

**3rd FAO/OIE Regional Steering Committee Meeting of  
GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific  
(Tokyo, 23-24 July 2009)**

The Third Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs (Global Framework for the progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases) for Asia and the Pacific was held in Toranomon Pastoral Hotel, Tokyo, Japan, on 23-24 July 2009.

The Meeting was attended by 42 participants of Selected FAO/OIE Members (Chief Veterinary Officers; CVOs), Secretariat of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) , Chair of ASEAN Sectoral Working Group of Livestock (ASWGL), Secretariat of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (Host Country), European Commission (EC), USA, FAO (HQ in Rome, Regional Office in Bangkok and FAO Office in Nepal) and OIE (HQ in Paris, SEAFMD (OIE Southeast Asia Foot and Mouth Disease Campaign) and OIE Sub-Regional Office in Bangkok and OIE Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in Tokyo).

Welcome remarks were given by Dr Teruhide Fujita, Permanent Secretariat of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee, Dr Joseph Domenech, FAO CVO, Dr Bernard Vallat, Director General of OIE and Dr Toshiro Kawashima, CVO of the Host country.

Short consultation on ASEAN GF-TADs was arranged before the Plenary Session of Regional Steering Committee Meeting, since the Sub-Regional Meeting for ASEAN was postponed due to the unavoidable circumstance.

The Meeting nominated Dr Toshiro Kawashima as Chairperson for the Meeting.

Outcome of the 2nd Global Steering Committee of GF-TADs initiatives was explained by Dr Joseph Domenech, while reports of the 2nd Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs was made by Dr Teruhide Fujita, of GF-TADs in other Regions by Dr Joseph Domenech and Dr Gaston Funes, OIE HQ, of on-going TADs control activities in the Region by Dr Subhash Morzaria, FAO RAP, Bangkok and Dr Itsuo Shimohira, OIE Asia-Pacific, Tokyo.

Reports on Sub-Regional GF-TADs for SAARC and SPC were made by Dr Riaz Hamiddulah, Secretariat of SAARC and Dr Ken Cokanashiga, Secretariat of SPC, respectively.

General Discussions were made by Donor Agencies and Collaborating Countries, which were followed by the discussion on the Regional Cooperation Programme for Control of Highly Pathogenic Emerging and Re-emerging Diseases (HPED).

The following are Conclusions and Recommendations by the 3rd FAO/OIE Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific.

1. The FAO/OIE GF-TADs is an established mechanism for the control and prevention of Trans-boundary Animal Diseases (TADs) and Emerging Infectious Diseases (EIDs) providing a coordinating framework for a range of infectious disease control activities occurring at global, regional and country levels.
2. GF-TADs is a coordinating mechanism, not an implementing one; and remains critical and the only available global framework in promoting synergies in approaches to control and prevention of TADs and other EIDs among the international agencies and avoiding contradictions and duplications in policy and programmes as recently seen in the management of HPAI and Pandemic H1N1 2009 crisis.

3. WHO is an important collaborating organization in the GF-TADs initiative and has a significant role in promoting animal and public health partnership in addressing zoonotic diseases.
4. GF-TADs has developed a range of tools and platforms such as GLEWS, OFFLU, RAHCs and CMC-AH to support TADs and EIDs control at international and regional levels.
5. HPAI crisis, and more recently the emergence of Pandemic H1N1 2009, have highlighted the potential importance of other existing TADs and EIDs such as FMD, CSF, PPR, rabies and infection with Reston Ebola virus, and the need to address these diseases as Global Public Goods with enhanced international and regional collaboration.
6. The unique coordinating mechanism under the GF-TADs is adding significant value to global and regional approaches to TADs and EIDs control.
7. HPAI is still resurgent in the region, while emergency responses to HPAI were supported by all stakeholders to control the disease with success in many cases, due *inter alia* to the investment made in the context of HPAI.
8. GF-TADs is strategically important for regional projects in animal health, in particular TADs and human infectious diseases (zoonoses) supported by bilateral and multilateral donors such as Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, USA, ADB and the World Bank (WB). It welcomes the intention of the European Commission (EC) to articulate future HPED programme with other donor activities and acknowledges the role vested onto GF-TADs to promote coherence and complementarities of these actions all along the implementation phases.

## GENERIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. GF-TADs overall goals are aligned with Millennium Development Goals and should contribute to food security and food safety, while taking into account socio-economic issues to protect livelihood and well being of people.
2. GF-TADs should continue to address cross cutting issues including capacity development; strengthening veterinary services to comply with international standards on quality of veterinary services (OIE PVS Tool and PVS Gap Analysis), good governance and legislation, veterinary education, and improved diagnostic laboratory services.
3. Cross cutting approaches should include strong cross sectoral collaboration including that between animal and public health sectors as embodied in the principles of the inter-agency (FAO/OIE/WHO/UNICEF/UNSC/WB) document entitled "Contributing to One World, One Health: A Strategic Framework for Reducing Risks of Infectious Diseases at the Animal-Human-Ecosystems Interface" presented at the 6th International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2008, and endorsed by the participants.

4. In this regard the WHO should be encouraged to participate in the Regional Steering Committee meetings to ensure synergy and harmonization of control of TADs particularly zoonoses and EIDs.
5. GF-TADs should support strengthening of diagnostic laboratory services, biosecurity, improved management of animal movement, epidemiology and laboratory networks, information systems and communication.
6. Good balance should be maintained between addressing the control and prevention of specific diseases and cross cutting issues, as well as the emergency response and medium to long term approaches to TADs and EIDs control.
7. The GF-TADs should continue to promote addressing the disease emergence through targeting the principle source which is animals, and ensure that the veterinary services remain the lead in addressing the control and eradication of these diseases at the national level.
8. Veterinary services, in dealing with animal diseases including zoonoses for improvement of animal production, the livelihood and well being of people, should take into account, at the national level, the importance of the interface between humans, domestic animals and wildlife.
9. More holistic and multidisciplinary approaches with veterinary and public health sectors are needed, considering globalization, climate change and broader factors of emergence and spread of TADs.
10. In this regard, the GF-TADs should promote surveillance based on defined hot spots in collaboration with other sectors including wildlife organizations.
11. FAO and OIE should maintain a sustainable mechanism to support the GF-TADs basic costs, which should be supported from external resources through continued collaboration with donors.
12. Monitoring and evaluation should be incorporated into the GF-TADs programme so that outcomes of coordination and synergies could be demonstrated.
13. GF-TADs visibility should be enhanced through the demonstration of its outcomes and impacts. It is important to show that GF-TADs adds value as a unique coordinating mechanism for control of TADs on global and regional bases. Model pilot projects under GF-TADs should be promoted in order to attract more donors to support such projects.

## **REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific should be the consultative mechanism for projects funded regionally such as the EC-supported regional cooperation programme on highly pathogenic and emerging and re-emerging diseases in Asia ("HPED Programme"), ASEAN Trust Fund activities, and others.
2. GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee supports the management set up for EC-funded HPED Programme as agreed during the meeting held in Rome in July 2008 and welcomes in particular the fact that the HPED Steering Committee meeting

should be held back to back and in close collaboration with the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee.

3. GF-TADs should continue engagement with sub-regional organizations/arrangements including SAARC, ASEAN, ASEAN+3, SPC and SPC+2 strengthening an important component of promoting sustainable improvements of GF-TADs.
4. ASEAN+3 sub-regional meeting should be organized as soon as possible.
5. GF-TADs sub-regional meetings should be organized to discuss specific sub-regional issues including socio-economic aspects related to disease control and prevention. The frequency of the sub-regional meetings should be flexible.
6. Efforts should be made to expedite the harmonization of national and regional information systems such as TADinfo and ARAHIS with WAHIS to ensure compatibility.
7. OIE and FAO should be invited to the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL) meetings, the SAARC CVOs' meetings and SPC PHOVAPS meetings, recognizing the importance of the role of these two international organizations in GF-TADs coordination.
8. The proposal from ASEAN as well as conclusions and recommendations (as per attached) from the Sub-Regions of SAARC and SPC be endorsed by the 3rd Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific.
9. GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee confirms the nomination of the CVO of Japan (Dr. Toshiro Kawashima) as the Chair of the Regional Steering Committee.
10. The Chairs of the SAARC CVOs Group, the ASWGL and PHOVAPS should be invited to join the Regional Steering Committee.

