

First session of the COAG's Sub-Committee on Livestock
Written Correspondence Procedure
Agenda item 3.2: Progress towards the eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants

Secretariat response to written comments from the Committee

The Secretariat expresses its appreciation for the comments received from Members on item 3.2 of the Agenda – Progress towards the eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants.

Responses to the WCP were received from the European Union (and its 27 Member Nations), Mali, Peru, Philippines, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America.

PPR exists as one serotype, and currently four genetic lineages. One of these lineages is dominant and circulating all over Asia, Middle East and Africa, and vaccines in use are considered to be equally effective against all four lineages providing life long immunity.

The Organization recognises the need to scale up capacity building to ensure increased expertise to manage the eradication efforts and the verification of virus elimination. FAO's virtual learning centres (VLC) and workforce training management systems play a very supportive role to rapidly scale up national expertise, capacities and competences. The PPR laboratory networks with the assistance of partners (e.g FAO/IAEA for technology transfer) will also play a critical role to assist countries in monitoring vaccination programmes and increase confidence in accessing freedom from infection.

PPR does not have a known wildlife reservoir but is known to infect a range of wildlife species with major implications for biodiversity conservation. Research and field activities to understand the role of wildlife in PPR epidemiology will continue in all regions where viral circulation and susceptible wildlife population co-exist; the “Guidelines for the Control and Prevention of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) in Wildlife Populations” have been published in English, French and Spanish, and translation into other FAO languages is ongoing. IAEA has been working on validating the diagnostic/serological tests for PPR in wildlife, which is clearly crucial. Wildlife need to be considered in surveillance/control efforts to combat the disease and fall within FAO's mandate. FAO collaborates with OIE; Wildlife Conservation Society, Royal Veterinary College (UK), national wildlife services, among others, to jointly address PPR in domestic and wild animal populations. Vigilance to prevent recurrence of epidemics is essential in countries free of infection and all Members will need to ensure they have early warning and early response systems in place. Support to infected countries to optimise vaccination will be holistic considering the full small ruminants value chain and husbandry systems.

The PPR GEP is implemented under the joint FAO and OIE framework (GF-TADS) and while eradication strategies have their specificities, the programme will seek to utilise all relevant synergies with other GF-TADS priority diseases including foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). The position of the EU in relation to the role of FAO and the European Commission for the Control of FMD is welcomed and the Secretariat also values the competences and experience this Commission brings to the eradication efforts. Better coordination, awareness and communication campaigns are needed at all levels including at grassroots with the translation of these communication materials into local languages.

At national level, technical support to investment planning is essential and relevant and appropriate investment expertise is needed. The expertise of the Partnering and Financing Panel of GF-TADS will be used to guide this effort. Jointly with CFI and PSR, emphasis will be given to turning the PPR national Strategic plan into the investment plan as well as advocating for more priority funding for building

countries' capabilities, and monitor efforts of the situation in order to identity progress and effectiveness of PPR eradication.

In terms of resource mobilization, FAO notes with appreciation the support provided and the renewal commitment for the next phase (e.g. EU) and the need for other partners to support the programme. Data collection will support assesment of risk-based intervention as well as the economic impact in affected countries that can reinforce cost benefit analysis to support increased investment at national level through increase national budgets for PPR eradication. This should include analytical quantification of the societal and economic benefits of PPR eradication.