

Minutes of the Meeting

Second Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TAD for Asia and the Pacific

Amari Watergate Hotel
Bangkok, Thailand
18-19 July 2007

Opening Session

Opening Remarks

The Opening Session was moderated by Dr. Teruhide Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific (OIE Tokyo), representing the Permanent Secretariat of the Regional Steering Committee of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific. He invited Welcome and Opening Addresses as delivered by Dr. Chaweewan Leowijuk, Dr. Hiroyuki Konuma, Dr. Bernard Vallat and H.E. Prof. Dr. Thira Sutabutra, respectively.

Dr. Chaweewan Leowijuk, Deputy Director General, Department of Livestock Development, Thailand on behalf of the host country for the Meeting, welcomed all participants to Thailand and the 2nd Regional Steering Committee Meeting of the GF-TAD. She expressed her appreciation to H.E. Prof. Dr. Thira Sutabutra for presiding over the opening ceremony and highlighted Thailand's involvement in various activities related to TADs.

Dr. Hiroyuki Konuma, Deputy Regional Representative of FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific delivered welcome remarks on behalf of Dr. He Changchui, Assistant Director-General of FAO, and Regional Representative of FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. He extended a warm welcome to the participants and thanked OIE Tokyo as the GF-TADs permanent secretariat for making the necessary arrangements for the meeting. He underscored the progress and development since the last Steering Committee Meeting of the GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific that have augured well for controlling and preventing TADs as well as sustaining efforts, as initiated by FAO and OIE under the GF-TADs. In closing, he reiterated FAO's commitment to improving the livelihoods of Asian farmers, to the shared goals of the GF-TADs, and to ensuring improved animal health status in the region.

Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of OIE, expressed appreciation for the opportunity given to OIE for the support of this meeting. He recalled the successful outcomes of the 1st Regional Steering Committee Meeting of the GF-TADs, as co-organized by OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific and FAO Regional Representation in 2005 in Tokyo that also paved the way for subsequent regional GF-TADs meetings for other regions. He highlighted that GF-TADs is a unique mechanism worldwide to control TADs and the support of all regional partners is vital. He emphasized the important and contributing role of the sub-regional organizations to this joint FAO/OIE global effort. He reminded all participants that although the incidence of some animal diseases is on the decrease, there are emerging or re-emerging diseases and all governments have to remain vigilant, especially veterinary services, which are now regarded as an international public good and should be strengthened for early detection and rapid response.

H.E. Prof. Dr. Thira Sutabutra, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand, officially announced the opening of the 2nd RSC Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific. He welcomed all

participants on behalf of Government of Thailand and noted the tremendous adverse effects caused by TADs on economic and social development in the region, in particular, Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Highly Pathogenic Avian influenza (HPAI). He expressed appreciation to FAO and OIE for their commitment to improving global animal health and production. He also expressed his confidence concerning the continuous and strong cooperation of all partners with FAO and OIE in the fight against TADs.

Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons and appointment of Rapporteurs Adoption of the Agenda	<p>Dr T. Fujita, the permanent secretariat proposed Dr. Chaweewan to be the chairperson for the meeting. The chairperson then appointed two vice-chairpersons.</p> <p>Dr. Chaweewan appointed Dr Domenech of FAO Rome and Dr. Dabeding of Brunei in his capacity as Chair of the ASWGL as vice-chairpersons.</p> <p>Dr. Chaweewan requested Dr. Fujita to announce the assigned rapporteurs.</p> <p>The chair presented the agenda to the Meeting for adoption. Having received no comments, the meeting adopted the agenda. The chair then called Dr. Fujita to make the first presentation entitled Objectives of the Second Regional Meeting and Expected Outcomes.</p>
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Objectives of the Second Regional Meeting and expected outcome

Background to GF-TAD	Dr. Fujita first gave some background on the GF-TADS initiative. GF-TAD is a joint FAO/OIE initiative combining the strengths of both the organizations to achieve common objectives. It emphasizes regional alliances to undertake capacity building for the control of specific TADs.
Aim of GF-TAD	The specific aim of GF-TADS is to establish subregional Regional Support Units (RSUs) with a cadre of epidemiology units (REU) integrated into relevant Regional Specialized Organizations (RSOs). Supporting the RSOs are FAO and OIE HQs, FAO and OIE Regional Commissions and Representations.
Organizational structure	Dr. Fujita presented the organizational chart showing how the Steering Committee functions with the RSOs and the RSUs. The role of the regional Steering Committee is to ensure subregional coordination of the clusters, monitor progress and determine performance indicators, provide strategic direction and foster a spirit of cooperation between member countries

RSO priorities and sub regional units	<p>To date the RSOs has the following disease priorities: ASEAN – HPAI, FMD, CSF SAARC – HPAI, FMD, PPR</p> <p>Sub-regional Epidemiology Networks (or laboratories) and Centers (or laboratories) will be established under each RSO.</p>
Review of the Mechanism and Functions	<p>Review GF-TADs mechanism and Regional Functions including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1st Regional Steering Committee 2. current situations of TADs at the Global Level (FAO, OIE) 3. current situations of TADs at the Sub-Regional Level (ASEAN, SAARC, SPC) 4. On-going Projects for priority TADs (e.g. FMD, HPAI, CSF)
Expected Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of the current situation (mechanisms and activities) 2. Review on the Progress of activities on nomination of Sub-Regional organizations for TADs 3. Expanded framework for TADs (e.g. SPC) 4. Development of short- and long-term Strategies for TADs control
Comment by Dr Domenech on perceptions of the media	<p>The chair thanked Dr. Fujita for his presentation then opened the floor for questions. Dr Domenech offered the following comment on perceptions of the media regarding TADs:</p> <p>Members of the media see reports of outbreaks of disease and tend to think the situation is getting worse, when in fact it is improving. Countries are responding much more quickly and having some success in stamping out or controlling outbreaks, particularly of HPAI. The situation is much improved since three years ago and there have been significant improvements in many countries where there is heavy contamination. These improvements are the result of the considerable efforts of many committed people to put in place effective strategies for prevention and control. There are questions yet to be answered about epidemiological factors but we are gradually making progress here as well. A few countries such as Indonesia and Egypt pose present special challenges and we continue to address these. Rift Valley Fever in Africa remains a significant problem and we need to develop specific surveillance systems to prevent it from reoccurring. Rinderpest, on the other hand, is on the verge of being eradicated. This will be the first instance of eradicating a transboundary animal disease. This reflects a significant investment of time and effort and is the result of a decision taken many years ago to implement a global strategy. The networking and coordination that has been achieved is most certainly why we have eradicated this disease.</p>