## **SPECIAL ISSUES**

1. In relation to Pandemic H1N1 2009 crisis, the key and harmonized messages produced by FAO and OIE have demonstrated strong collaboration under the GF-TADs and that FAO has started emergency financing for surveillance activities in pigs in various regions including Asia. Further funding should be sought to sustain activities to support surveillance in the region to monitor evolution and potential impact of Pandemic H1N1 2009 virus.
2. Strategies and road maps for specific diseases such as HPAI, FMD, CSF, PPR and rabies should be developed and funding sought to implement control and eradication programmes as appropriate.
3. All countries from the region should be encouraged to undertake the OIE PVS Evaluation, PVS Gap Analysis and to update their legislations related to animal health.
4. The existing disease control such as road map for SEAFMD, GREP and veterinary capacity building such as OIE/AusAID PSVS programme can be used as models for control of other TADs in the region.

5. Considering the growing importance of rabies in this region, there is a need for addressing the problem at source rather than post-exposure treatment in humans, through better engagement with public health sector at the same time taking into consideration animal welfare issues.
6. EC-supported HPED Programme is a very welcome regional flagship programme, to be linked with existing sub-regional activities.
7. The next Regional Steering Committee should be held within the two years time frame.
8. The meeting acknowledged the huge contribution of Dr. Joseph Domenech to the development of GF-TADs.

#### List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
OIE:	World Organisation of Animal Health
GF-TADs:	Global Framework for the progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases
EIDs:	Emerging Infectious Diseases
HPAI:	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
WHO:	World Health Organization
GLEWS:	FAO/OIE/WHO Global Early Warning and Response System for Major Animal Diseases
OFFLU:	OIE/FAO Network of Expertise on Animal Influenza
RAHCs:	Regional Animal Health Centers
CMC-AH:	FAO/OIE Crisis Management Center of Animal Health
FMD:	Foot and Mouth Disease
CSF:	Classical Swine Fever
PPR:	Peste des Petits Ruminants
ADB:	Asian Development Bank
WB:	World Bank
EC:	European Commission
HPED:	EC-supported regional cooperation programme on highly pathogenic emerging and re-emerging diseases in Asia
PVS:	Performance of Veterinary Services (OIE-PVS Tool)
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSC:	United Nations System Influenza Coordination
ASEAN:	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
SAARC:	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
ASEAN+3:	ASEAN member countries plus Japan, RO Korea and PR China
SPC:	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPC+2:	SPC member countries plus Australia and New Zealand
ARAHIS:	ASEAN Regional Animal Health Information System
WAHIS:	World Animal Health Information System
ASWGL:	ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock
CVO:	Chief Veterinary Officer
PHOVAPS:	Pacific Heads of Veterinary and Animal Health Production Services
SEAFMD:	OIE Southeast Asia Foot and Mouth Disease Campaign
GREP:	Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme
AusAID:	Australian Agency for International Development
PSVS:	(OIE/AusAID) Project to Strengthen Veterinary Services

### Proposals from ASEAN Sub-region for GF-TADS

Due to the incidents and security reasons in Jakarta, the Sub-regional Meeting of GF-TADS for ASEAN could not be organised prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Steering Committee for GF-TADS for Asia and the Pacific. However, views and discussion made by the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock on the sub-regional cooperation on TADS was reported, from which the recommendations were drawn.

1. There is considerable progress in the control of important TADs in the ASEAN region through the formulation and implementation of Sub-regional Strategy/ Campaign for each priority TADs, namely HPAI and FMD. SEAFMD Campaign 2020 is a model in which partnership among countries and international organisations with funding support from donor agencies has contributed to the success in tackling with the disease in the ASEAN region. Such a model could be replicated for other TADs, particularly CSF. It is recommended technical and funding support to the implementation of Sub-regional Strategies/ Campaigns should be continued. This is in particular to the Sub-regional Strategy for Control and Eradication of CSF in the ASEAN region.
2. Regarding BSE, ASEAN Member States requested technical assistance from FAO and OIE declaring a BSE-free status in ASEAN through enhancing studies and regional collaboration in addition to information sharing. Suggestion is to seek possibility of extending the existing training scheme for BSE diagnosis and risk assessment into a workshop in order for ASEAN Member States to discuss a work plan on how ASEAN can be considered as a region where all countries are BSE negligible risk.
3. Multi-sectoral collaboration is inevitable in the preparedness and response to any zoonotic diseases and should continue to be enhanced. It is however important to underscore the importance of and the need for strengthening of veterinary services capacity and sub-regional coordination to control animal diseases at sources. This would be a foundation, essential in enhancing contribution of the animal health sector into broader public health concern as guided by OWOH.
4. With the view to improve sub-regional coordination of TADs in ASEAN region, an independent study on "Strengthening ASEAN sub-regional coordination on animal health and zoonosis" is considered crucial and important in mapping out long-term strategy and plan. Due consideration and reference should be made to existing models and experiences in the control and eradication of priority TADs in the sub-region. Collaboration and inputs from international organisations and agencies concerned, particularly FAO and OIE is requested. Suggestion is made to clarify further expansion and utilisation of the ASEAN Animal Health Trust Fund as an integral part of strengthening of ASEAN sub-regional coordination on animal health and zoonosis.

