernoth provided an outlook on current developments and more specifically on drafts that the Aquatic Animals Commission intends to present for adoption at the 76th General Session in 2008. The latter include the listing of two amphibian diseases, guidelines for aquatic animal health surveillance, guidelines on the control of aquatic animal health hazards in aquatic animal feed, guidelines on the handling and disposal of carcasses and wastes of aquatic animals and an introduction to the OIE guidelines for the welfare of live aquatic animals.
230. Dr Bernoth stated that the development of international aquatic animal health standards has progressed immensely since Nouméa mainly in the following:
- For most diseases, specific commodities are recognised as "safe" for trade
 - A consistent yet disease-specific set of recommendations for trade in other commodities has been adopted
 - There are more flexible pathways for self-declaration of disease freedom
 - Compartmentalisation has been adopted as a concept in trade and in disease control.
231. The President of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission observed however, that further challenges lay ahead, for example the on-going "catch-up" situation with emerging aquatic animal diseases in newly farmed species. In addition, wider animal production issues such as controls on availability and use of antimicrobials and closer scrutiny by trading partners of import measures all call for "whole-of-government approaches" to increasing aquatic animal production in the face of consumer concerns about animal welfare, food safety, trade rules and environmental protection.
232. Dr Bernoth concluded by commenting on whether Members are in fact prepared to act in accordance with OIE recommendations and asked how OIE could be of further assistance.

Discussions

233. A member of the Australian delegation commented about abalone viral ganglioneuritis and urged the Aquatic Commission to draft listing criteria to clarify reporting. He also sought explanations on the reporting requirements for amphibian diseases indicating that some countries may currently be reporting diseases of wild amphibians. He asked whether there are rules demarking wildlife and generic amphibians.
234. Dr Bernoth replied that it is intended to set up an Ad hoc Group to work on abalone viral ganglioneuritis. An Australian expert will be a member of that Group. Regarding the reporting of wildlife diseases, she stated that it is not unique to amphibians. In the aquatic sector there is no differentiation between farmed and wild animals. The OIE will thus include farmed and wild animals.

Activities of the OIE Animal Welfare Working Group

235. The Conference Chairman invited Dr David Bayvel, Chairman of the OIE Working Group on Animal Welfare and Director Animal Welfare, MAF Biosecurity New Zealand, to make his presentation.
236. Dr Bayvel stated that in recognition of the increasing scientific, political and public attention given to animal welfare in general, and its role in international trade in particular, animal welfare was identified as an important emerging issue during the preparation of the 2001 – 2005 OIE third strategic plan. At the 69th Session of the OIE International Committee, approval was given for the Director General's work programme to implement the recommendations of the strategic plan. In this programme, it was agreed to establish a new department specifically responsible for international trade in animals and animal products which would provide extra resources to address new topics including food safety, zoonoses and animal welfare. It was agreed that initial scoping documents would be commissioned to assist in defining the degree and scope of OIE involvement with these new topics and a Permanent Animal Welfare Working Group was established in 2002.
237. The working group developed an initial work programme, which addressed the following as priority issues:
- Preparation of statements of mission, guiding principles and policies for adoption by the International Committee
 - Development of expertise and stakeholder databases
 - Organisation of the First OIE Global Conference on Animal Welfare
 - Terms of reference, scope and membership of four Ad hoc groups, to address agreed priority areas
 - Increasing awareness of animal welfare in undergraduate training
 - Increasing awareness of animal welfare research needs and funding requirements
 - Promoting collaboration among academic and research institutions
 - Communications plan addressing both internal and external audiences
238. Dr Bayvel provided an update on the progress made since 2002 with particular reference to the four sets of guidelines on transport and slaughter adopted at the 2005 OIE General Session, Publication of "Animal Welfare: Global Issues, Trends and Challenges" in the OIE Scientific and Technical Review Series and the status of new priority work areas including farmed fish, stray dog control, wild animals, production animals and laboratory animals.
239. The OIE commitment to providing international, inter-Governmental leadership on animal welfare standard setting has been further emphasised in the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan for the period 2006-2010. Resolutions adopted at recent meetings of the OIE International Committee have stressed the importance of OIE Members fully engaging in the implementation of the adopted animal welfare guidelines. Member country animal welfare focal points, close liaison with non-government stakeholders and Regional Commission initiatives are all seen to play an important role in such implementation.
240. Dr Bayvel concluded by confirming that the October 2008 Second OIE Global Conference on Animal Welfare to be held in Cairo, Egypt in October 2008, will have as its central theme, "Implementation of the OIE Guidelines".