OIE perspective and activities in GF for the progressive control of TADs

Presenter: Dr D. Sibartie; Head of OIE Regional Activities Department, Paris

Presentation of OIE activities related to AI, Bluetongue,	<p>The chair then called Dr. Sibartie, Head, OIE Regional Activities Department, to give his presentation.</p> <p>Dr. Sibartie presented the regional distribution of TADs (FMD,</p>
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FMD, RVF, Rinderpest, African Swine Fever	Rinderpest, Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP), Peste de Petits Ruminants (PPR), Classical Swine Fever (CSF), African Swine Fever (ASF), Rift Valley Fever (RVF), New Castle Disease (NCD), HPAI, Bluetongue (BT), Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), and Tuberculosis (TB). Tropical Africa has most of the diseases listed.
Avian Influenza	<p>Dr. Sibartie then presented the HPAI situation as to subtypes and location. Some of the highlights of the presentation are: In 2005, HPAI spread to Russia and to other parts of Asia. In 2006 the disease spread to Europe and then to Africa in the second half of 2006</p> <p>There was a recurrence in Vietnam in December 2006, then in Laos in 2007 and in Thailand in January, 2007. Japan reported the disease again in January 2007. Hungary reported its first outbreak in June 2006 and then in January 2007. The UK then reported its first case after a few months and gene sequencing revealed that the virus is related to that of Hungary.</p> <p>Recurrences appeared in Laos and Myanmar, Czech Republic and Germany.</p> <p>Fresh outbreaks were reported in Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong (on dead wild birds).</p> <p>In conclusion, Dr. Sibartie reported that countries are now better prepared to respond to new outbreaks. However, H5N1 virus is now in 64 countries. The virus has also been isolated in wild birds in 14 countries. The number of new countries getting the virus is decreasing.</p>
Bluetongue	<p>Bluetongue was reported in the Netherlands in 2006, Germany, Belgium and France, Luxembourg. Clinical signs were observed as more severe in cattle, which is not usually the case.</p> <p>Changes in climatic conditions coupled with frequent travel of persons and goods might increase the risk of the appearance and establishment of diseases in parts of Europe that were exotic for these regions</p>
Foot and Mouth Disease	<p>Movement of ruminants in the Middle East triggered the outbreaks. FMD types present were O, A, Asia 1.</p> <p>Four countries in Africa (Egypt, Botswana (SAT 1, 2), S. Africa (SAT 3) and Guinea reported cases based on clinical signs alone.</p> <p>South American outbreaks were reported in 2006 and early 2007 in Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina.</p>
Rift Valley Fever	RVF was reported in Africa (Kenya and Tanzania), Madagascar, and the Arabian peninsula, Kenya and Tanzania particularly.
Rinderpest	Rinderpest now occurs only in very small traces in the Somalia ecosystem.
African Swine Fever	<p>Recently diagnosed in Georgia.</p> <p>No new outbreaks of a large scale were reported on CSF, HS, and Lumpy Skin Disease</p>

FAO Perspective and Activities in GF-TAD

Presenter: Dr Joseph Domenech, Chief Veterinary Officer of FAO, Chief of Animal Health Services, Animal Production and Health Division, Rome

Dr. Chaweewan called on Dr Domenech to give the presentation on FAO perspectives and Activities in GF-TADS.

GF-TAD milestones	Dr Domenech gave a brief overview of GF-TADs and some of milestone events that led to its formation and evolution over the last three years. Much of this information is available on the OIE website at http://www.oie.int/eng/en_index.htm
Agreements signed	Dr Domenech reported that in 2003 during discussions between FAO and OIE a need to address TADs nationally and internationally came to the force. Following a series of discussions, an agreement was signed between FAO and OIE in 2003 in Rome and formalized during the OIE General Session in Paris in 2004.
Rationale for GF-TAD	A large part of the rationale for GF-TAD is the growing recognition among government and animal health authorities of the need for regional and international coordination and cooperation in the fight against these highly transmissible and dangerous diseases. Globalization, trade, movements, climate change, and human-induced and natural disasters all contributed to the development of the GF-TAD. An annual review of the GF-TAD framework is undertaken to consider the development of emerging diseases especially HPAI.
Combined strengths	The GF-TADs initiative combines the strengths of FAO and OIE and emphasizes regional alliances. Programs and activities are based on regional priorities. Strategies are developed to make the best use of available expertise by supporting laboratories, organizing technical meetings and scientific conferences and improving communications. Improving surveillance, preparedness, detection, awareness, and response are also part of the GF-TADS initiative to combat emerging diseases.
Benefits of regional and international coordination	Regional and international coordination is only effective if national governments are committed to the same agenda. This means investing in long-term infrastructure for preparedness, detection and surveillance and in research as opposed to simply reacting to emergencies. Past experience has shown that effective regional and international coordination is essential for long term success. These networks help break down barriers, foster sharing and exchange of information, facilitate capacity building, and help improve standards and quality, disseminate important information and help mobilize donor support.

