BRIDGING THE DIVIDE BETWEEN TWO BONA FIDE GUARDIANS OF SOCIETY’S INTERESTS: THE DISEASE EXTERMINATORS AND THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH ADVOCATES

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Clearly society must have, and indeed needs, the “we-must-control-FMD-at-all-cost” community in the world; that is how targeted disease-specific actions raise the probability of impact in their field. Society also needs the development and livelihoods perspective on FMD (often based on economic reasoning) that advises the world where (or where not) to invest and which highlights the tradeoffs between scarce resources and unlimited societal wants. Moreover, when it comes to “poverty reduction”, the war cry of national and international development agencies, the jury is still out on the ranking and merits of FMD control. Even within the broader concept of sustainable and inclusive growth (formerly called pro-poor growth), the world presents a patchwork of various regional and production system contexts in which FMD control may or may not be a priority. We would thus argue that the sustainable control and prioritization of FMD investment necessitates that the “disease exterminators” (possibly the bulk of attendees at this meeting) seek an enhanced understanding of the multidimensional implications of controlling, eradicating or reducing the impacts of FMD in different settings. We further suggest that much stronger mechanisms of communication and partnership are required between the disease exterminators and the development and livelihood economists if society is to optimise their invaluable contributions.