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Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
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Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная организация  
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las  
Naciones Unidas para la  
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة  
الغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE

### FORTIETH SESSION

**Budapest, Hungary, 27 and 28 September 2017**

### PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

#### *Opening of the Session*

- 1) Adoption of the agenda and timetable
- 2) Appointment of the Rapporteur

#### *Main theme: Effect of climate change on transboundary animal diseases (TADs)*

- 3) **The effect of climate change on animal diseases, trade and food security in the REU region**

The REU region spans an extremely large range of agro-ecological environments. Animal production systems occurring across this large area are similarly fairly diverse: from predominant intensive animal production in the North-West to much more extensive, even pastoralist, animal husbandry systems in the South-East. Extensive belts of zonal environments, such as semi-deserts, steppes, forest-steppes, forests and tundra, sharing similar climatic and animal production characteristics, stretch in longitudinal direction across Eurasia for thousands of kilometres. This significantly facilitates longitudinal spread of diseases through agro-ecologically similar settings. The most densely populated mid-latitudes of the area, bridging Asia and Europe, provide an “epidemiological Silk Road” for the spread of TADs in both directions. Middle latitudes of Eurasia experience complex climate change processes, whose effect on the epidemiology of animal diseases needs to be carefully re-analyzed and monitored in future in order to anticipate emerging epidemiological threats to animal production.

One of the difficulties here is that the effects of climate change develop over large spatial scales and often accumulate over a period of time before their agro-ecological and epidemiological implications become apparent. Many of the recent epidemics or local flare ups of TADs (ASF, LSD, PPR, AI, rabies etc.) seem to have been preceded by certain changes in regional climate systems, modulating host or vector population dynamics and thus favouring elevated disease activity. Most visibly, variations in climate affect vector borne diseases such as Blue Tongue, West Nile Fever, Schmallenberg disease, Lumpy Skin Disease, Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic

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Fever and others. However, on the inter-annual and decadal scale climate also strongly modulates the dynamics of other diseases such as African Swine Fever, Avian Influenza and fox rabies, which are often actually considered largely climate irresponsive. This calls for a change in the way in which we perceive the problem of animal diseases towards accounting more and more for a broad environmental context of their epidemiology and expanding the range of disciplines and approaches likely to help (wildlife ecology, climatology, remote sensing, GIS, niche modelling etc.).

Session one will review these and other examples and case studies in order to identify climate-TADs related issues that need to be addressed scientifically and practically. Presentations and discussions will be held on if and how changes in climate and weather patterns have already affected disease occurrence rates and ranges, and will provide an outlook into the future climate scenarios likely to bring even more changes to the vectors, pathogen and host distribution patterns.

The session will also review the current impacts of animal diseases on trade and the development of the animal production sector under the conditions of climate change, in the context of local and international trade restrictions. Within the framework of the two ongoing regional initiatives in the Region ( Empowering Small Holders and Family farms and Agri-food Trade and Market integration)<sup>1</sup> but also an envisaged third regional initiative focussing on sustainable natural resource management in a changing climate, the session will particularly focus on how animal diseases impair the production of smallholder farmers, their likely production losses, and the implications for food security and public health challenges (zoonosis) in the region. Trade-related sanitary and phytosanitary issues, international food safety and quality standards and the transparency of agri-food policy will be considered. The regulatory and enabling environment measures needed to ensure viability for small holders, while ensuring food safety and preventing the further spread of transboundary diseases will be addressed too.

#### **4) Antimicrobial resistance (AMR): the loss of a major defence to the emerging challenge?**

The availability and use of antimicrobial drugs in terrestrial and aquatic animals and in crop production is essential for both health and productivity and contributes to food security, food safety and animal welfare, and in turn, the protection of livelihoods and sustainability of animal and crop production. However, there are growing global concerns about resistance to antimicrobial drugs, including antibiotics, and that antimicrobial resistance (AMR) will reverse these benefits. The livestock sector is one of the main sectors that is associated with antibiotic resistance. There are a range of factors which have contributed to this such as: (i) a lack of regulation and oversight of use; (ii) poor therapy adherence; (iii) non-therapeutic use; (iv) over-the-counter or internet sales, and; (v) the availability of counterfeit or poor quality antimicrobials. The consequences of AMR include the failure to successfully treat infections, leading to more severe or prolonged illness, death, production losses and negative consequences for livelihoods and food security.