Tools and mechanisms used by FAO for better implementation of GF-TAD

- Establishment of a Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) position to mirror what is happening in the national situation and centralizing the chain of command and putting the responsibilities for animal health under the CVO.
- Establishment of the Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) to facilitate operational and technical cooperation.
- GLEWS with WHO for zoonotic diseases signed in 2006 with specific support from donors.
- Establishment of the OFFLU network and other networks of laboratories for FMD.
- Establishment of CMC in partnership with OIE to intervene when there is a new outbreak in a country (the 'fire brigade' function).
- Development of media and donor advocacy and communication tools like websites, press releases, etc.
- A global strategy for HPAI finalized last February.
- Regional Steering Committees in Tokyo, Bamako, Europe, Americas (attended by CVOs, regional organizations, donors).

In conclusion

In conclusion, Dr Domenech promised that GF-TADs would continue its efforts to serve as a platform for concerted and coordinated action against transboundary diseases.

Comments and Questions

Situation regarding FMD

The representative from AusAID asked how the development of GF-TADs would impact on the projects in the long term like that of SEAFMD.

Dr Domenech and Dr Vallat replied that:
While the situation regarding FMD does not appear to be critical at the moment it remains a serious concern. New strains are emerging and there has been a crisis in the lake region in Africa as well as problems in Vietnam and Central Asia. FMD is still one of the major livestock diseases in the world. What we have done so far is to establish a regional network of laboratories, including reference laboratories (e.g. Geelong in Australia). At OIE we have been discussing the possibility of strengthening our global strategy for FMD. We are discussing a global approach to control and prevention and have activities ongoing in several regions, including Central Asia and South America. There is nothing 'new' about FMD, which is why we feel this, is a good time to think about a global strategy. OIE in Paris is trying to join forces with FAO. We would like to adopt a similar approach to the one we used to eradicate Rinderpest. This approach took 20 years but we were successful. FMD may turn out to be more difficult but we have an agreement with FAO on the objective. Beyond that

we have yet to work out details.

Mechanism in ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture

Presenter: Dr. Somsak Pippopinyo, ASEAN Secretariat

Broader impacts of controlling transboundary animal diseases	Dr. Somsak Pippopinyo emphasized the broader impacts of controlling transboundary animal diseases (TADs) such as promoting food safety and security, enhancing safe trade in livestock and livestock products and reducing poverty among livestock communities. He also reminded the audience that it is important to present these broader impacts of TADs to policy makers in ASEAN if we are to gain broader political support.
ASEAN structure for TADs	He then proceeded to describe the ASEAN structure under which activities related to TADs are conducted. The cooperation mechanism in food, agriculture and forestry is an umbrella mechanism which deals with some of the livestock and TADs issues. These components include food and food security, food safety and food handling; agriculture, crop, livestock, fisheries and agriculture, forestry, trade promotion and developing joint position on international and regional issues.
Activities under regional cooperation on livestock	There are a number of activities under regional cooperation on livestock. These are regularization of the production and use of animal vaccines, strengthening animal disease programmes, promoting international trade of livestock and livestock products and other activities. These other activities include a number of animal health related activities such as development and establishment of disease information system in ASEAN (APHISA), strengthening animal health management and biosecurity in ASEAN, establishment of reference laboratories for South East Asia and establishment of ASEAN Animal Health Trust Fund.
Priority diseases	Progress on animal disease control programme, ASEAN has identified priority diseases which are similar to those identified GF-TADs. Due to importance of trade in livestock, ASEAN has also a programme on BSE prevention and monitoring. The progress on FMD in the region has been achieved through SEAFMD Campaign. Focus on HPAI has been in developing a regional strategy for HPAI through ASEAN HPAI taskforce. Recently ASEAN has also received funding from ADB to develop their capacity in regional coordination for HPAI control and eradication.
Key developments and initiatives in the region	Dr Somsak then described some key developments and initiatives in the region. These include field activities on TADs under the ADB funded project on TADs control in the GMS countries, development of a roadmap for freedom

from FMD by 2020, establishment of AAHTF and progress towards signing of MoU between OIE and ASEAN. He also noted that GF-TADs has been endorsed by SOM-AMAF in September 2005 in Philippines. In the last two ASWGL meetings, ASEAN has already identified lead countries for priority TADs. Hence, Thailand will be a lead country in FMD, Philippines in CSF and Malaysia in HPAI. The lead diagnostic laboratories for FMD, CSF and HPAI will be Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia, respectively. He closed by requesting FAO and OIE to provide support to ASEAN in building their capacity for regional coordination of TADs activities.

Comments and Questions

Clarification on the difference between APHISA and ARAHIS	Dr. Gleeson asked for clarification on the difference between APHISA and ARAHIS, the two information systems being planned by ASEAN. It was clarified that while both systems are in development and testing phase, APHISA is going to be more of a public access system on both animal health and production, while ARAHIS would be a password protected animal health system only, and available to member countries only.
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Animal Health and Production

Presenter: Dr Ken Cokanasiga, Animal Health and Production Adviser, Secretariat of the Pacific Commission

Context	Dr Cokanasiga presented activities on animal health in the region, described as unique as it comprises 8.5 million people spread over many countries, covering 22 PICTs spread over 30 million square kilometers of ocean, 30% of which is land and represents 30% of the world's languages.
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HPAI major animal health focus	The major animal health focus in the region is the threat of HPAI and it is currently implementing a number of activities through a project entitled Pacific Region Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Programme (PRIPP). The project aims to prepare for HPAI and other emerging diseases and to promote capacity building in infectious diseases. The project has been running for 2 years. Currently. Specific activities include strengthening laboratory capacity, building animal health networks, and general training in animal health. The project is also considering a strategy for regional procurement and stockpiling of equipment and biologicals necessary to respond to disease emergencies through a regional taskforce.
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Control of Foot and Mouth Disease in Southeast Asia