Animal Welfare: European perspectives and expectations

241. The Conference Chairman then invited Dr Andrea Gavinelli – Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General – European Commission, to make his presentation on the European perspectives and expectations regarding animal welfare.
242. Dr Gavinelli stated that animal welfare is now accepted as an integral part of the European Community's "*farm to fork*" policies and is one of the strategic priorities related to the development of more sustainable food production policies. However, animal welfare is not only related to the production of food and important challenges exist with regard to protecting the welfare of experimental, zoo and companion animals etc.
243. The importance attached to animal welfare in Europe is evolving in terms of ethical concerns and this has become a "***cultural attitude***" for European society affecting Europe as one of the most important world market for global agricultural commodities. Furthermore this attitude is acknowledged since 1999 by the EC Treaty's Protocol on Protection and Welfare of Animals which recognises animals as **sentient beings**. European citizens have also highlighted the importance of this issue in recent social surveys. These considerations provide the foundations for the Commission's activities in the field of animal welfare both in the context of European policies and in relation to the activities in International Organisations such the OIE.
244. The Community shares the perspective of the OIE in that its animal welfare strategy has recognised that "*animal welfare is a complex, multi-faceted public policy issue that includes important scientific, ethical, economic and political dimensions*". In the past the Commission has been called upon on several occasions to take initiatives in this area in order to incorporate and balance these dimensions and to continue its international efforts to raise consensus in this area of work. To facilitate this, greater coordination is necessary at international level and it is difficult to satisfactorily address this matter in particular in the longer term by the sole action of the Community acting unilaterally. This is one of the main reasons to contribute and actively support the work of the OIE in this area.
245. Taking account of the cross-cutting nature of some issues, their international dimension and value and the range of associated and inter-connecting competencies, it is clear that the recent and future role of the OIE will only increase in importance in leading the development of animal welfare standards both at local and international level. By pooling experience, expertise and resources a common response coordinated at OIE level can be set in train which will be more effective than that which any individual OIE Member Country could muster on its own.
246. It is clear that efforts to improve animal welfare can impose extra costs on either the keepers of such animals or administrations responsible for enforcing such controls. Consequently, any economic, social or environmental consequences need to be taken into account by the OIE in developing its work and the Commission is making all its scientific and economic resources available in order to contribute to the process. Nevertheless, these need to be counter-balanced by the benefits both to the animals in particular in respect of their improved protection and also to wider society in general.

Discussions

247. The Conference Chairman congratulated both speakers on the subject of Animal welfare for their very lively presentations and invited comments.

248. Dr Vallat stated that animal health is a key component to animal welfare but animal welfare cannot be automatically linked to food safety because of lack of scientific evidence. Referring to the 'from farm to fork' concept, he informed that large multinationals are very keen to support the OIE and apply OIE standards which are based on science as opposed to consumers who tend to design requirements devoid of any scientific basis.
249. Dr Gavinelli agreed with the views of Dr Vallat and stressed on the importance of communication amongst the various stake holders.
250. Professor David Mellor of Massey University, New Zealand congratulated both speakers for their excellent presentations. He suggested that on the basis of the five known dimensions of animal welfare, a link between food safety and animal welfare is possible in certain situations.
251. The representative of IFAH briefly presented the views of farmers and underlined the often superficial view of consumers on animal welfare.
252. Dr Domenech congratulated Dr Gavinelli for his talents as a speaker. He also congratulated the OIE for the great job being carried out on animal welfare. He was however of the opinion that animal welfare can appear as the business of the rich because there are many areas in Africa and Asia where basic human requirements are still not being met and for these people, talks on animal welfare do not necessarily represent the first priority.
253. The Conference Chairman concluded the session by stating that animal welfare is a long journey and different people have different destinations. The OIE will however strive to satisfy all its Members as far as practically possible.

Update on activities of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission

254. The Conference Chairman invited Dr. Alex Thiermann, President of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission to highlight the salient changes that are being proposed for the Terrestrial Animal Health Code.
255. Dr Thiermann discussed the outcomes of the recent Code Commission meeting held in Paris during the last two weeks of September 2007. He pointed out that the full report is available on the OIE Web page in all three OIE official languages. He stressed the importance for Delegates to closely follow the activities of the Code Commission and participate actively by providing comments during the course of year and not to wait for the General Session.
256. He listed the 30 individual topics that were discussed during the recent Code Commission meeting and explained in more details those that are more relevant to the region.
257. Dr Thiermann highlighted the importance of the changes brought on the following disease specific Chapters: foot and mouth disease, rabies, bovine tuberculosis, BSE, classical swine fever, HPAI, Newcastle disease and West Nile fever.
258. Regarding the generic topics of the Terrestrial Code, he discussed the recent inclusion of the concept of 'containment zone' and provided further explanations on the proper implementation of zoning and compartmentalisation. He also described the work on the implication of the presence of pathogens in wildlife when considering the official health status of a country or zone.

