

**INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE ON ANIMAL GENETIC
RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE**

Interlaken, Switzerland, 3–7 September 2007

**The Impact of Zoo-sanitary Measures in International Trade on Animal Genetic
Diversity**

Side Event

Wednesday, 5 September, 13.15–14.45 Room Grimsel

R e p o r t

Goal of the Side-Event of the Interlaken Conference and the FAO Mandate

The goal of the side-event was to get feedback from experts and a dedicated audience on the draft study on the Impact of zoo-sanitary measures in international trade on diversity in animal genetic resources for food and agriculture (AnGRFA). The comments received during the side-event will be incorporated into the final study. The World Trade Institute of the University of Berne was commissioned to the by FAO to conduct this study. The FAO mandate was:

- 1) to analyse and assess the impact of international regimes and policies to protect human and animal health on animal genetic diversity, and
- 2) to elaborate recommendations regarding this interface, and
- 3) to evaluate the results at a side-event of the Interlaken Conference.

Programme of the Side-Event

The programme of the side-event consisted of a short presentation of the essential questions and results, followed by statements by the panellists, and finally by statements from the floor.

Participants in the Side-Event

- ◇ Besbes Badi, Animal Production Service (AGAP), FAO
- ◇ Susette Biber-Klemm, World Trade Institute
- ◇ Willem Droppers, World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)
- ◇ Nitya Ghotge, ANTHRA, India
- ◇ Vanida Khuminrdpetch, Animal Husbandry Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand

- ◇ Kai-Uwe Sprenger, Health and Consumer Protection Directorate-General, European Commission

Two invited panellists were unable to attend the side-event and sent their apologies, namely Jürg Rüfenacht from the Swiss Veterinary Office and François Pythoud from the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture.

Terms of Reference for Panellists

The panellists had been requested to comment on the draft study and in particular on the conclusions and recommendations which were handed out as separate briefing papers. The recommendations were the following:

1. *Information and capacity-building on measures for the conservation of AnGRFA in both the member countries and the OIE institutions.*
 - Integrate AnGRFA diversity issues into the OIE guidelines and recommendations.
 - Explore options to incorporate AnGRFA expertise into Codex and OIE commissions.
 - Create a joint ad-hoc group on AnGRFA diversity, animal health and food safety.
2. *Elaboration of emergency, containment and prevention strategies and plans.*
 - Elaborate the relevant background information and prepare the necessary infrastructure for the conservation of AnGRFA.
 - Initiate and promote capacity-building on the level of the national administration, in particular of the veterinary services.
 - Create instruments for funding and technology transfer sustained by the international community.
3. *Indirect impacts of standards regarding international trade in products*
 - Investigate options and means to expand the remaining room for manoeuvre.
 - Investigate whether there are synergies between the pro-poor livestock development and the diversity arguments.
4. *Direct and indirect impacts of emergency measures, and indirect impacts of measures for containment and prevention on smallholders.*
 - Evaluate and investigate the optimal application of the measures recommended on small livestock keepers.

Side-Event Proceedings

Susette Biber-Klemm introduced the draft study on the impact of international regimes for animal health and food safety on the diversity of animal genetic resources for Food and Agriculture (AnGRFA). As a basic assumption, Susette Biber-Klemm pointed out that due to increasing movements of animals and animal products, risks to animal and human life and health are growing. However, the resulting rise of risk prevention measures calls for impact mitigation. The organisations which address risk prevention issues are the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) with standards for animal health and the Codex Alimentarius

Commission (CAC) with standards for food safety. Susette Biber-Klemm invoked the example of foot and mouth disease (FMD) to show the direct and indirect impacts of risk prevention measures. She concluded that information and capacity-building are both needed to mitigate the impacts of emergency measures. Strategies to conserve AnGRFA diversity are also needed.

Besbes Badi invoked the case of HPAI H5N1 and the new project Animal Health, Breeds and Livelihoods (AHBL) of the FAO. Besbes Badi explained the triangle between zoo-sanitary measures, the industrial sector, and backyard systems with smallholders and local populations of AnGRFA. Besbes Badi identified knowledge gaps as barriers to addressing backyard poultry production systems. These knowledge gaps consist of inadequate information about the types of production practices, the roles of poultry production in family strategies, and the question how to provide veterinary inputs and services to backyard poultry production systems. Whereas in the past these difficulties could have been ignored, the emergence of HPAI H5N1 amplifies the need for a change in attitude. Therefore, the AHBL project adopts a holistic approach, taking into account poultry health, poultry breed diversity and production practices and the role of poultry in family livelihoods. Besbes Badi explained the main steps of the AHBL project as follows: develop appropriate disease control policies to address animal health issues, propose strategies for considering genetic diversity in backyard poultry systems in transboundary disease control measures, including HPAI, and evaluate the role of poultry in the livelihoods of poor people.