**FAO/OIE Sub-Regional Meeting of GF-TADs for SAARC Region****in collaboration with SAARC Secretariat****(4-5 June 2009) Kathmandu, Nepal****Recommendations**

1. Considering that SAARC CVOs have developed a broad and generic roadmap for TADs control it is now recommended that more specific strategies and roadmaps be developed for each of the priority diseases identified for the region taking into account specific regional issues. In this regard the following is recommended:
  - a. As part of the global effort to control FMD, a number of regions in the world have moved toward developing regional road maps for FMD control. In order to support this global effort and to provide strong thrust to the control of FMD in SAARC countries, it is recommended that a road map for FMD towards progressive control and eradication be developed for the sub-region.
  - b. Recognizing that PPR is endemic in the SAARC region and its economic importance to the livestock industry of member countries, the meeting recommends that a regional strategy for PPR control and eradication be developed based on the global rinderpest eradication programme model.
  - c. While all SAARC member countries have national strategies to control HPAI in poultry, given the regional importance of the disease the meeting recommends that a sub-regional HPAI strategy to cover SAARC member countries be developed as soon as possible and to be compatible with the FAO/OIE Global Strategy on the Control of HPAI.
  - d. The disease specific roadmaps should be developed with the CVOs of each country based on the already agreed GF-TADs Framework for SAARC, taking into account the need for harmonization of approaches, including the need for regional epidemiological studies based on pathogen ecology, management of cross border livestock movement, disease information sharing, and improved understanding of the biological (particularly genetic and immunological) characteristics of pathogens, and the mechanism of provision of vaccines in case of emergencies.
  
2. In order to enhance more regional coordination using the GF-TADs framework, the meeting emphasized on early implementation of GF-TADs in SAARC, by early establishment of RSU and all associated units and networks.

In the meantime the meeting acknowledges and supports the ongoing work on HPAI and FMD being conducted by FAO and OIE in some countries and the sub-region.

Given the increasing importance of emerging infectious diseases it is recommended that broader capacity on early detection and response be developed in the region and greater cross-sectoral collaboration be promoted on the broad principles of One World One Health.

3. Considering the rapid spread of A/H1N1 influenza in humans, the propensity of the virus to recombine with other Influenza A viruses, and the presence of H5N1 virus in the region, it is recommended that in the context of SAARC member countries a surveillance strategies for H1N1 and H5N1 be developed in pigs and mixed pig-poultry farming systems and overall capacity building in the region to diagnose this disease be strengthened.
4. In the context of long term capacity building for the region to control TADs and EIDs, it is recommended that SAARC countries are encouraged when appropriate to have their veterinary services assessed using OIE PVS tool, and PVS gap analysis (OIE in collaboration with FAO and other partners).

The meeting recognizes and appreciates the efforts of FAO and OIE in fostering regional cooperation and collaboration for improved control of TADs in SAARC countries.

**FAO/OIE Sub-Regional Meeting of GF-TADs for SPC Region**  
**in collaboration with SPC Secretariat**  
**(25-26 June 2009)**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The FAO/OIE Sub-Regional Meeting of GF-TADs for SPC Region in collaboration with SPC Secretariat held in Nadi, Fiji on 25-26 June 2009, recommended the following to support activities of animal disease prevention and control in the Secretariat for Pacific Community (SPC) region, particularly in conjunction with the Global Framework for progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs).

The following conclusions and recommendations were derived from the above meeting.