259. The President of the Code Commission stressed that considerable time and efforts have been spent in expanding and making more visible the recommendations on commodity specific measures to render these safe for trade, as opposed to strictly focusing trade measures on country free status with respect to specific diseases.
260. Dr Thiermann discussed the work of the Working Group on animal welfare highlighting the progress made on the draft text on the control of stray dog populations, general recommendations on laboratory animals and the discussion paper on animal production methods.
261. He also briefly discussed the work of the Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety.
262. Finally, Dr Thiermann presented the endorsement on the improvements to the PVS tool which has been renamed the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (OIE-PVS). He reminded Delegates of the paramount importance of supporting the work of the OIE in the improvement of governance of Veterinary Services worldwide, as the sole mechanism for ensuring the ability of VS for early detection and rapid response to emerging diseases.

Discussions

263. The Conference Chairman thanked the speaker and asked him whether he was satisfied with the technical input of Members of the region regarding the submission of comments on draft standards. Dr Thiermann replied that some encouraging improvement has been noted recently but there was still room for improvement.
264. Dr Stuart Mc Diarmid, a member of the Code Commission commented on the development of guidelines on the control of stray dog population. He stated that the text has been improved but it still needs to be critically reviewed especially by developing countries on its appropriateness. Dr Thiermann noted that the text is meant more for the control of rabies which is common in many countries of the region. Dr Vallat urged support for these standards as rabies is responsible for over 50,000 human deaths every year with more than two thirds occurring in the region.
265. A member of the Australian delegation asked Dr Thiermann whether there was any on-going work on atypical prion diseases and whether the OIE has adopted unified criteria for declaring countries free from BSE. Dr Thiermann replied that the question of atypical prion diseases will again be examined in March 2008 by the Code Commission when considering the report of a recent Ad hoc Group on this topic. Regarding BSE, he assured that countries will be judged by the same rules as those that have already been recognised free. He added that the Code and Scientific Commissions are working together to ensure the publication of a transparent set of criteria.
266. Dr Bernoth mentioned the close coordination between the Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commissions in order to harmonise Code Chapters, definitions, import criteria etc. between the two codes.

Presentations by international and regional organisations

267. The Conference Chairman invited presentations from international and regional organisations.

World Health Organization

268. Dr Bee Lee Ong, representative of WHO delivered a short presentation on WHO activities in the region.
269. She stated that the goal of the Asia Pacific Strategy for emerging Diseases (APSED) and Zoonoses work Plan is to improve health protection in the Asia-Pacific region. It contains the road maps for countries to strengthen core capacities required for effective prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases.
270. The APSED work plan has five components: surveillance and response, laboratory, zoonoses, infection control and risk communications. In the zoonoses workplan, emphasis has been placed on strengthening sustainable and functional intersectoral collaboration.
271. A Guide to aid countries to establish a sustainable mechanism for Animal-Human Health sectors has been prepared. Pilot studies on the Guide will be conducted next year in a few countries. Once the Guide is finalised, it will be posted on the WHO Web site

Discussions

272. Dr Thiermann acknowledged the existing collaborating mechanisms among the various health sectors but insisted that the will to collaborate was more important than the mechanisms themselves.
273. Dr Vallat strongly supported the 'one health system'. He stated that the OIE collaborates with WHO at the regional level through the existing OIE/FAO GF-TADS mechanism, the meetings of which are always attended by WHO representatives. He also mentioned the OIE/FAO/WHO GLEWS programme where the three organisations work together particularly on zoonoses. Dr Vallat advocated better complementarities between the ministries of Agriculture and Health, but has reservations on the concept of 'one medicine' because of the differing nature of the work of veterinarians and physicians.
274. Dr Domenech supported the views of Dr Vallat on the 'one health concept' and the coordination between the two ministries concerned. Regarding food safety, he added that the main precautions have to be taken at the farm level under the responsibility of the ministries in charge of animal production and health.

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)

275. Ms Julie Delforce, representative of AusAID mentioned that the Australian aid commitments to combat emerging infectious diseases in the Asia-Pacific region amounts to over A\$150 million since 2003.
276. Under the aid programme's *Pandemics and Emerging Infectious Diseases Strategy 2006-2010*, four main areas of assistance are identified: planning and preparation; recognition, control and prevention; underlying animal and human health systems and outbreak response.
277. Numerous bilateral and regional programmes are now underway supporting partner Government priorities in collaboration with technical organisations and other donors. In Indonesia, for example, Australia is helping strengthen disease surveillance and response, pandemic planning, inter-island quarantine and veterinary laboratories. Significant bilateral support is also being provided to Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Mekong countries.

278. Regional programmes include SEAFMD and the new Veterinary Services project through OIE; support for WHO's Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases; contributions to the World Bank's AHI Trust Fund; and major programmes being managed by the Secretariats of ASEAN and the Pacific Community.
279. Identification and placement of expertise relevant to EIDs is being facilitated through the new AusReady Facility. A framework for multi-sectoral, applied research on EIDs is being developed.
280. Australian Scholarships (including short-term awards) are also available to build capacity in the region.
281. More information is available on www.usaid.gov.au/hottopics; www.ausready.org.au; www.australianscholarships.gov.au.

