

Meeting on highly pathogenic avian influenza in Europe

OIE Headquarters, Paris, France, 27-28 February 2006

Recommendation

Original : English

Control of avian influenza in Europe

CONSIDERING THAT

The highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza virus is already widespread in several countries of Europe;

The transmission of the H5N1 virus over long distances by migratory birds is possible and the infection has already spread to domestic poultry in several countries,

The spread of the infection to domestic poultry in other European and neighbouring countries is highly likely and may be potentiated by the arrival in Europe of possibly infected birds from Africa and the Middle East,

Avian influenza will have a considerable negative impact on the rural economies of certain European countries, on increasing poverty and on the trade of poultry and poultry products;

All countries of the world should be supported by international community to be able to control the virus irrespective of their national economies as only one defaulting country can seriously endanger the rest of the planet;

Veterinary Services (VS) in all countries of the world are on the front line for the policies relating to the prevention and control of animal diseases;

The efficacy of VS is particularly linked to compliance with OIE standards adopted democratically by all Member Countries;

The Performance, Vision, Strategy (PVS) tool elaborated by the OIE with assistance from the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture can be used to assess the degree of that compliance;

The FAO/OIE framework GF-TADs (global framework for the control of trans-boundary animal diseases) gives the possibility to coordinate and put in place the prevention and control programmes for trans-boundary animal diseases;

The prevention and control strategies of avian influenza in animals are defined by each country in agreement with the global strategy published by OIE and FAO, in collaboration with WHO, as adopted during the Geneva and Beijing Conferences.

The international community has during the Beijing Conference, made a commitment to support the VS of 140 developing and in transition countries at risk by using particularly OIE standards

and considerations of OIE and FAO, to determine priority areas for improving VS for which funding will be provided to countries that so request;

It is particularly recommended that Member Countries adopt appropriate veterinary legislation and put in place an efficient organisation and provide adequate resources to VS to correctly apply that legislation;

These standards also insist upon a sanitary policy based on a chain of command permitting an upward flow of information from the field to the top and instructions from the top to the base while ensuring adequate budgetary resources necessary for the effective application of veterinary legislations;

The contents of the national investment programmes of developing or in transition countries will be particularly based on the results obtained from the evaluation of VS carried out on a voluntary basis under the responsibility of the OIE/ FAO Quality centres for animal health, hosted by the regional offices of OIE.

The evaluation of the veterinary services will be performed under the auspices of the OIE in collaboration with FAO and the donors concerned.

The H5N1 virus may mutate or reassort and become transmissible from man to man generating a major public health problem at global level; The best way to avoid this evolution is to combat the virus at its animal source;

THE MEETING ON HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA IN EUROPE RECOMMENDS THAT

1. All Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe endorse the declaration of the Beijing conference related to veterinary measures to be taken for the control of avian influenza.
2. All Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe prepare emergency plans in line with international standards, guidelines and recommendations, in particular these of FAO and OIE
3. These emergency plans include, new legislations and regulations enabling the constitution of a national chain of command, a mechanism for compensation for poultry owners and if necessary an appropriate strategic stock of vaccines directed against the H5N1 strain accompanied by relevant vaccination materials.
4. In certain countries or situations at risk where early warning, early detection, confinement and stamping out control measures are not sufficient to limit the spread of the virus and in case of specific situations at high risk, a vaccination strategy in line with OIE/FAO recommendations can be applied.
5. VS must be on the front line of avian flu prevention and control
6. Countries which so wish, prepare investment dossiers relating to strengthening of VS taking as objective, compliance with OIE standards on the quality of VS.
7. Deficiencies in standards be determined by evaluations carried out on a voluntary basis under the auspices of the OIE and with the support of FAO and donors using the PVS tool which will also be regarded as a development tool by Member Countries.

8. Requests for financing addressed to governments and donors be established whenever necessary taking into account the deficiencies in the standards noted during the evaluations carried out using the PVS tool in accordance with the position of donors during the Beijing conference in January 2006.
9. The strategies on avian influenza prevention and control be set up taking into consideration the international and regional mechanisms under the auspices of the OIE, FAO and the EC.
10. The FAO/OIE GF-TADS Agreement for Europe be implemented without delay.
11. A regional OIE/FAO health centre to be hosted by the OIE Regional Representation as defined during the Beijing conference be urgently created in Europe in order to particularly support countries to control avian influenza in very close collaboration with the EC.
12. Funds pledged for avian influenza control in animals during the Beijing conference by donors including the EC, be allocated at global, regional and national levels.
13. Non EU Member Countries of Eastern Europe located on the borders of other continents be considered as front line defenders and supported on request by other countries, World Bank and the EC for controlling animal diseases in the field of quality of VS, diagnostic capabilities, vaccine production and veterinary infrastructure.
14. Findings of the highly pathogenic H5N1 in wild birds do not lead countries to adopt trade restrictions in poultry and poultry products according to the standards of the OIE *terrestrial Code*.
15. Countries report to the OIE on their findings of the highly pathogenic H5N1 in wild birds and on the measures taken to prevent transmission of disease to domestic birds. OIE will propose to member countries new articles on the *Terrestrial Code* for notification on AI in wildlife.
16. The OIE will complete the work on the guidelines on surveillance of wild birds in collaboration with FAO, including the role of species such as pigeons.
17. The OIE evaluates the current chapter for veterinary vaccine production and develops guidelines for the implementation and management of avian influenza vaccination programs. These guidelines will be discussed again during a OIE/FAO/EC worldwide conference on AI vaccines in 2006. Other potential donors are invited to support and to participate in this conference
18. The OIE regional commission for Europe encourages the set up of an AI reference laboratory in Vladimir Russia. The EC is requested to support this project.
19. The current recommendation will be presented for adoption at the next OIE Regional Conference for Europe as well as to donors that have made funding commitments during the Beijing conference.