Presenter : Dr Ronello C. Abila, Regional Coordinator, SEAFMD, Bangkok

Purpose of the OIE	The purpose of the OIE initiative is to increase the
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initiative	productivity and economic output of the livestock sector by controlling and eradicating FMD. The objective is to add value to the regional control program through SEAFMD Campaign by employing a series of integrated and harmonized approaches to disease control.
Phases I to III	<p>Phase one of the project (1997-2000) focused on resource mobilization, identifying national coordinators and planning.</p> <p>Phase II (2001 to 2005) focused on institutionalized regional cooperation, identifying pilot areas for zoning and engaging the private sector. Funding was provided mainly from Australia, with support from OIE Tokyo and in kind contribution from Thailand and member countries.</p> <p>Phase III (2006 to 2010) will focus on transition to ASEAN, progressive zoning and strengthening the network. Funding is being provided by Australia, New Zealand, and France with support from OIE Tokyo and in kind contribution from Thailand and member countries.</p>
Outline of the presentation	<p>The presentation outlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organization structure • main activities • mechanisms for international coordination and support • meetings, missions • plans for program management, resources and funding • a public awareness and communications campaign • mechanisms for disease surveillance, diagnosis, reporting and control • FMD distributions in 2006 (maps) • the regional reference laboratory and some of the work it is doing • Policy, legislation and zoning initiatives • Traditional animal movements • Regional research and technology transfer • Livestock sector development
SEAFMD 2020 Roadmap	The final section of the presentation outlined the SEAFMD 2020 Roadmap and included a timetable, strategic directions and requirements.

Questions and Comments

Involvement of China	Dr Vallat (OIE) suggested that China should be involved in the SEAFMD process and would most likely be willing.
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Ongoing OIE project on HPAI Control in Southeast Asia
 Presenter: Dr Shiro Yoshimura, OIE HPAI Coordination Office

The presentation offered background information about the HPAI Control Programme in Asia, the OIE/Japan Project (with 4 components): Past and present situation and future actions for the OIE/Japan Project.

OIE/FAO HPAI Programme

- About 20 million USD for both Projects (OIE & FAO)
- Plan of implementation from April 2006-March 2007 (extended by 1 year to March 2008)
- OIE components: Regional/National level; FAO components: Field level and linkages with production

HPAI and OIE

- Special Trust Fund for the OIE component : About 8 million USD
- Regular Fund: HPAI as a targeted disease under GF-TADs Programme

Component I:

HPAI strategy formulation and improvement

- Obtaining documentations of National strategies from the participating countries (Done)
- Preliminary review of the National strategies (Done)
- Further review (In progress)
- Consultation with the participating countries for reviewing and recommendations (In progress)
- Improvement of National HPAI Control Strategies (In progress)
- Improvement of the Regional HPAI Control Strategies (In progress)
- Review of and final recommendations for the Regional Strategies (In progress)

Component II:

Establishment of Regional HPAI Information network

- Regional workshop on HPAI Information systems (Done in Bangkok, September 2006)
- Regional training workshop on Epidemiological information of HPAI in collection and analysis (Done in Bangkok, July 2006)
- National workshops on Epidemiological information collection and analysis (Done)
- Development of computer software for HPAI information systems (In progress)
- Provision of personal computers to participating countries for information network (Done)

Component III:

Procurement/provision of modern laboratory equipment and materials for HPAI diagnostic capacity building (2)

1. Selection of National laboratories to be strengthened under the Project (Done)
2. Identification of the equipment and materials (Done)
3. Verification/finalization of the equipment list (Done)
4. Formal agreements b/w OIE and authorities of the participating countries (Done)
5. Tendering and award (Done)
6. Equipment being collected (in progress)

Component IV: Training of field veterinarians and para-professionals

- Preparation for national training (Started consultation with relevant organizations for implementation in August 2006.)
- Implementation of training (including a Regional workshop and National training workshops to be done in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar in collaboration with other partners, in particular with FAO)

Comments and Questions

Clarification of the term 'border' Dr Yoshimura clarified a point in the discussion. A border is not a physical barrier in the geographic sense. A border is only a barrier if there is effective training and support for border personnel and compliance with regulations at the border.

FAO Project Activities for HPAI control in South-East and South Asia

Presenter: Dr Laurence Gleeson, Manager of FAO Regional ECTAD Unit, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

FAO vision for progressive control of HPAI in Asia Dr Gleeson outlined the FAO vision for progressive control of HPAI in Asia. The key issues are to provide technically sound advice and support, encourage research on country issues and to undertake activities to limit social and economic impact of the disease and to control the speaker outlined the project portfolio including donor support and human resources engaged across the region.

Basis of the program The FAO HPAI program is based on regionally and nationally focused statistics. At the regional level actions and collaboration with other organization and agencies, as well as with donors. The program has established laboratory and epidemiological networks, coordinated HPAI control related activities across the region and facilitated submission of samples to international laboratories. Dr Gleeson acknowledged support from the National Institute of Animal Health in Thailand.

National focus At the national level support focuses on surveillance diagnosis, preparedness and response, communications, and socio economic activities. The thrust of activities vary depending on country HPAI status; eradicated, sporadic or endemic. The background with respect to surveillance in 2005 and 2004 was outlined and approaches to strengthening surveillance described in the way that are tailored to countries existing strengths and structures.

Laboratory networks FAO has established laboratory networks of East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia and a recent workshop was conducted to establish a proficiency testing program and standardized approach base at NIAH.

FAO has also been providing specialist advice on laboratory biosafety and biosecurity for laboratory upgrades. With respect to HPAI response, a range of activities were described, especially strategies for vaccination and biosecurity. Research activities focus on wildlife surveillance, H5N1 in cats, OFFLU activities to monitor vaccines and collaboration on vaccine efficacy.

The FAO program on communication socio-economic studies was outlined along with examples of value chain.