International Dairy Federation

282. Dr Gwyneth Verkerk delivered a presentation on the activities of the International Dairy Federation.
283. The IDF is an organisation with 47 Members that are principally those that market dairy products around the world. Its primary purpose is the promotion of dairy and dairy products. The scope of activity covers dairy cows, buffaloes and small ruminants kept for milk production.
284. The structure of IDF consists of a series of Standing committees that consider a wide range of issues ranging from aspects of farm management such as the environment and animal feeding, animal health, chemical contaminants, dairy marketing to human nutrition. There is a key interaction with Codex processes.
285. The principal outputs of the organisation are technical communications and expert advice with a variety of publications, guidelines and conferences.
286. More information can be accessed on the IDF web site: www.fil-idf.org

Meat Industry Association of New Zealand

287. At the request of the Conference Chairman, Ms Caryll Shailer, Chief executive of the Meat Industry of New Zealand (MIA), made a brief presentation on the activities of her organisation.
288. The MIA is a non profit organisation having as members, meat processors, marketers, and exporters and covers all activities relating to the meat supply chain.
289. It provides advice to its members on economics, trade policy, market access, industrial relations, business compliance costs, technical and regulatory issues facing the industry.
290. The MIA represents the interface between the meat industry and Government.

International Meat Secretariat

291. Ms Caryll Shailer, Representative of the International Meat Secretariat (IMS), briefly recalled that her organisation is a worldwide non-profit association representing and serving the meat and livestock industry world-wide. It aims to promote and develop the industry and provides a forum for the consideration of all issues related to its activities. Its members include leading meat and livestock organisations throughout the world. They are principally national meat and livestock offices, meat and livestock inter-professional trade associations and individual companies.
292. Four years ago, an official agreement was signed between the OIE and IMS and a practical cooperation has developed between the two organisations. The mutual agreement was marked in 2007 by:
1. The organisation of a reception by the IMS for delegates to the OIE 75th General Session in Paris on 21 May. At that event, IMS President Patrick Moore introduced the IMS film which celebrates the inextricable link between the meat and livestock sector and animal welfare. The film's message makes it clear that the meat industry, far from standing on the sidelines of the animal welfare debate, is its major participant, as it caters for the animal's well-being at all stages of its life.
 2. OIE participation in the person of Dr. Leopoldo Stuardo, who spoke at the IMS Workshop in Animal Welfare in Paris in April.
 3. The presence of Dr. Vincenzo Caporale, the President of OIE's Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, as a speaker at the IMS Regional Conference in Sao Paulo also in April.
 4. The participation by the IMS representative, Dr. Nils Beaumont as an observer at the September meeting of the OIE Permanent Animal Welfare Working Group in September.
293. Ms Caryll Shailer expressed great appreciation for the efforts of OIE Director General Dr. Vallat to resolve the issue of industry representation at this Working Group, and hoped that the present representation agreement is a step on the road to full membership of the Group for the IMS. She looked forward to a further enhancement of the relationship with OIE.
294. Apart from the two IMS Conferences, she announced two other major IMS events that took place this year namely:
- An IMS Symposium on Meat Safety was held in Valencia, Spain in February. This brought together meat scientists, technologists, and representatives of the international meat industry to discuss scientific, technical, political and legislative issues of meat safety.
 - The Fourth IMS World Pork Conference was held in Nanjing China on 16-17 September. Delegates from some thirty countries attended the event. They were able to learn about the remarkable progress that has been achieved in the development of the Chinese pork sector, with presentations by some of the leading industry players. The growth of the pork industry in the world generally was also analysed by speakers from the leading pork producing countries.
295. Ms Shailer ended her presentation by announcing the IMS 17th World Meat Congress that will be held in Cape Town on 7-10 September 2008, and expressed the wish of OIE participation at this important event.

International Federation of Animal Health (IFAH)

296. Dr Peter Holdsworth made a representation on behalf of IFAH.
297. IFAH represents manufacturers of veterinary medicines, vaccines and other animal health products in developed and developing countries over five continents. It fosters quality regulatory environments and positive understanding of the products of its members with public Governments in order to encourage innovative product development into a competitive market.
298. IFAH collaborates with OIE on mutually beneficial issues including:
 - a. list of critically important antimicrobials in veterinary medicine
 - b. the value of vaccination in managing avian influenza
 - c. international harmonisation of the regulatory requirements for veterinary medicines
299. IFAH looks forward to continued collaboration with OIE in the future.
United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS)
300. Dr Mark Prescott made a presentation on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS).
301. USDA-APHIS is a regulatory agency in charge of sanitary and Phytosanitary Health for the USA.
302. Offices in the Asia, the Far East and Oceania region are located in Australia, PR China, Chinese Taipei, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Philippines and Thailand, the latter covering Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam)
303. Offices are for information exchange on sanitary issues as well as technical capacity building usually in collaboration with FAO.
304. Some activities currently in progress include veterinary epidemiology, laboratory training, TADs training and live bird markets.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