Vanida Khuminrdpetch questioned the initial assumption that trade in animal products is intrinsically risky, but agreed on the finding of the study that the issue of genetic diversity in current legal regimes addressing zoo-sanitary measures is missing. Vanida Khuminrdpetch raised the criticism that in current legal regimes addressing zoo-sanitary measures the focus is biased towards the import side and asked whether there is equal treatment in the current system. Vanida Khuminrdpetch discussed the need for integrating non-industrial production, especially backyard poultry production systems, into the legal regimes of zoo-sanitary measures.

Kai-Uwe Sprenger explained that lower standards and higher risks are inversely proportional, *i.e.*, the lower the standard, the higher the risks. Considering the conclusions and recommendations from the draft study, Kai-Uwe Sprenger took the view that one has to prepare for emergencies before they occur. Kai-Uwe Sprenger concluded that there should be no trade-off between the different interests in the triangle mentioned by Besbes Badi. By this he meant that the interests of industrial production systems, the interests of backyard production systems and the conservation of populations of wild birds should not be seen as mutually exclusive. All three elements should be addressed in an integrated framework of zoo-sanitary measures.

Nitya Ghotge started with the fact that animal diseases were part of livestock production everywhere and all the time. Also, trade in animals and animal products is not a new phenomenon. In contrast to the currently predominant perception, Nitya Ghotge added, it was the developing countries (DCs) of today which fell prey to many diseases and illnesses during colonial times. Nitya Ghotge identified privatisation of public veterinary services in the 1980s and 1990s as one reason for the worsening of the animal health situation, in particular in DCs and LDCs. Another reason for the problems DCs are facing today when confronted with zoo-sanitary issues is that these measures are becoming more and more stringent. The fact that the level of zoo-sanitary prevention is rising can also be observed in cases where a disease is not a new phenomenon. As an example, Nitya Ghotge pointed out that in more and more cases,

vaccination is not accepted by zoo-sanitary regulations without the risk of hampering exports of animal products. In sum, Nitya Ghotge observed a push towards a system of tight zoo-sanitary regulations which is not acceptable especially for the poor people in DCs, *e.g.*, poor people with backyard chicken production systems.

Willem Droppers explained the different roles of the international organisations regarding zoo-sanitary measures. The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) addresses animal health and food safety issues at the farm level whereas the Codex Alimentarius Commission addresses food safety issues after the (animal) products have left the farm. Addressing the issue of backyard poultry production systems in particular, Willem Droppers noted that the OIE does not have a mandate to address the problem of AnGR diversity, but that through the OIE's disease prevention measures backyard poultry production systems would also profit. Willem Droppers disagreed with the statement of Nitya Ghotge insofar that according to OIE, vaccination of rare breeds was not forbidden. Willem Droppers criticised the draft study. In particular, he expressed his view that zoo-sanitary measures were not aimed at serving the interests of rich countries only. Considering the recommendations addressing smallholder livestock production systems, Willem Droppers warned of "underground farming". Addressing the issue of capacity-building, Willem Droppers observed that the OIE has established a capacity-building programme. In response to the recommendations of a joint ad-hoc group on AnGRFA diversity, Willem Droppers was of the view that this would be a very difficult task. Duplicated decision-making processes in OIE and Codex have proven to be very difficult.

In the **discussion** that followed, representative of DCs supported the statements of Vanida Khuminrdpetch and Nitya Ghotge. Discussants stressed the importance of backyard poultry production systems for the livelihood of poor people in DCs. Discussants also stressed the relationship between budgetary constraints in DCs and increasing zoo-sanitary requirements. In particular, it was emphasised that the specific situation of small island developing countries had not been sufficiently reflected. Addressing the threat of HPAI H5N1 in particular, discussants noted the open question of how backyard chicken populations were meant to be replaced after the culling of infected flocks. Whether replacement should be with imported hybrid chickens or by local breeds was not considered to be only a question of refunding, but also one of in-situ-conservation of AnGRFA diversity.

Susette Biber-Klemm summarised the statements of the panellist and the discussion by highlighting the following points:

- ◇ Disease outbreaks affect whole societies and not only distinguishable segments thereof.
- ◇ There should be no trade-off between the different interests in the triangle of the industrial sector, the backyard production systems and zoo-sanitary measures.
- ◇ There is a link between privatisation policies and poor veterinary and health service systems in DCs.
- ◇ The current OIE mandate does not include measures directly aimed at enhancing AnGRFA diversity.