



International Ministerial Conference on Animal and Pandemic Influenza 2010, Hanoi

Moving towards One Health

Government officials and global organizations meet again to strategize against HPAI and other animal diseases

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THERE HAVE ALREADY BEEN SEVEN MEETINGS

as part of this growing global dialogue, the first of them in Washington DC, USA, in 2005. The International Ministerial Conference on Animal and Pandemic Influenza (IMCAPI) held from April 19 to 21 in Hanoi this year was the eighth time that high level government of-

officials and international organizations convened to discuss highly pathogenic avian influenza, animal influenzas and other Emerging Infectious Diseases (EIDs), to plot a way forward. At each of these conferences, custodians of global health have reviewed and grappled with the dimensions and the ramifications of these infectious diseases, and agreed on strategies and measures to address its challenges.

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Flight Control

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it a remote-controlled duck? The Ruddy Shelduck in the picture below is one of several that are participating in a novel tracking experiment in Bangladesh. For more details, see the back page.



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the light of the pandemic H1N1/2009 influenza virus first detected in North America in March-April 2009, additional aspects of preparedness and response to a more virulent human influenza virus were tabled.

IMCAPI was preceded by three meetings: a *Technical discussion on best practices for Prevention and Containment of H5N1 HPAI* organized by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in March at Bali, Indonesia (see report on page 3); and two more meetings in mid-April, one organized by the World Bank in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, and an IMCAPI technical pre-meeting organized by the United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC) in Hanoi.

Ash cloud

The ash cloud from Iceland’s Eyjafjallajökull volcano and the closure of much of northern Europe’s airspace curtailed the participation of several international leaders in the realm of infectious diseases and country representations. Mr. Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific of



The conclusions of the conference highlighted the need to move beyond disciplinary insularity if the One Health approach was to be successful.

the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) headed the FAO delegation comprising Mr Juan Lubroth, Chief, Animal Health Service of FAO (AGAH) and Chief Veterinary Officer of ECTAD, FAO Headquarters in Rome; Mr Dominique Burgeon, Senior Adviser, Office of the Deputy Director-General (Operations); the ECTAD country team in Vietnam; FAO’s erstwhile Vietnam Representative Mr Andrew Speedy; and Mr Subhash Morzaria, FAO ECTAD Regional Manager.

IMCAPI focused on three major issues: the status and response to H5N1 avian influenza; the status and response to pandemic H1N1/2009 influenza and lessons learned; and an overall encompassing focus on the *One Health* global agenda promoted by FAO, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), UNSIC and the World Bank (WB) with regard to infectious diseases at the animal-human-ecosystems interface. FAO’s attention was principally on the body of work in the progressive control of H5N1 in poultry and on the need to address the *One Health* agenda.

and capacity built for surveillance, early detection and response to known or novel pathogens without losing focus on ongoing H5N1 incidence. The *One Health* approach was generally embraced by the attendees, highlighting the importance of strengthening partnerships and intersectoral cooperation.

Some of the challenges addressed included ensuring that support for H5N1 HPAI control is part of a more holistic approach, and required that funding be maintained and expanded to meet country, regional and global needs. There was a call for equitable access to resources in the least resourced countries and a mechanism for sustained funding for such a global public good (strengthened animal health and public health systems).

The need to move beyond disciplinary insularity was noted if a *One Health* approach was to be successful, including broadening the scope beyond the Ministries of Agriculture and Health to include also Ministries of Environment or Natural Resources.

Greatly needed now are leadership, legislation, transparent policies and strategies, and plans backed by institutional processes at the national and sub-national levels. These must be multi-disciplinary, integrating policy dialogue, capacity building and empowerment to accelerate poverty reduction and supporting the most vulnerable and marginalized groups .

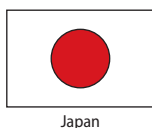
One Health

The conference noted that the gains achieved both in reducing the number of H5N1 outbreaks in poultry and number of affected countries now need to go beyond H5N1. Systems need to be strengthened

A Point of Honour

FAO Myanmar’s Avian Influenza program was recently honoured for excellence with an award. Mr. Murray Maclean, Chief Technical Adviser, Myanmar, received the award (above) from the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Myanmar.

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Bali to the fore

Proven and promising practices in the fight against H5N1 HPAI are shared by key USAID partners

Technical Discussion on Best Practices for Prevention and Containment of H5N1 HPAI

Bali, Indonesia, 29 March – 1 April 2010

As part of its preparations for IMCAPI in Hanoi, USAID held a round of technical consultations with its key partners and stakeholders on the key issues that needed to be addressed for the major H5N1 HPAI endemic countries.

During the two-day meeting, countries shared information on their best practices and selected best practices from other countries which they found promising. For instance, Bangladesh, the only endemic country that does not use vaccination, expressed interest in Indonesia's Participatory Disease Surveillance and Response (PDSR) approach.



ECTAD-RAP Epidemiological Consortium Meeting

Bangkok, Thailand, 4-5 March 2010

The first Epidemiology Consortium was formed by FAO in 2004, as part of its work in strengthening the epidemiology network within Southeast Asia. The additional stakeholders and players involved plus the changes that have occurred in the field of epidemiology in the past six years justified a meeting to revitalize the consortium.