305. Dr Ken Cokanasiga made a presentation on behalf of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.
306. The SPC covers an area consisting of 22 Pacific Island Countries and Territories ranging in size from small atolls to Papua New Guinea with a land area of 462,840 sq km.
307. Many Pacific Island Communities are extremely vulnerable to climate change with a projected 15% increase in the intensity of tropical cyclones. They will be among the first to be forced to abandon or relocated from their homes with an accelerated sea rise.
308. The people, the agricultural land, tourist resorts and infrastructure are concentrated in the coastal zones.
309. In Fiji, 50% of the population live within 60 kms of the shore with 90% of villages located at the coast. In Samoa (Upolu) 60% of schools are on coastal lowlands. Atolls, e.g. Tuvalu – only 2.5m above sea level - has requested NZ to provide homes for its citizens

310. A World Bank report states that the :Eastern Pacific would experience the largest rise in sea levels, there is a prediction that there will be a 100% increase in intensity of cyclone damage in Fiji, 20-30% increase in dengue fever, decline in crop yields of up to 15%. The same report states that Kiribati (33 small atolls, 90,000 people)) could experience an 80% rise in sea level during high tides.
311. A recent Red Cross report states that the number of people in Oceania affected by weather-related disasters increased by 65 times in the last 30 years. There is the planned evacuation of the Carteret Islands in PNG (1.5 m high) with a population of 2000 that was agreed in November 2005. Two inhabited Kiribati islands disappeared in 1999. In Jan 2006, rising sea levels forced the relocation of an entire village in Vanuatu (>100 residents of Tegua island moved to higher grounds.)
312. Issues with the Livestock Sector concern:
- Increasing temperatures (Global Warming)
 - Reduced water availability
 - Increased Sea Water Intrusion (coastal, low lands, atolls)
 - Increasing Water Salinity
 - Changing Precipitation, Evaporation Patterns/Distribution
 - Changes in Vector/Agent distribution
 - Changing Vegetation Cover
313. The likely consequences are:
- Reducing available land areas
 - Greater interaction/closer proximity between animals, and, between animals and humans – Zoonosis (adaptation of animal pathogens to humans)
 - Intensification of Animal Production Systems
 - Change in Forage cover to species that can adapt to issues raised above
 - Increase(?)- incidence of emerging and re-emerging diseases for animals and humans
314. The adaptations required are:
- Forage/Pasture species that can adapt
 - Livestock breeds/species that can adapt – to “new forages/pastures”, warmer climate, swamp/dry land
 - Change feed formulations – use of locally available feed ingredients
 - Sources of Genetic Material for adapted plants and livestock
 - If need to be imported – introduction of exotic pests and diseases (esp. for animals)
 - New Animal Disease Considerations-
 - Effects on Export Market Access for livestock and livestock products
315. The conclusion is that SPC is currently developing programmes to both mitigate against, and adapt, to the predicted changes expected with Climate change.

ASEAN Secretariat

316. Dr Somsak Pipoppinyo, representative of ASEAN informed the Conference on the recent progress in the ASEAN-OIE cooperation.
317. The 29th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (29th AMAF), held in Bangkok, Thailand on 1 November 2007 agreed to the signing of the MOU between ASEAN and OIE to enhance the working relationship in the fields of animal health, animal welfare, and veterinary public health as well as other areas of common interest.
318. The "Final Report on the "Implementation of the Regional Framework for the Control and Eradication of HPAI in ASEAN" has also been reported to the 29th AMAF, taking account of the implementation of various initiatives embodied in the Regional Framework for the Control and Eradication of HPAI in ASEAN, and situational evaluations and gap assessments based on country reports presented in Taskforce meetings, regional workshops and member country visits/reviews. The Ministers were pleased with the progress made in the implementation of the Regional Framework for Control and Eradication of HPAI in ASEAN and adopted the Final Report of the ASEAN HPAI Taskforce. They also acknowledged the importance of the support provided by various international organisations and donor agencies (e.g. FAO, OIE, ADB, WHO, AusAID, USAID), in capacity building and technical assistance. The Ministers reiterated the need for a well-coordinated multi-agency and multi-sectoral approach to prevent, control, and eradicate HPAI in the ASEAN region and endorsed the ASEAN Regional Strategy for the Progressive Control and Eradication of HPAI for 2008 - 2010.

Discussions

319. Dr Ken Cokanasiga acceded to a request of Dr Vallat that the SPC provide assistance to SPC non members of OIE to submit dossiers to the OIE to be declared free from rinderpest on the historical freedom rule.

Presentation and discussion of draft Recommendations Nos 1 and 2

320. Draft Recommendations Nos 1 and 2 on the two technical items of the Conference were presented to the participants and put forward for discussion. Both draft Recommendations were presented for adoption at the Friday session with some minor amendments.