Conclusions

- Significant investment into control and into animal health services still required
- Partnerships and coordination remain key to effective use of resources
- Structural changes to poultry production and marketing required but with care
- Human behaviour is a large part of the problem ('we are not the problem' say the chickens and ducks)
- There are still knowledge deficits that have to be addressed in some key areas
- Better technological solutions especially for vaccination and optimal strategic approaches
- In countries where is endemic, remains a challenge

Comments and Questions

importance of effective communications

The AusAid representative emphasized the importance of effective communications and informed the participants of a recent APEC workshop on communications and suggested there might be some opportunity for collaboration.

crucial role of communication campaigns

Dr Domenech also stressed the crucial role of communication campaigns and emphasized that it is important to translate technical content so it is understandable to lay people. He suggested that attention to communications issues should be increased and noted that UNICEF has strong support from donors to work on these issues because of their past experience on human disease communication campaigns.

Ongoing FAO Projects (Activities) on FMD and CSF in Asia

Presenter: Dr Carolyn Benigno, Animal Health Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia

and the Pacific, Bangkok

Animal Health Service through the leadership of the CVO of FAO provides technical guidance and direction on the control of GF-TADs. Animal Health within the Regional Strategic Framework translates the Global Strategic Framework into regional actions and provides a set of priority areas for interdisciplinary action over and above RAP's comprehensive regular and field programme activities.

Regional Thematic Areas

- Restructuring of the agricultural sector
- Decentralizing governance in support of sustainable development
- Reducing vulnerability to disasters
- Promoting effective and equitable management
- Conservation and sustainable use of natural resources
- Strengthening biosecurity
- Alleviating poverty in rice-based livelihood systems

Animal health concerns
Epidemiological
capacity

The presentation then outlined animal health concerns and steps being taken to strengthen epidemiological capacity. Control options for FMD and CSF include risk communication strategies in disease emergencies, identification and analysis of animal human interface areas where transmission of infectious agents occur and the possible interventions.

FMD Control Activities

- Active partner with SEAFMD especially in progressing with the disease free zoning initiatives
- Co-organized the FMD Diagnostic Network in SEA
- Provided assistance with vaccine requirements of countries
- Various FMD Projects – to lay the foundation for disease control or looking into long term plans

main points for TADs
Projects

- TCP/MON/3101 – Strengthening Early Warning of Transboundary Animal Disease
- GCP /CMB/028/EC Support to Smallholder Livestock Production in Cambodia
- GCP/PHI/049/AUL – Eradication of FMD in the Philippines
- TCP/DRK/3104 – Emergency Assistance for Early Detection, Response and Control of FMD Outbreaks
- GCP/RAS/206/ASB FAO-ADB Project on the Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases in the Greater Mekong Sub-region
- TCP/MON/3101 – Strengthening Early Warning of Transboundary Animal Disease

CSF activities

For CSF activities, a regional workshop was held in 2005 which focused on field and laboratory surveillance and economic impact of CSF. During this workshop member

countries agreed to forward the recommendations through regional organizations so that a regional plan could be developed for CSF. On the part of ASEAN, the ASEAN WGL has endorsed this and assigned Philippines as the lead country. Plans are afoot to hold the next workshop this year in joint collaboration with OIE.

APHCA Disease
Emergency Assistance
Fund

The Fund is owned by APHCA member countries and will be available only to APHCA members. The Fund will be managed by the APHCA Executive Committee with assistance from the APHCA Secretariat. The fund covers costs for outbreak handling such as in-country travel expenses, purchase of vaccines, diagnostic kits and other emergency supplies (drugs, disinfectants, PPE, packaging and shipment of samples etc.), casual labor and printing of communication materials. The country may submit a request to the APHCA secretariat stating the need and budget. The request will then be circulated to the Executive Committee for approval where a decision within 48 hours will be arrived at. Funds will then be disbursed through FAO country offices.

Comments and Questions

There were no comments or questions following this session.

The Context of GF-TAD: Control of Transboundary Animal Disease in the Greater Mekong Region

Presenter: Dr Subhash Morzaria, FAO Bangkok

Background to the
project

The presentation outlined activities of the project entitled Control of Transboundary Animal Disease in the Greater Mekong Region. This project was developed under the umbrella of GF-TAD and is supported by the Asian Development Bank. The project was developed before the emergency of HPAI in the Region and focuses on two priority diseases, FMD and CSF. The project has 5 participating countries (Cambodia, China's Yunnan Province, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam) and 2 collaborating countries (Malaysia and Myanmar).

Key components

The key components of the project are to enhance regional cooperation on the control of TADs, build capacity at the grass-roots and animal health department's levels, upgrade national laboratories, improving disease control strategies and mobilize additional resources for TADs control in the region.

Key achievements	<p>The key achievements in each component were described. During the term of the project ADB facilitated the signing of a MoU at the ministerial level to cooperate in the control of TADs in the GMS countries. Over 1500 people (farmers and para-veterinarians) have been trained at the grass-roots level in the sub-region, over 60 veterinarians have been trained and over 30 people have been trained in laboratory diagnosis of TADs.</p> <p>National diagnostic laboratories in the departments of animal health in Cambodia and Lao PDR have been upgraded with additional equipment for supporting sero-diagnosis. Cross-sectional sero-surveillance studies linked with KAP survey, livelihoods study and on-farm economic impact studies were conducted in the Upper and Lower Mekong Disease Control Zones. These studies are contributing towards validation of disease control zones and enabling improved targeting of disease control strategies in the sub-region.</p>
Resource mobilization	<p>Resource mobilization activities have been principally focused on getting Phase II of the ongoing Project. Two proposals amounting to US\$2.41 million has been submitted to ADB for support. It is expected that funding would come in the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2007. The main activities of Phase II will be to conduct pilot disease control programmes in the Upper and Lower Mekong Disease Control zones, evaluating economic impact of disease control, enhancing public awareness of TADs and increasing disease surveillance capacity in the GMS.</p>
Main partners	<p>The main partner of the project has been the OIE SEAFMD Campaign with significant collaboration with JICA, EU and other HPAI projects under FAO execution within the sub-region.</p>
In conclusion	<p>In conclusion, the presentation outlined FMD epizootic 2005/2006-emerging issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater engagement in the field/more field data • Full participation of the Yunnan Province PR China • Impact of HPAI on FMD control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need for strengthening outbreak investigation • strain isolation and characterization • Control strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ emergency ○ medium to long term • Vaccines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ quality, efficacy, availability • Reality of the region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Animal movement ○ Variable vet capacity in the region • Greater regional financial commitment

Comments and Questions

There were no comments or questions following this session.