The key objectives were to discuss future collaborations in three interrelated thematic issues: capacity building; information sharing; and knowledge identification and utilization. Participants were mainly from 13 national research agencies, universities and academic institutions as well as international organizations including FAO, OIE, the International Livestock Research Institute, USAID, USCDC, Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Australia; Murdoch University; the University of Colorado; the Royal Veterinary College, London; the Free University of Brussels; and the Instituto

REGIONAL UPDATE

Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie in Padova, Italy. The participants have all agreed to the consortium.

The meeting developed a collaborative framework for the regional epidemiology activities agreed upon by all participants and which is now being elaborated by specific working groups. The participants agreed that FAO should play a coordinative role as the secretariat for the epidemiology consortium.

In-country trainings on the surveillance of animal influenzas

These trainings were envisaged under the work plan of the *Emergency assistance for surveillance on novel influenza A subtype H1N1 viruses in pig and poultry production sectors in high risk Southeast Asian countries*. The objectives were to strengthen regional capacity to implement harmonized surveillance protocols for animal influenza, and to assist in developing a surveillance and implementation plan. Training was conducted in five countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including Thailand, Philippines, Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Malaysia.

The trainings, which were for field and central level staff who are directly involved in the surveillance of animal influenza, included people who collect samples and data in the field and submit them

Celebrating Staff Day in style

FAO ECTAD Indonesia celebrated Staff Day at Cibodas Botanical Gardens outside Jakarta (below). Some of ECTAD-RAP's Bangkok belles line up (left) as part of the ECTAD celebrations in the land of smiles.



World Bank



The Netherlands



China



European Commission



New Zealand



Ireland



France

for management and analysis. Overall, the project has trained 77 officers from provincial, regional and central levels.

Inception Meeting for the Regional Risk Assessment of HPAI in South and Southeast Asia: A Socio-Economic Perspective

Bangkok, Thailand, 28-29 April 2010

The workshop aimed to characterize cross-border areas at potential high risk of HPAI in South and Southeast Asia based on an integrated analysis of epidemiological and socioeconomic risk indicators as part of a semi-quantitative risk assessment. The goal was to help design risk-mitigation strategies for the control of HPAI in cross-border areas using a multi-disciplinary approach.

There were 29 participants from nine countries, NGOs, FAO ECTAD-RAP and country teams. The workshop produced a mapping list of cross-border areas at high risk of spread of HPAI in the region and a short list of priority areas.

Strong collaboration has been developed with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and ASEAN, who support FAO's efforts in veterinary laws and legislations.

2010 Cohort of the Regional FETPV

The 2010 cohort for FETPV among veterinarians will be initiated soon, and will include joint training for the two-year programme, including the initial training over a nine-week period. Five veterinarians, three from Thailand and one each from Myanmar and China will join ten health officers at the Ministry of Public Health. At least half their initial training will be from the human health perspective. DLD and ECTAD-RAP staff will be visiting these trainees in their countries to mentor them in establishing their various field projects.

The regional Field Epidemiology Training Program for Veterinarians (FETPV), began in September 2008 through a formal collaboration between FAO and Thailand's Department of Livestock Development (DLD), and enlisted its first cohort of six trainees in June 2009. Lessons from the previous year's training are being applied to continually improve the FETPV training curriculum. **For information, contact wantane.kalpravidh@fao.org or david.castellan@fao.org.**

One for the birds

An ambitious experiment in tracking wild migratory birds took off in Bangladesh this March



Md Anwarul Islam, CEO of the Wildlife Trust Bangladesh releases a Northern Shoveler after it has been fitted with a satellite transmitter. Photo: Samia Saif

Do Asian waterbirds that winter in Bangladesh's wetlands help spread H5N1 HPAI when they migrate? To find out, in early March this year, a diverse team of researchers began implementing a programme led by the Wildlife Trust New York and FAO to monitor the movements of migratory waterbirds in and out of Bangladesh. Tens of thousands of these birds, representing over 260 species, are attracted to the wetland habitats offered by the tributaries of the Ganges and other river systems in Bangladesh, one of the four countries where HPAI remains entrenched.

"Outbreaks due to avian influenza are most often associated with poor biosecurity in poultry production and trade, but we recognize that wild birds play a role in the ecology of this disease," says Dr. Scott Newman, Wildlife Unit Coordinator with the FAO Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) for transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases.

To flag off this research, wild ducks were captured, sampled for influenza viruses and then released after being fitted with satellite transmitters that pinpoint their exact location every two hours.

Researchers will map their routes as they migrate north over the Himalayas and on their return to Bangladesh later in the year. This will help identify stopovers or breeding grounds within the Central Asian Flyway, and help ascertain if wild birds are the link between locations and countries that have had avian influenza outbreaks.

Sixteen ducks (the Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*; the Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata*; and Garganey *Anas querquedula*) were harnessed with satellite transmitters and released. The international team also tagged birds in Hakaluki Haor in northeastern of Bangladesh.

The project is supported by the Bangladesh Forest Department, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Livestock Services, Bangladesh. Project partners include the Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Bird Club, the Bombay Natural History Society, the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh, the Wildlife Trust of New York, Wetlands International, the United States Geological Survey, Western Ecological Research Center, FAO Bangladesh and Rome, and ECTAD-RAP.