Venue, dates and technical items for the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania

321. The proposal of PR China to host the 26th Regional Conference for Asia, the Far East and Oceania was unanimously supported and approved.
322. The dates of the Conference will be decided during the Regional Commission meeting to be held back to back with the General Session in 2008.

323. As usual, two technical items will be discussed. One technical item will include the response of Members to a questionnaire that will be prepared on the specific subject. The other technical item will deal with a subject of current interest that will be proposed by the Regional Commission and endorsed by the International Committee during the General Session preceding the Conference, i.e. in 2009.

Thursday 29 November 2007

Field trip

324. The professional and cultural excursion organised by the host country was highly appreciated by participants and their guests.

Friday 30 November 2007

Adoption of final report and Recommendations

325. Dr Vallat explained the procedures to adopt the report of the Conference and the recommendations. Delegates are allowed to comment or make suggestions which are taken into account on the spot but additional comments received by 15 December 2007 at the OIE Central Bureau will also be considered. However, the recommendations need to be adopted during the session and cannot be changed later on.
326. The report was adopted with a few minor amendments.
327. The two recommendations were adopted without any amendment.
328. The traditional motion of thanks for the host country was read by a representative of the delegation of PR China.

Closing ceremony

329. The President of the Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, Dr Gardner Murray, thanked the host country, all participants including representatives of Industry and the OIE Secretariat for a most fruitful conference. He thought that the Conference agenda was relevant to the region and the social programme most enjoyable. He asked Dr O'Neil to convey the gratitude of the Commission to the Government of New Zealand for supporting the Conference.

330. Dr Bernard Vallat, OIE Director General stated that the Conference provided a good opportunity for Members of the region to raise issues of mutual interest but also those of concern. He noted that the technical presentations were of a very high level. He expressed his appreciation to the OIE Secretariat and other OIE staff from the Central Bureau for their active and fruitful participation. He invited all participants to be present in PR China for the next Regional Commission Conference. Dr Vallat thanked Dr O'Neil and his staff as well as the Government of New Zealand for their contribution in making the Conference a success.
331. Dr Barry O'Neil, President of the OIE International Committee and OIE Delegate of New Zealand thanked all participants noting that a total of 113 participants from 22 countries attended the Conference. He expressed his sincere appreciation to the Secretariat of the host country and of the OIE for the excellent work carried out to ensure the success of the Conference. He made a special mention of the contribution of Mrs Nathaly Monsalve and Dr Dewan Sibartie of the OIE and for Mrs Sally Lees and Kirsty Grant of the Secretariat of the host country. He thanked PR China for having kindly agreed to host the next Regional Conference. He hoped that participants enjoyed the hospitality of the People of New Zealand and that they would carry home with them fond memories of their stay in New Zealand.
332. Dr Barry O'Neil officially declared the Conference closed at 10.30 a.m.



25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania

Queenstown, New Zealand 26-30 November 2007

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**25th Conference of the
OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania**
Queenstown (New Zealand), 26-30 November 2007

AGENDA

- I. Emerging and reemerging diseases in the region with special emphasis on porcine epidemic diarrhoea (with questionnaire)
 - II. Farm Food Safety in Thailand's Poultry Industry (without questionnaire)
 - III. Animal health situation of Member Countries for 2007
 - IV. Fourth OIE Strategic plan, Strengthening of Veterinary Services
 - V. Other matters:
 - Presentations by international or regional organisations
 - Activities of the OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific
 - Activities of the Foot and Mouth Disease Sub-Commission
 - Updated information on aquatic animal health activities by the OIE
 - Miscellaneous presentations
- Date, venue and agenda items for the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania



**25th Conference of the
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Timetable

Monday 26 November 2007

7.00 pm - Cocktail hour and welcome to Queenstown

Tuesday 27 November 2007

8.30 am Registration and distribution of documents

9.00 am Opening Ceremony

- Dr Gardner Murray, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania
- Dr Teruhide Fujita, OIE regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific
- Dr Barry O'Neil, OIE Delegate for New Zealand and President of the OIE International Committee
- Dr Bernard Vallat, OIE Director General
- Minister of Agriculture of New Zealand

Break

10.30 am Election of the Conference Committee (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and rapporteur General)

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

Election of Session Chairpersons and Rapporteurs for Technical Items and Animal Health Situation

11.00 am **Animal health situation of Member Countries during the first semester of 2007-
Implementation of the OIE WAHIS System (Dr Karim Ben Jebara)**

12.00 pm Activities of the Foot and Mouth Disease Sub-Commission and of the SEAFMD Campaign and the AusAID project for Strengthening Veterinary Services in South East Asia (Dr Ronello Abila)

12.30 pm Lunch

2.00 pm **Technical Item I: Emerging and Re-emerging Diseases in the Region with special emphasis on Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea (Dr Reildrin Morales)**