Report of the 1st Regional Steering Committee Meeting, Tokyo, 7-9 March 2005 Bangkok, 18-19 July 2007

Presenter: Dr. Teruhide Fujita, Permanent Secretariat of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee (OIE Tokyo)

In attendance at the meeting

In attendance at the meeting were:

- H.E. Mr. Mineichi Iwanage, Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan, Dr B. Vallat, DG of OIE, Dr J. Domenech, FAO, Mr. Y. Yamashita, President of JLTA
- Selected CVOs from the Region, WHO Geneva & Manila, FAO Rome & Bangkok, OIE Paris, Tokyo & SEAFMD (Bangkok), World Bank, EU, USA, Australia, ASEAN, JICA,

The meeting was chaired by:

- Chair: Dr Mahato, Nepal
- Vice-Chairs: Dr Domenech, FAO and Dr Teng (ASEAN)

Roles of Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific

- To ensure Sub-Regional guidance and coherence of the clusters; S-E Asia, S. Asia, Pacific Islands, etc. to monitor progress and determine, with the Permanent Secretariat, performance indicators for effective field, laboratory, epidemiological evaluation of disease events and control efforts
- To provide strategic direction to RSOs and RSUs and to promote the control and eradication of specific TADs
- To foster a spirit of cooperation between Member Countries and donors, to coordinate activities and to provide advice and assistance whenever possible

Regional Steering Committee
Duties and Responsibilities

- 1) Advise on the coordination and management of the RSUs activities and their annual work plans
- 2) Assist the RSOs and major donors in monitoring and evaluating the RSU activities
- 3) Ensure that the representatives of RSOs provide reports and coordinate the implementation of agreed actions within their member countries, etc.

Meetings

- 1) Meet at least once a year;
- 2) An extraordinary meeting by Chairperson with agreement of the Permanent Secretariat;
- 3) Between meetings, activities to be carried out by the Permanent Secretariat

Chairman and vice Chairmen

- 1) Chairman; to be proposed by the Permanent Secretariat, and rotate every year
- 2) Two Vice-Chairmen

Membership of Steering Committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selected representatives of Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) of member countries 2. Representatives of RSOs (ASEAN, SAARC, SPC, etc) 3. Representatives of specific donors; such as WB, EU, USA, AusAID, ADB, Japan, JICA, Australia, etc. 4. Representatives of OIE (Paris and Tokyo), and of FAO (Rome and Bangkok)
RSO, RSU and Sub-Regional Networks and their Functions	<p>Regional Specialized Organizations (RSOs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASEAN, SAARC and SPC • Strategize and prioritize activities for disease control, information reporting, surveillance and risk mitigation • Host RSUs • Regional mechanism to decide and support Animal Health Issues
Regional Support Units (RSUs):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate GF-TADs status and priorities situations • Targeted diseases for TADs; HPAI, FMD, CSF, PPR
Regional Epidemiological and Laboratory Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Sub-regional functions to support/coordinate the networks (epidemiological information, laboratory training, regional coordinating meetings support, etc.)
Permanent Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location: OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific, Tokyo, Japan (its Bureau led by OIE Regional Representative)
Roles of Secretariat:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) prepare agendas, invitations, draft recommendations and reports for annual meetings 2) provide policy and strategic advice to RSUs between meetings of the Steering Committee 3) undertake and maintain communication with the Global Steering Committee
Priority Diseases in the Region	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avian Influenza (HPAI) 2. Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) 3. Classical Swine Fever (CSF) 4. Peste de Petits Ruminants (PPR)
Recommendations (abstract)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsed the TOR of the Regional Steering Committee, Permanent Secretariat, REUs and Regional Diagnostic Laboratories • RSUs to be hosted by RSOs • Early establishment of RSUs and to finalize the location of RSUs, REUs and RDLs for priority diseases • GF-TADs to ensure appropriate funding be made available • Adequate funds to be earmarked for research in priority fields • Financial mechanisms supporting projects to appropriately be transparent concerning use of resources funded by donors, when necessary, etc.

Current situation in ASEAN

- RSU; functional RSU in ASEAN Secretariat
- Lead countries; Thailand for FMD, Malaysia for HPAI and Philippines for CSF
- Proposal for Regional Reference Laboratories; Thailand for FMD, Malaysia for HPAI and Vietnam for CSF (by ASWGL)
- Establishment of Epidemiological networks
- How to coordinate between the Lead countries and GF-TADs Sub-Regional Mechanism
- RSU; SAARC Secretariat (functional RSU in Nepal)
- Regional Laboratories
 - FMD: India
 - HPAI: Pakistan
 - PPR: Bangladesh
- Need to nominate an Epidemiological Network for the targeted diseases

Comments and Questions

Identification of leading laboratories

There was a discussion on the identification of leading laboratories in each sub-region. The ASEAN reported that they have identified the following ASEAN Reference Laboratories: Thailand for FMD, Malaysia for HPAI, and Vietnam for CSF. The OIE and FAO raised the question of using the term Reference Laboratories, because under international parlance the term Reference Laboratory has more specific Terms of Reference. They clarified that under the GF-TADs framework the term being used is "Leading Laboratory".

Dr Laurence Gleeson raised the issue of the current arrangement under the FAO programs that identified the NIAH in Thailand as early as 2004 as the leading HPAI Laboratory for Southeast Asia. The program has implemented activities such as conduct of diagnostic training for neighbouring countries and submission of samples to NIAH. In June this year, the FAO organized a laboratory network meeting for Southeast Asia, and it was recommended in that meeting that Thailand will continue as the Leading HPAI Laboratory in the sub-region and they will manage the implementation of proficiency testing for member countries.

