



**REMESA 2012, Joint
Presidency France - Morocco**

**6th Meeting of the Joint Permanent Committee
Montpellier, France, 12 and 13 November 2012**

Summary of conclusions

Subject	Decision	Implementation
<u>Reminder:</u> validation of JPC meeting reports	Meeting reports to be considered validated 30 days after distribution of the draft text for comment.	REMESA Secretariat (OIE Tunis)
Animal health activities in the region	Prepare a table summarising all the cooperative and collaborative actions on animal health.	FAO, OIE and member countries
REMESA Cooperation Framework	Validation during the session of modifications proposed by the CVOs of France, Morocco and Spain, and signing of the Cooperation Framework. The document, duly validated and signed, will be sent to the member countries after it has been signed by the CVO of Italy (not present at the JPC meeting in Montpellier).	French Joint Presidency and OIE Tunis
Mediterranean animal health meeting – role of farmers in the health agenda	The participants approved the proposal (without validating a specific timetable at this stage).	Franco-Moroccan Joint Presidency
Next stage (after the signing of the Cooperation Framework)	Prepare the continuation and further development of concrete operational actions. Define a work programme for the next 3 or 4 years.	FAO, OIE and member countries
REMESA enlargement	Inclusion of Cyprus, Greece and Malta, subject to their making an official application.	Member countries
Dates and venue for the 7th JPC meeting	Thursday 4th and Friday 5th April 2013, in Portugal (Algarve, to be confirmed).	Joint Presidency, with the REMESA secretariat

The 6th Meeting of the Joint Permanent Committee of REMESA was held in Montpellier, France, on 12 and 13 November 2012. The Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) and representatives of the 10 member countries of REMESA, the representatives of the European Commission (EC), FAO and the OIE participated in the meeting, which was co-chaired by France and Morocco (Co-Presidency of REMESA in 2012). The CVO of Malta and the representative of the CVO of Cyprus participated as observers. Greece, which had also been invited, was unable to attend. The Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) did not reply to the invitation (see attached list of participants).

After having welcomed and thanked all the participants for attending the meeting, the Regional Director of CIRAD, in his opening address, pointed out that CIRAD had been strategically located on the Mediterranean at the request of the French Government but also because of the important challenges facing the Mediterranean region (animal health being one of the 5 major topics highlighted in CIRAD's strategic policy directions in the Mediterranean). Before giving the floor to the CVO of Morocco for his opening remarks, the CVO of France underlined the relationship of trust that had developed between the 10 member countries of REMESA, which was helping to strengthen the fight against animal diseases in the region and encourage the development of trade in animals and animal products. He also pointed out that REMESA was a follow-up to the initiative launched during the French Presidency of the European Union in 2008 (REMSA). The CVO of Morocco welcomed the forthcoming signing of the Cooperation Framework, and the representatives of

the OIE and FAO in turn reaffirmed the commitment of their respective institutions to the proper functioning and success of REMESA.

The proceedings then began with the approval of the agenda. The programme was based around the topics described below (the PowerPoint presentations are available online at <http://www.remesanetwork.org>).

Animal health situation in the region:

The CVOs of member countries and the representatives of Cyprus and Malta reported on their country's animal health situation, and in particular with regard to peste des petits ruminants (PPR), rabies, bluetongue, West Nile fever, foot and mouth disease (FMD), Rift Valley fever (RVF), SBV (Schmallenberg virus), equine infectious anaemia, brucellosis (*B. abortus* and *B. melitensis*) and anthrax. OIE Tunis then summarised the animal health situation in the region and reported on changes in the worldwide distribution of PPR and the distribution of FMD by serotype, both globally and in Africa (see PowerPoint presentation). The two major current concerns in the region were the persistence of FMD in Libya and the resurgence of RVF in Mauritania (19 deaths having been notified in the previous 2 months, based on information provided by the Mauritanian CVO). On the subject of FMD, FAO Tunis presented the results of a mission conducted in Libya by the FAO/OIE Crisis Management Centre – Animal Health (CMC-AH) in May 2012. The recommendations of the Global Conference (Bangkok, June 2012) and the conclusions of the sub-regional meeting at UMA Headquarters (Rabat, July 2012) were also mentioned. The French CVO also informed his counterparts that France would soon be recovering its “bluetongue free status”.

Plan for a Mediterranean animal health meeting:

The possibility of a Mediterranean animal health meeting on the role of farmers in the health agenda was proposed by the Franco-Moroccan Joint Presidency and was welcomed and approved by all the participants (without any specific timetable being validated at this stage).

Signing of a Cooperation Framework for the creation and development of REMESA:

The finalised version of the Cooperation Framework was presented during the session and underwent minor amendments before being validated by all the members. This final working session on the subject culminated in the Cooperation Framework being signed at a specially arranged ceremony prior to the official dinner offered by France. The Cooperation Framework having been duly validated and signed (the framework defines the operating rules of REMESA), all the CVOs of the network called for concrete operational actions in the region to be continued and further developed.

FAO – OIE activities: cooperation projects and twinning in the region:

The OIE and FAO explained their respective activity reports and action plans. The latter were validated by the members of REMESA (see PowerPoint presentations). The action plan for the following 6 months included implementation of the RVF project by FAO and the OIE, continuation of the sub-regions' activities and organisation of the closing meeting of the OIE regional programme of collaboration between Algeria, Lebanon, Italy and Tunisia, due to be held in Tunis at the beginning of 2013.