- 3.30 pm Break
- 4.00 pm Activities of the OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific (Dr Teruhide Fujita)
- 4.30 pm OIE Rinderpest accreditation scheme- Situation in Asia (Dr Dewan Sibartie)
- 5.00 pm FAO/OIE Collaboration in animal diseases control during the past two years in the region (Dr Joseph Domenech)
- 5.20 pm End of Session
(Preparation of recommendation for Item 1 by designated small group)
- 6.30 pm Depart for reception given by the Government of New Zealand
- 7.00 pm Reception given by the Government of New Zealand

Wednesday 28 November 2007

- 9.00 am **Technical Item II: Poultry production food safety in Asia**
(Dr Kanarat Sasitorn)
- 10.30 am Break
- 11.00 am Fourth OIE Strategic Plan, Strengthening of Veterinary services and Capacity Building: Asian experience with the PVS Instrument (Dr Bernard Vallat)
- 12.00 am * Activities of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania
* Application of the Australian Animal Health Laboratory to become an OIE Collaborating Centre for Laboratory Enhancement (Dr Gardner Murray)
- 12.30 pm Lunch
Preparation of recommendation for Item II by designated small group
- 2.00 pm Aquatic Animal Health: An update (Dr Eva-Maria Bernoth)
- 2.20 pm Activities of the OIE Animal Welfare Working Group (Dr David Bayvel)
- 2.35 pm Animal Welfare: European perspectives and expectations (Dr Andrea Gavinelli)
- 3.05 pm Update on the activities of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Dr Alex Thiermann)
- 3.35 pm Break
- 4.05 pm Presentations by other international and regional organisations
- 5.00 pm Discussions of Recommendations Nos 1 and 2
- 5.30 pm Date, venue and agenda items for the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania
- 7.00 pm Reception given by the OIE

Thursday 29 November 2007

8.00 am Field trip

Friday 30 November 2007

9.00 am Adoption of the draft Final Report and Recommendations

10.30 am Break

11.00 am Closing Ceremony



**25th Conference of the
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Recommendation No. 1

**Emerging and Re-emerging Diseases in the Region with special emphasis on
Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea**

CONSIDERING THAT

A number of emerging and re-emerging animal diseases such as porcine epidemic diarrhoea (PED) and porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) are becoming increasingly important in the region,

The causes of newly observed diseases of pigs are complex and multifactorial,

Porcine epidemic diarrhoea has been reported in several countries of the region and is responsible for significant economic losses to farmers,

It is not certain that porcine epidemic diarrhoea meets the criteria to be considered an OIE listed disease,

Vaccination of piglets against PED in the region does not seem to be cost effective,

Many emerging and re-emerging animal diseases seem to have entered the region through importation of breeding animals,

Not all countries of the region regularly report emerging and listed diseases to the OIE.

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA, THE FAR EAST AND OCEANIA
RECOMMENDS THAT

1. Veterinary Services of the region encourage studies and research to determine the nature of the agent, spread and economic impact of emerging and re-emerging animal diseases such as PED and PRRS;
2. The OIE examine the possibility of recognising an OIE Reference Laboratory or Collaborating Centre for emerging and re-emerging diseases of swine in the region rapidly. In the meantime, consideration should be given by existing relevant OIE Reference Laboratories to assist countries of the region in the diagnosis of these diseases and also to undertake research in vaccines with the aim of producing more robust and cost-effective vaccines;

3. Veterinary Services carry out appropriate import risk analyses in order to ensure that all necessary precautions are taken by importing countries and territories especially those free from PED and PRRS when importing live animals and animal commodities from PED and PRRS infected countries and territories;
4. Veterinary Services of the region commit themselves in accordance with their obligations as Members to implement the new World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) of the OIE and to report listed and emerging and re-emerging diseases of swine to the OIE in a timely manner;
5. OIE consider developing guidelines on good husbandry and biosecurity practices to guard against multifactorial pig diseases in the region.



**25th Conference of the
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Recommendation No. 2

Poultry production food safety in Asia

CONSIDERING THAT

Consumers worldwide have become more sensitive to policies governing the microbiological and toxicological safety of food of animal origin,

Poultry production food safety is an essential prerequisite to ensure consumer confidence,

Veterinary Services and other stake holders are conscious that the health of animals during the production stage has an important bearing on food safety,

An effective mechanism to ensure poultry production food safety should include training of farmers, farm personnel and veterinarians and ensure that appropriate diagnostic facilities including laboratory tests are available. Such training would have applicability to other animal production systems,

Appropriate legislation and enforcement mechanisms regarding food safety including poultry disease surveillance, monitoring and traceability do not exist in many countries of the region.