Dr Dabeding from Brunei, Chair of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group for Livestock (ASWGL), clarified that the ASWGL meeting in Brunei in April this year discussed the selection process of ASEAN Reference Laboratory: several countries were identified early on and after deliberation by the ASWGL they arrive at a final decision to identify Malaysia as the ASEAN Reference Laboratory for HPAI. Dr Somsak, ASEAN Secretariat, also clarified that they used the term "Reference Laboratory" based on the Term of Reference that ASEAN has endorsed, and the assume that this is based on international standards. It was also clarified that only one Epidemiology Center should be identified to manage the epidemiology network

for each sub-region. This is to clarify a query from ASEAN if the Epidemiology Network has to be set-up for each priority disease.

For the identification of the Regional Support Unit (RSU), it was also clarified that there will be only one RSU for each sub-region. It was further suggested by FAO that it would be more effective if the Epidemiology Center and RSU is in the same location.

Day 2: Thursday 19 July 2007

Comments from SAARC	Prior to a discussion of the Work Plan of GF-TAD Regional Committee for 2007-2008, the Chair invited Dr Md. Sufiur Rahman, the representative from SAARC to comment.
Role of SAARC	Dr Rahman described the role of SAARC and its relationship to members and the Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development. He described how the members arrived at their decision to locate regional laboratories in India (FMD), Pakistan (HPAI) and Bangladesh (PPR). It was agreed to have the RSU in Katmandu but not at the SAARC Secretariat. No final decision was made regarding the Epidemiological Center.
Ownership	Dr Rahman noted that the SAARC process is designed to establish ownership among member countries because of the long-term goal of integrating RSUs, labs and other structures into national government structures.

Comments and Questions

Comments on the SAARC organogram	There was a lengthy discussion concerning the organizational chart presented by Dr Rahman, particularly the relationship of the SAARC Regional Steering Committee to other agencies. Various participants in the meeting expressed their concerns for a clear strategy regarding the establishment and location of RSUs, labs and the epidemiological center as this will have implications for resource mobilization. Dr Rahman will take these points under consideration and discuss them with SAARC members at the next meeting.
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Resource Mobilization

	Dr Domenech and Dr Vallat both commented on resource mobilization issues.
OIE mandate	OIE has a mandate to advocate for improvements in animal health safety standards and actively promotes animal health issues to national policy makers and to international donor agencies.
Fund for animal health	The OIE has a fund for animal health and welfare which it uses to assess veterinary services and to help fill organizational gaps and address weaknesses to encourage continued long-term donor investments.
No implementation at national level	It is not OIE policy to implement programs at the national level but to support capacity building for national policy makers in the field of animal health. At the regional level, OIE uses these funds to support regional programs through regional mechanisms.

Conference in New Delhi	In December there will be a ministerial conference in New Delhi and this will most likely be a pledging conference. This presents a good opportunity for the region to present its needs; not just for HPAI but for all emerging and reemerging diseases. One message we need to convey is that investments in animal health are not lost or wasted if HPAI is not totally eradicated. HPAI is still considered a priority and allocation of resources to Asia is seen as an important priority.
Impact of GF-TAD partnership	Four years of careful planning and implementation have demonstrated that the GF-TAD partnership is an effective way of addressing this international crisis. Donor comments have been positive and they support the concept of the GF-TAD umbrella working through national organizations. Now we need to think more about long-term goals and strategies. FAO has already made a number of structural changes in the way it deals with animal health issues. These changes appear to be on the right track and we need to think about how to make them sustainable.
Donor confidence	At the international level, donors have some confidence that the FAO-OIE partnership is an effective mechanism for them to balance regional and national concerns and can be expanded to other areas of animal health protection.
Effective advocacy	Effective advocacy on our part starts at the country level by ensuring that governments are investing wisely in animal health services. However, to effectively address the transboundary nature of animal diseases we need for central chain of command, which the FAO-OIE structure can provide.
Asia as high priority region	Asia will remain a priority area for some time. At a donor meeting in Bamako in December of 2007, the donors have asked for a technical meeting to showcase our achievements over the last three years and to offer suggestions for how they can invest for the future. There will be meetings in Rome in the very near future to discuss this and the proceedings will be available shortly after. This will also give us some guidance for the donor meeting in New Delhi.
Sustaining donor commitment	The donors waiting to hear our recommendations. We need to inform them that the situation is improving, there are fewer outbreaks, many countries have demonstrated their capacity to control the disease, there is more awareness than before and hence there is faster detection and response and the disease has been eradicate in at least 15 countries. However, this is still the short term and we need to convey that message that our successes to date have depended very much on donor commitment.

In conclusion

Preparation for New Delhi	The donor consultative meeting in New Delhi must have good preparation and should advocate support to veterinary services as this approach focuses on prevention and yields far better cost benefit than preparing for or
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Funding for Steering Committee meetings	<p>dealing with a pandemic. All members were encouraged to consider their priorities and resource needs.</p> <p>Included in those resource needs are the funds needed to continue these Steering Committee meetings. These meetings are essential to the GF-TAD mechanism and must be sustained. It was suggested that the members propose that 1% of all project funds be allocated to this purpose.</p>
Japan	<p>The Government of Japan has been supporting OIE for the last three to four years and will continue to do so. Partners should be clear, however, that it is the policy of the government not to support ongoing operation and maintenance costs.</p>
Australia	<p>The previous donor pledging meeting was successful in part because it was driven by the threat of H5N1. The donor and animal health communities both have been maturing their thoughts about prevention of emerging and reemerging diseases and donor countries hope to identify priorities. The Australian government sees the need for developing capacity for prevention and control and the values of partnerships and encourages regional organizations to come forward with their ideas and recommendations. Australia will continue to support these initiatives and future directions will be influenced by internal dialogue and regional priorities. In general, the donor community likes to see concrete suggestions with measurable outcomes and this meeting is encouraged to come forward with such recommendations. Australia remains committed to supporting capacity building for veterinary services and building links with health services and looks forward to continued discussion of these issues.</p>