5. The member countries of the Pacific Region have agreed that Regional Support Unit (RSU) under the umbrella of GF-TADs for the Pacific region will be hosted by the Secretariat for Pacific Countries (SPC). The RSU will be based in Suva, Fiji and attached to the animal production and health team. It has also been agreed by the member nations that the Epidemiological Unit will be attached to the RSU in Suva and will have links with national focal points as well as to the epidemiological expertise in Australia, France, New Zealand and USA.
6. For the RSU to function efficiently, it is also recommended that it be strengthened, and training for the regional staff attached to the Unit be provided so they are able to manage regional coordination to support rapid responses to emerging disease problems and also develop and deliver training programmes of the region in various aspects of TADs control.
7. Based on the predominant livestock species in the 22 member countries, and almost no major problems with important transboundary animal diseases (TADs), the member countries have agreed to base their GF-TADs priority on disease prevention through early detection and response capabilities. In this regard the countries have identified the following two broad priorities:
  - a. Consolidating their preparedness plans for exotic diseases such as Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), Newcastle Disease, Classical Swine Fever, Foot and Mouth Disease, Bluetongue, Peste des Petit Ruminants and Rabies.
  - b. Continuing to address their immediate endemic zoonotic disease problems such as Brucellosis, Leptospirosis and Bovine Tuberculosis in ruminants.

8. Regional Coordination will be one of the most important functions of the RSU and in this regard it should play a major role in:
  - a. regional harmonization of various aspects of disease control including standardization of legislation and its application, and
  - b. resource mobilisation for the priority areas identified below.
  
9. SPC has identified three Sub-Regional laboratories to be based in Guam, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. These are level 2 laboratories that will serve the three Pacific Island subregions; Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Level 2 laboratories are defined as easily accessible to other Pacific Islands Countries and Territories (PICTs), have an appropriately established infrastructure to house serology equipment, have permanently employed, well trained laboratory veterinarians and technicians and countries hosting the laboratories can give duty tax exemption for imported laboratory equipment. These laboratories are currently focused on conducting serological tests for avian influenza, but will soon be upgraded to conduct PCR-based diagnostics. These laboratories are also expected to provide other diagnostic services, particularly for potential important exotic diseases (see above). The member nations recommend that the strengthening of these sub-regional laboratories is a priority in order to provide rapid regional diagnostic capacity, particularly as most of the countries in the region have inadequate national diagnostic capabilities.
  
10. The Pacific countries have agreed that given the current state of national and regional diagnostic capacity it is not realistic to consider building facilities that could provide regional reference level diagnostic facilities. Thus the SPC members will continue to access services of the external Reference Laboratories through Australia, France, New Zealand and USA.
  
11. It was acknowledged that in the medium to long term national laboratory capacities will need to be built up to support surveillance programmes that will enable the countries and the region to detect infectious diseases early, and respond to them in a timely manner. In recommending enhancement of laboratory capacities in various countries of the Region the following important points need to be taken into consideration:
  - a. Laboratory capacity is still rudimentary in the region and majority of the countries do not even have basic national laboratory facilities.
  - b. In most countries the human health diagnostic capacity is at a higher level than veterinary laboratories, however currently, veterinary samples are not allowed to be tested in human laboratories.
  - c. The key areas for strengthening laboratory capacity include renovating existing rundown laboratory buildings or constructing completely new buildings, and procuring new laboratory equipment.

- d. Multiple laboratory techniques should be progressively strengthened; starting with basic laboratory facilities to microscopy, serology and in some countries molecular diagnostics.
  - e. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for collection and shipping of samples and diagnosis need also to be developed for most countries.
12. The SPC also agreed that all countries should strengthen their surveillance capacity and develop programmes focusing on the two main activities below:
- a. Conducting base line disease surveillance to better define the existing disease status in the countries.
  - b. Generating national and regional information on livestock sector (range of species, numbers, farming systems, etc), and their socio-economic relevance and importance.
13. The participants also strongly recommended training in a broad range of areas for infectious disease prevention and control. These included:
- a. Training of paravets, and institutionalization where possible. The training should include development of advanced para-vet modules and web-based training courses starting with introductory level training, and gradually moving into more specialised training to make diagnosis of exotic or unusual diseases possible.
  - b. Training should also be provided to build a strong cadre of laboratory technicians who should be able to make diagnosis of exotic diseases.
  - c. Field epidemiology training is also necessary in all countries of the Region.
  - d. Biosecurity training for quarantine officers
  - e. Communications training (for public awareness, risk communication and crisis communication, etc.) should also be included as part of the capacity building.
  - f. Good livestock production practices (including on farm biosecurity) and animal welfare
14. Policy and legislation should be strengthened particularly in the areas of compensation, border control (biosecurity), intersectoral coordination, emergency management and vaccination.
15. It is also recommended that for effective and efficient delivery of the above recommendations a monitoring and evaluation system of the GF-TADs regional programme be carried out every for 2 years.