Among the various interventions by CVOs regarding cooperation projects in the region, there was unanimous interest in the elaboration and regular updating of a table summarising all the actions and collaborative work on animal health in the REMESA zone (proposal by FAO Tunis). Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia reported on their progress made on the OIE PVS Pathway. On the subject of European twinning arrangements, Tunisia expressed its

satisfaction regarding implementation of twinning with CNVZ¹ (partnership with France, Italy and Spain) and the Algerian CVO indicated that two twinning projects had been planned in Algeria (implementation of quality assurance; residue monitoring). With regard to regional coordination, Egypt emphasised the importance of sharing the results of FMD and PPR surveillance and confirmed the country's favourable RVF status (analysis of 4000 to 5000 samples per year). The Libyan CVO expressed interest in a harmonised regional strategy on PPR prevention and control. He also agreed to FAO provision of support on communication. France reiterated its financial and technical support for REMESA and mentioned the partnerships and collaborative activities underway with Tunisia (European twinning with CNVZ), Morocco (training of official veterinarians, regular cooperation activities between ONSSA² and DGAL³, OIE twinning between the pharmaceutical firm Biopharma and CIRAD on PPR) and Algeria (EC DIVECO project – economic diversification in the agricultural sector). The French CVO, in collaboration with his Spanish counterpart, also indicated that EuFMD⁴ support for REMESA on FMD had been decided upon at the last meeting of the EuFMD Executive Committee, held in Pirbright, United Kingdom. The CVO of Morocco mentioned a large-scale survey on FMD (comprising nearly 8000 samples) being carried out within the framework of the country's application for official recognition as an FMD free country where vaccination is not practised. This survey could be associated with the regional study on FMD (by serological survey) proposed by ANSES⁵ in which Tunisia, Algeria and Mauritania were already participating. He also referred to training in communication for 300 veterinarians within the framework of a World Bank project funded by the EC, and stated that Morocco's communication plan was in the process of being finalised. Lastly, the CVO of Mauritania emphasised the requirements of CNERV⁶ in terms of technical support and recalled the prospect of an OIE twinning arrangement between CNERV and the OIE Collaborating Centre in Teramo, Italy.

Development and funding of REMESA:

Regarding the development and funding of REMESA, all the members agreed on the need to prepare a 3- or 4-year programme, which would provide greater visibility for potential donors and, following the signing of the Cooperation Framework, would enable REMESA to move forward to an operational phase. In this respect, the EC representative indicated that EC support could be envisaged for the funding of sub-network workshops or meetings and certain JPC meetings.

CaribVET network, Information system on animal mobility, Expertise on vectors:

The history, functioning, activities and future prospects of the Caribbean Animal Health Network, (CaribVET), covering 32 countries of the Caribbean, were then presented by CIRAD, which also put forward proposals for collaboration aimed at linking research and surveillance in the Mediterranean region (for example, improving and updating vector distribution maps, or developing new surveillance techniques in line with new diagnostic methods).

A proposal for an information system on animal mobility in the region, extending the work done by RESEPSA⁷ on the subject, was put forward by CIRAD. Only a modest tool had been produced so far; more extensive development would mean that it could meet medium- and long-term challenges while remaining a tool that all countries in the region could use. The question of determining the funding of this tool was not discussed.

¹ National Centre for Animal Health Surveillance, France

² National office for food sanitary safety, Morocco

³ Directorate General for Food, France

⁴ European Commission for the Control of Foot and Mouth Disease

⁵ French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety

⁶ National Centre for Livestock and Veterinary Research, France

⁷ Socio-Economy Network for Production and Animal Health

The CNEV (French national centre for expertise on vectors), which was set up as a result of an inventory of vector control in France in 2008, was then presented. This vector control consortium, officially set up in 2011, currently had 140 agents operating in France. The Director of the CNEV emphasised the importance of entomological reference collections for the control of vectors and the management of health risks. He said he would be in favour of REMESA countries reporting their vector collections on the Centre's portal, if they wished.

Summary of conclusions:

- The signing of the Cooperation Framework at the JPC meeting in Montpellier will lead to the definition of a clear strategy and an associated action plan;
- A table summarising the main actions and collaboration activities on animal health within the zone will be prepared for each JPC meeting;
- The example of CaribVET serves as a reminder of the importance of the concepts of time and of ownership by the member countries when setting up a regional network. Mutual trust and the exchange of information between member countries are crucial;
- The representative of the European Commission indicated that DG SANCO funding for certain OIE activities via the OIE World Animal Health and Welfare Fund might be used for forthcoming JPC meetings, probably for 2013 and possibly for 2014;
- This funding, in addition to possible support for targeted activities through the BTSF⁸ or TAIEX⁹ programmes, will help to ensure the implementation of animal health actions within the framework of REMESA, the viability of the REMESA Secretariat (managed by the OIE or FAO) already being ensured for several more years;
- REMESA will also be able to rely on existing structures for technical support: EuFMD, EFSA¹⁰, national agencies, etc.;
- With regard to the enlargement of the network, any applications from countries invited to the 6th JPC as observers (Cyprus, Greece and Malta) should be sent to the Co-Presidents of REMESA (CVOs of France and Morocco);
- Joint Presidency of REMESA for 2013 will be by Libya and Portugal;
- The next meeting of the JPC will be held on 4 and 5 April 2013 in Portugal (Algarve, to be confirmed).

Lastly, the two Co-Presidents, France and Morocco, thanked the REMESA Secretariat, CIRAD and FVI¹¹ for the organisation of the JPC meeting.

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Enclosures:

- Programme for the meeting
- List of participants
- Signed Cooperation Framework

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On behalf of the REMESA Secretariat
OIE Sub-Regional Representation for North Africa

⁸ Better Training for Safer Food (a European Commission training initiative)

⁹ Technical Assistance Information Exchange (short-term missions, seminars, workshops, technical training, etc.)

¹⁰ European Food Safety Authority

¹¹ *France vétérinaire internationale*