Final comments from donors

ADB	<p>ADB has been supporting many of the activities mentioned and provides support to ECTAD and is involved in control activities for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Central Asia. The Bank's position is that investments in HPAI control are a good investment and ADB is committed as a regional partner. The Bank would like to see some specific indications how it might engage in future activities, how to better partner with regional organizations and how to fit ADB projects and initiatives to GF-TAD programs.</p>
Thai Swine Producers Association	<p>Both the Thai Swine and the Thai Broiler Associations are concerned about the issues under discussion at this forum as they have significant implications for the export industry. Both Associations are open to suggestions how, on a case by case basis, they might participate in GF-TAD activities and would welcome more information.</p>
USAID	<p>The USAID/RDMA, Office of Public Health mainly focuses on health issues, particularly HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases such as TB, Malaria and Dengue. Because AI is an animal human interface issue, thus</p>

Dr Vallat, OIE Paris	<p>to the host country and to the many others involved in the organizing of the meeting. He noted that the discussions demonstrated the principle of flexibility that is an essential ingredient in forums such as this.</p> <p>Dr Vallat noted that the conduct of this meeting and collegial atmosphere that prevails is an indication of the progress we have made over the last three years. He thanked the organizers, wished all a safe journey home and officially closed the meeting.</p>
Next Steering Committee meeting	<p>The Chair, Dr Chaweewan, called for nominations for the location of the next GF-TAD meeting. The SARC representative volunteered to approach Nepal as the host for the next meeting. The SAARC Secretariat would facilitate arrangements and procedures in conjunction with the GF-TAD Secretariat. It was suggested that this meeting should follow the three RSU meetings in order that RSU plans and strategies could be included in the agenda.</p>
Preparation of final recommendation	<p>The Chair called on Dr Fujita to facilitate a final revision of the draft recommendations of the meeting. Revisions were made and the recommendations were adopted.</p>

Second Meeting
of the
Regional Steering Committee of the FAO/OIE GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific
Bangkok, Thailand, 18-19 July 2007

Recommendation

Support to Regional Animal Health Activities under the GF-TADs Mechanism

CONSIDERING THAT

Some recommendations were adopted during the first Regional Steering Committee Meeting held in Tokyo, Japan in March 2005,

In the meantime, the importance of the GF-TADs mechanism has been recognised in both sub-regions namely; South East Asia represented by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and South Asia represented by the Secretariat for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) herein referred to as Regional Specialised Organisations (RSOs) ,

This second meeting was also attended by the Secretariat of Pacific Community (SPC) providing a unique opportunity for the three organisations to discuss matters relating to harmonisation of animal health policies and GF-TADs activities in the region,

The three organisations agree that prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases (TADs) including zoonoses need to be further strengthened,

The Regional Support Unit (RSU) should bring together a critical mass of multidisciplinary teams of experts who can serve the needs of member countries,

There is a need to identify leading laboratories with relevant expertise in specific TADs which could subsequently become OIE Reference Laboratories and/or FAO Reference Centres if needed,

It is important to guarantee the coordinated action and sustainability of regional and international mechanisms ,

THE SECOND MEETING OF THE REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE GF-TADS FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. The SPC be recognised as an RSO within the framework of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific.

2. Only one RSU and one Epidemiological Network/Centre dealing with all priority diseases be established for each sub-region.
3. Each Epidemiological Network/Regional Leading Centre may, as far as possible, be attached to the RSU which will be responsible for the coordination of its activities.
4. RSUs organise their meetings in close collaboration with OIE, FAO, Regional organisations and neighbouring countries.
5. RSUs develop their short, medium and long term strategies for the prevention and control of TADs in accordance with OIE and FAO guidelines and with their support as required.
6. RSOs are encouraged to consider the possibility of involving the participation of neighbouring countries in their activities. In this respect, ASEAN shall enlist the participation of at least Japan, Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China and thus be known for the purpose of TAD prevention and control, as ASEAN+3. Similarly, SPC shall enlist the participation of Australia and New Zealand and be known as SPC+2.
7. RSUs identify and update their own list of priority TADs. With respect to SPC, the following are currently considered priority diseases: highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) , classical swine fever (CSF) and foot and mouth disease (FMD).
8. The RSU for the SPC region be hosted in the SPC's animal health and production office located in Suva, Fiji.
9. SPC animal health policies in animal and veterinary public health reflect OIE standards.
10. As noted in the recommendation by ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock on the interim location of the RSU in the ASEAN Secretariat, and as considerable experience in regional cooperation and technical expertise in animal health activities have been acquired by Thailand, which has also invested significantly in these fields, the RSU for ASEAN be located in Bangkok, Thailand.
11. The leading laboratories for the ASEAN region for FMD, CSF and HPAI be located respectively in Pak Chong, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia. All efforts will be made to provide support to these laboratories in order to allow them to meet high international technical standards if needed.
12. The leading laboratories for the SAARC region for FMD, HPAI and peste des petits ruminants (PPR) be located respectively in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh while it is confirmed that the RSU will be located in Kathmandu, Nepal.
13. The SPC+2 prepare proposals for leading laboratories within the sub-region for consideration by the third Steering Committee meeting.
14. Donors be requested to provide resources to assist in the sustainable implementation of the Steering Committee mechanisms.

15. The support to the regional and international GF-TADs mechanisms be made sustainable through financial support coming partly from the resources provided under national programmes.
16. More potential donors be invited to Regional Steering Committee Meetings and certain donors (World Bank, European Commission...) be represented by officials from their headquarters.
17. RSUs be encouraged to work in conjunction with OIE and FAO to present their TAD related short and medium term work priorities to relevant international meetings of donors.