

Conclusion and Recommendations (Final version)

Third OIE Regional Expert Group Meeting for Implementation of the Programme on Surveillance of Wild Birds and Domestic Animals along Migratory Flyways under the OIE/JTF Project for Strengthening HPAI Control in Asia

Tokyo, Japan, 16-17 June 2010

(The background)

1. OIE/Japan Trust Fund (JTF) Programme on Strengthening HPAI control in Asia was launched in April 2008. This project is planned to be carried out for five years from April 2008 to March 2013.
2. In order to launch the programme in a smooth and effective manner, the Inception Meeting was organised in Tokyo, Japan on 21-23 April 2008 with the attendance from OIE Headquarters, inviting Members in Asia, Donors and other relevant organisations. During the meeting, the overall plan of the programme on surveillance of wild birds and domestic animals along migratory flyways was discussed.
3. Taking into consideration the discussion of the Inception Meeting, the Expert Group Meeting was established in 2008 and the First and Second OIE Regional Expert Group Meeting for implementation of Programme on Surveillance were organised in Tokyo, Japan on 16 October 2008 and on 13-14 May 2009, respectively, with the attendance from OIE Headquarters (first meeting), and inviting participants from PR China, Hong Kong SAR China, Japan, RO Korea, Laos, Malaysia (second meeting), Mongolia, Pakistan (second meeting), Thailand and Vietnam as well as related organisations such as Ministry of the Environment of Japan, the OIE Reference Laboratory for HPAI and LPAI in Japan and Yamashina Institute for Ornithology.
4. At the first meeting held in October 2008, it was considered that the OIE Regional Expert Group Meeting be organised at least once a year for the following objectives to ensure smooth and effective implementation of the surveillance programme:
 - (1) To discuss and prepare an Action Plan for the surveillance;
 - (2) To discuss Methods for implementation of the surveillance;
 - (3) To share information on the progress of the surveillance of each year; and
 - (4) To provide OIE with technical advice on implementation of the surveillance.
5. At the first and the second OIE Regional Expert Group Meeting, the action plan for the surveillance during the 2008 fiscal year (October 2008-March 2009) and the 2009 fiscal year (May 2009 – March 2010) were discussed and established, respectively.

(The Third Meeting)

6. The 3rd Expert Group Meeting was successfully organized in Tokyo, Japan on 16-17 June 2010.
7. The meeting was attended by more than 25 participants from nine (9) member countries/territories, namely, PR China, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Laos, Mongolia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal, OIE Reference Laboratory for HPAI and LPAI, Yamashina Institute for Ornithology and OIE Head Quarters.
8. The meeting was informed of (1) outline of the OIE/J(S)TF Project for Strengthening HPAI control in Asia, (2) Progress of AI surveillance of wild birds and domestic animals along migratory flyways in 2008-2010, (3) Current Global situation of Avian Influenza, (4) Influenza development including Pandemic H1N1 2009 in animals.

(Recognitions)

9. The meeting noted the informative and meaningful presentations concerning (1) current global situation of HPAI by Dr Hamilton from OIE HQ and (2) Influenza Development including Pandemic H1N1 2009 in Animals by Dr Kida, OIE Reference Laboratory for HPAI and LPAI.
10. The meeting noted the importance to strengthen Veterinary Services globally to control HPAI.
11. The meeting noted the excellent and informative country reports by nine countries/territories on (1) Current HPAI Situation and National AI surveillance programme of domestic animals and wild birds, and (2) Migration of wild birds at national level.
12. The meeting also noted through the country reports from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal the excellent outcomes and achievement of the OIE/JSTF Project in the respective countries.
13. The meeting noted that clade 2.3.2.HPAI virus has spread to South Asia and Europe and it is possible to cause the second cross continental spreading of the disease.
14. The Meeting noted the progress of AI surveillance under the OIE/JTF Project and achievement of surveillance in 2008-2010 implemented in Hong Kong SAR, Laos, Mongolia and Vietnam (the south and the north) in accordance with the recommendations made by the 1st and 2nd Expert Group Meeting.