The underlying reasons, current status and challenges faced in the region and how will these effect REU's response to regional shifts in animal diseases will be discussed. Similarly, prevention and response measures at the regional level will be addressed. There is a need for a multi-sectorial and multi-dimensional One Health approach. The FAO/OIE/WHO tripartite, together with public and private sector organizations, shares the responsibility for and coordination of global activities addressing AMR at animal-human-ecosystems interfaces. FAO,

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Initiative 1 - Empowering Small Holders and Family farms for improved livelihood and poverty reduction and Regional Initiative 2 - Improving Agri-food trade and market integration

being a multi-sectorial and multi-disciplinary organization in itself, brings into practice its expertise on aquatic and terrestrial animal health and production, food safety and crop production, with due attention to the regulatory aspects.

#### **5) Disease occurrence tracking, strategic response to TADs and informed decision making**

Ensuring timely and reliable information flows on the disease situation all the way from the farm to the international level is key to effectively fighting transboundary diseases, developing strategic response measures and applying informed and effective control actions in the affected areas. Firstly, existing approaches to international disease tracking and reporting used by the EC (ADNS), FAO (EMPRES-i), OIE (WAHIS), WHO and DTRA will be reviewed to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and where possible avoid duplication. The practice of sharing disease occurrence information internationally: either as opportunistically reported outbreaks or results of systematic targeted surveillance campaigns, needs to be strengthened and enhanced, possibly with the use of more advanced information management solutions.

Secondly, attention will be brought to the fact that strategic responses to any TAD requires a good understanding of a wealth of other epidemiologically relevant information, such as host population data, production systems, vector distribution, risk factors and environmental variables (land cover, climate, trade patterns etc.). Currently, there is no international information facility aimed at collecting, managing, updating and making this kind of data available to animal health analysts and decision makers. Disease risk modelling efforts are strongly restrained by the availability of such background information and are currently restricted geographically to just a few selected countries, mainly in Western Europe. This situation can be greatly improved to make epidemiological observation and disease situation monitoring much more intelligent, strategic and risk based, through use of a wide range disease relevant information products.

Thirdly, recent advances in information technologies (dynamic cartographic applications, mobile data collection, data management and visualisation techniques, etc.) make it much easier to integrate disease occurrence data with other epidemiologically relevant information into the decision support tools, which can help to prepare for animal health emergencies and to respond in a strategic and informed way.

The session will review some of the existing solutions developed in the framework of FAO projects, including risk analysis and communication, disease risk modelling, tools for data collection and support of the decision making process. FAO's assistance to countries with animal disease response measures and engagement of stakeholders will also be presented and discussed, i.e. Crisis Management Centre missions, Good Emergency Management Practice (GEMP), capacity building, etc. The session will analyse what is available and what needs to be improved based on the new challenges to ensure stakeholders can prepare and respond adequately.

#### **6) Leaving no one behind: challenges and opportunities for mainstreaming gender concerns in FAO work**

The Secretariat will provide to the Members an update on the status of progress made by FAO in the region in addressing gender-related challenges in agriculture and rural development. The paper reviews the preliminary results of the FAO REU regional gender equality strategy, and the findings of the stock-taking, to seek recommendations and solutions for enhancing its efforts over the next biennium.

### **7) Review of the assessment of the European Commission on Agriculture**

Members will review the findings of the report on the assessment of the ECA and discuss its recommendations, it will also assess if the new format of the ECA session was successful and what new modalities might be useful in “modernizing” the ECA.

### **8) Amendment of the Rules of Procedure of ECA**

Members will review and discuss the proposal for the amendment to the Rules of Procedure of ECA.

### **9) Election of Members of the Executive Committee**

### **10) Any Other Business**

### **11) Date and place of the Forty first Session**

## **Review and endorsement of the Report of the Commission**

## **Closing of the Session**

### ***Information items***

#### **UNFCCC Paris agreement: how do countries’ INDCs/NDCs commitments relate to transboundary diseases what does this mean for climate financing**

The document reviews the pledged commitments of member states under their INDC/NDCs towards the UNFCCC Paris agreement. In particular the document assess how such commitments are linked to animal diseases and considerations on how animal and other transboundary diseases can be included in national as well as regional climate financing mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

#### **International Years 2014-2016 and their contribution to the activities in the regions**

The past few years, has seen a number of agriculture and food security issues being the topic of United Nations International Years; namely, the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in 2014, Soils (IYS) in 2015 and Pulses (IYP) in 2016. The document reviews how these international years were received and what activities and impacts were achieved in the region.

#### **Regional Technical Commissions’ contribution to the Regional Priorities**

An overview on the main priorities of work of the regional commissions (ECA, EIFAAC, GFCM, CACFISH and EFC) based on their work-programme and directions within the FAO Strategic Objectives is presented. The document identifies possible linkages and synergies among the commissions, especially considering the agreement to jointly report to the ERC and address common and cross cutting national and regional priorities such as Agenda 2030.