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA, THE FAR EAST AND OCEANIA
RECOMMENDS THAT

2. The OIE pursue its efforts in establishing standards and guidelines on animal production food safety;
3. The OIE in collaboration with its Collaborating Centres, Reference Laboratories and other relevant organisations such as FAO, organise or co-organise training programmes for the personnel of Veterinary Services involved in relevant food safety activities. Such training should cover the nature of food safety systems, risk analyses, surveillance, emergency management, compartmentalisation, monitoring and traceability mechanisms throughout the production chain;
4. The OIE in collaboration with other international organisations assist developing countries of the region in upgrading their laboratories for surveillance and monitoring of animal production food safety including training of laboratory staff on analytical techniques and good laboratory practices;

5. Veterinary Services of the region become more involved in animal production food safety issues including good practices particularly in farms and slaughter houses to reduce the risk from pathogens, toxins, residues or other contaminants to support the production to safe food;
6. Veterinary Services organise training programmes for farmers, para-professionals and veterinarians on good agricultural and hygienic practices in farms and food processing plants;
7. Members adopt and enforce appropriate legislation in accordance with OIE guidelines to ensure that necessary controls are implemented at the various stages along the animal food production chain to ensure that farm and processing plant practices do not have an adverse effect on food safety.



**25th Conference of the
OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania
Queenstown (New Zealand), 26-30 November 2007**

PRESS RELEASE

30 November 2007

The 25th Conference of the Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) was held in Queenstown, (New Zealand) from 27 to 30 November 2007.

The Conference was chaired by Dr Barry O'Neil, the OIE Delegate for New Zealand and President of the OIE International Committee. Honourable Jim Anderton, Minister for Biosecurity and Agriculture of New Zealand, Dr Bernard Vallat, the Director General of the OIE, Delegates of OIE Members, representatives of international and regional organisations and observers attended the Conference.

In his welcome address, Dr Barry O'Neil stated that it was a great personal satisfaction for him as President of the OIE International Committee to host the Regional Conference in his country. He emphasised the importance of countries working together to stop serious animal diseases from spreading in the region and the rest of the world and commended South East Asian countries on their goal to eliminate foot and mouth disease from their region by 2020.

The Minister for Biosecurity and Agriculture of New Zealand commended the role of the OIE in the international control of animal diseases and the facilitation of international trade of animals and animal products and thanked the OIE for the support provided to countries of the region. Acknowledging the significant achievements of the OIE over the years, he said: "*the success of New Zealand and that of the OIE are linked as New Zealand shares the OIE objectives relating to transparency, scientific information, international solidarity and the promotion of Veterinary Services, food safety and animal welfare*".

Two technical items were discussed during the Conference namely:

Emerging and re-emerging animal diseases in the region with special emphasis on porcine epidemic diarrhoea.

Poultry production food safety in Asia.

Addressing the issue of infectious diseases including those transmissible to humans, Dr Vallat reminded that more than 75% of human diseases recorded over the past two decades have been traced to an animal source. He added that "*Members of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania have by far the largest livestock population of the world and with the lives of millions of farmers and poor livestock keepers being so intimately linked with those of their livestock, there is every reason to be vigilant about animal diseases. Prevention and control of animal diseases are key policies for poverty alleviation*". Dr Vallat commented on the frontline role played by Veterinary Services in the control of animal diseases which are likely to become more frequent due to climate change and globalisation of the movements of goods and services.

The OIE Regional Commission expressed its gratitude to the support provided by the OIE to Members of the Region and strongly supported the actions being undertaken by the OIE to promote the control of animal diseases and zoonoses world-wide and in the region.

Dr Bernard Vallat, warmly thanked the Government of New Zealand for kindly hosting and supporting the Regional Conference and all participants for their valuable contributions to the outcome of the conference.

All recommendations adopted by the conference will be submitted for consideration and adoption during the next OIE General Assembly, in May 2008.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), created in 1924 under its initial name "Office International des Epizooties", is one of the oldest international organisations and, with its 172 Members, is one of the most representative intergovernmental organisations.

Present on all five continents through its 9 Regional and Sub-Regional Representations, its 200 Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres, the OIE oversees animal health and surveillance in the world and plays a key role in scientific research and the dissemination of veterinary information.

The close relationship between animal health and animal welfare has prompted the OIE to play a key role as the leading international organisation for animal welfare and elaborates specific recommendations and guidelines on relevant subjects.

Operating at the interface between animal and human health, the OIE works in close collaboration with other agencies supporting and financing the fight against animal diseases and helps its Members to prevent, control and eradicate those diseases.

In its capacity as the international reference organisation for animal diseases, including zoonoses, the OIE also elaborates sanitary standards that safeguard the world trade in animals and animal products within the framework of the WTO SPS Agreement.

The OIE is also a key partner of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in the field of prevention and release of farm animal pathogens and contaminants of importance to food safety.



MOTION OF THANKS

The President and the members of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, the Director General of the OIE, the President of the International Committee of the OIE, members of delegations, country representatives, representatives of international and regional organisations and observers, wish to express their gratitude to the Government of New Zealand, the Host Country of the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission, held from 26 to 30 November 2007, for the excellent welcome accorded to the participants and for all facilities made available to them during their stay in Queenstown.