15. The meeting noted the excellent and informative report on the outcomes of AI virus studies under the surveillance programme by OIE Reference Laboratory, Hokkaido University.
16. The Meeting noted that so far 40 influenza A viruses have been isolated from the samples collected from domestic birds (ducks) in the southern part of Vietnam, and that the results of the AI virus studies such as genetic analysis (sequencing) on these isolates are beneficial to understand and to elucidate the mechanisms of transmission and spread of AI viruses including H5N1 virus within a country and in the region.
17. The meeting noted that occurrence of genetic re-assortment has been recognized in H9N2 viruses isolated from Live bird Markets in the southern part of Vietnam, and the important roles of surveillance/monitoring in live bird markets to develop better understanding of the occurrence of genetic re-assortment in avian influenza viruses.
18. The Meeting noted several key factors that are crucial to secure an effective and efficient implementation of the AI surveillance programme, as follows.
 - (1) Establishment of a steady framework of implementation amongst related organizations
 - (2) Identification and assignment of a focal point in countries for the AI surveillance programme under the OIE/JTF Project
 - (3) Smooth and better communication amongst related organizations
 - (4) Appropriate handling and temperature control of collected samples in the field
 - (5) Encouragement of synergy with partner organizations
19. The Meeting also noted that (1) identification of appropriate local ornithologist(s) and (2) availability of relevant information concerning migration of wild birds in a country are the key factors to identify candidate sites, the best timing for the surveillance activities of wild birds.
20. The Meeting noted that the factors mentioned in item 16 and 17 should be among the elements to be considered when selecting candidate countries for the implementation of surveillance.
21. The Meeting noted the importance of continuous and frequent sample collections from domestic birds (waterfowl) in the south of Vietnam to get more information and data concerning the prevalence of AI viruses.
22. The Meeting noted that candidate countries for 2010-2011 should be selected considering the geographical distribution in the region.
23. The meeting noted the importance of continuous implementation of surveillance in Asia.
24. The meeting noted the importance of shearing information with other partner organizations and donors concerning their AI surveillance activities.

25. The meeting noted that Bhutan expressed its interest in joining the AI surveillance programme.

26. The meeting acknowledged the importance of monitoring influenza viruses in birds and other animals to identify emerging threats for both animal and public health.

27. The meeting noted the interest of some country to host the next Expert Group Meeting.

(Recommendations)

28. Considering the factors mentioned in Item 18 and 19, and geographical distribution of countries where surveillance activities are to be carried out, OIE Asia-Pacific should consider implementing the surveillance programme for 2010-2011 in the following countries.

- (1) East Asia: Mongolia
- (2) Southeast Asia: Vietnam
- (3) South Asia: Bangladesh

29. In the case of Vietnam;

- (1) surveillance activities should be carried out in the south of the country,
- (2) Surveillance activities of domestic birds (sample collections) should be carried out twice in September-October 2010 and in January-February 2011.
- (3) Surveillance activities of wild birds (sample collections and banding) should be carried out once in January-February 2011.
- (4) Site(s) and the best timings for the surveillance activities should be determined in due course.

30. In the case of Mongolia;

- (1) OIE Asia-Pacific should consider implementing surveillance activities in both in Mid July-Early August 2010 and in late August – early September 2010 in collaboration with OIE Reference Laboratory, Hokkaido University.
- (2) Surveillance activities should be focused on wild birds and including dead birds.
- (3) Site(s) and the best timing for the activities should be determined in due course.

31. In the case of Bangladesh;

- (1) OIE Asia-Pacific should visit the country to discuss an implementation plan with the Veterinary Authorities in the country and to identify candidate sites and the best timings for surveillance activities
- (2) OIE Asia-Pacific should consider implementing surveillance of wild birds in early 2012.

(3) OIE Asia-Pacific should consider implementing surveillance of domestic birds in early-mid December 2010.

32. Where appropriate, OIE Asia-Pacific should consider studying the feasibility to implement AI surveillance programme in other countries from South Asia.

33. OIE Asia-Pacific should promote synergy with other organizations to secure effective and efficient implementation of the surveillance programme and to complement each other.

34. The 4th OIE Regional Expert Group Meeting should be organized in April-June 2011.

(Acknowledgement)

35. The Meeting acknowledged the MAFF-Japan for its continuous and generous support for the Surveillance Programme.