

FAO/OIE GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE CONTROL



BANGKOK, THAILAND 27-29 JUNE 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS

CONSIDERING THAT:

- Livestock is important in food security, income generation, small holder's livelihoods and poverty alleviation.
- Major livestock diseases are of social and economic importance, in particular those of highly contagious and transboundary nature. They are among the most significant limiting factors for livestock production. Their impact can vary from reduced productivity and restricted market access to the elimination of entire flocks or herds, with the resultant loss of biodiversity and valuable genetic resources and public health risks.
- Globalisation of trade with rapid and long distance movements of animals and animal products increases the risk of major pathogens spreading from one country/region to another.
- FMD is still widespread throughout the world, particularly in Asia, Africa and the Middle East and by the end of May 2012, more than 100 countries were not FMD-free and they remain a continuous threat to free countries. Foot and mouth disease (FMD) can severely affect and disrupt regional and international trade in animals and animal products causing enormous financial damage. In developing countries, where the adverse effects of FMD are often underestimated, the disease undermines food security and economic development, at the level of both village smallholders and the more organised production chains. In other regions of the world massive culling has created animal welfare and ethical concerns, not just in the agricultural sector, but in society as a whole.
- All scientific evidence indicates that in most regions of the world, wild ungulates are susceptible to FMD but do not serve to maintain the virus in the absence of ongoing infections in domestic livestock. In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, the African buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*) can serve as a source of FMD infection for domestic animals but not all FMD outbreaks in livestock over the last ten years have been associated with buffalo. In some regions, in particular in Southern Africa, the persistence of the FMD virus in certain wild animals represents a threat to the domestic ruminant population and the impact of some FMD control measures on wildlife conservation has become an important consideration.
- The recent epidemiological situation, with the incursion of FMD virus into free (Japan, Korea, Bulgaria) and infected countries (SAT2 in Egypt and Libya) once again shows that countries – even those where the virus has been eliminated for years – remain under threat and must be fully prepared for the emergence / reemergence of FMD.
- Controlling Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) such as FMD at source is a shared interest between infected and uninfected countries and should be considered a Global Public Good.
- The control of FMD and other TADs cannot be sustained if good governance of animal health systems, including effective Veterinary Services complying with OIE Standards and continuously updated supporting legislation, is not in place and supported by appropriate public-private partnerships.
- The first OIE FAO Global Conference on FMD held in Asunción, Paraguay, in June 2009 recommended that FAO and OIE establish an FMD Working Group under the Global Framework for the progressive control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF TADs) and prepare a Global FMD Control Strategy.

- The 79th OIE World Assembly in May 2011 in Paris supported the preparation of the Global Control Strategy and asked that a consultation of experts and representatives of national, regional and international institutions be undertaken.
- Implementing science-based animal health measures based on the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* and *Manual* is essential to minimise potential economic and trade implications of FMD.
- The Global FMD Control Strategy published and discussed during the FAO/OIE Global Conference on FMD Control held in Bangkok, Thailand, 27-29 June 2012, is not presented as a 'stand-alone' activity but rather a combination of three inter-related components, namely the Control of FMD, Strengthening of Veterinary Services and the Prevention and control of other major diseases of livestock. The overall aim of the FMD Control Strategy is to reduce the global impact of the disease and to be used as an entry point to achieve sustainable progress in the performance of Veterinary Services and, in turn, improve the animal health status concerning other livestock diseases (spin-off effects). The Strategy is flexible enough to accommodate differentiated responses according to different scenarios in terms of country FMD-PCP stages and regionally different existing initiatives such as SEACFMD and South American Institutions.
- Endemic countries are at different stages of managing FMD reflecting their socio-economic development and their livestock sectors. But for global control it is necessary to find ways to encourage all countries to engage with the global effort.
- In addition to the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services Pathway (PVS Pathway) and relevant articles of the OIE *Terrestrial Code* and *Manual*, new articles of the *Code* allow OIE to endorse national FMD control programmes submitted by countries that are not yet FMD-free but which are at an advanced level such as Stage 3 of the FMD-PCP and this will mark the country's entry into the pathway towards freedom from FMD in the domestic animal population.
- The OIE pathway to freedom provides the definitive steps for countries seeking international recognition for their disease control programme and disease freedom status, whereas the Progressive Control Pathway for FMD (FMD-PCP), a new joint FAO-EuFMD-OIE tool, provides a mechanism for other countries to engage in and contribute to the global FMD control effort without the immediate goal of disease freedom.
- Several tools are of critical importance to the Global FMD Control Strategy. These include effective surveillance and competent diagnostic laboratories with regional and international networking, appropriate vaccines to control FMD in endemic countries and to maintain free status (before complete cessation of vaccination), and emergency preparedness and immediate response to new disease events.
- Capacity building at the technical and managerial level as well as regular and effective communication to build public-private partnerships and gain the support of the animal owners are crucial for any control strategy.
- The role and services of reference laboratories are important to the success of a global approach. However some concerns exist among participating countries about the constraints in submitting infectious materials to reference laboratories.
- A regional approach is seen as (and history has proven to be) key for the control of FMD and other major TADs. The FMD control experience of a number of countries and regions, especially Europe, South America and South-East Asia have served as the basis for developing the global strategy.
- Global experience with Rinderpest eradication and HPAI H5N1 control have demonstrated the importance of international and regional cooperation and coordination.
- Many developing countries lack the necessary resources and effective veterinary services that comply with the OIE Quality Standards to initiate, implement or sustain control programmes against FMD and other TADs.
- The difficulties and limits of analysis of the Cost Benefit on the Global FMD program, as well as the demand from many national veterinary services to get support with the socio-economic justification of investing in overall veterinary services capacity and specific control programs, including the progressive control of FMD.

- Strengthened veterinary services with sound governance are able to make a sound contribution to One Health initiatives and the broader public good.
- Global elimination of FMD and other major TADs is a long term objective requiring more than the period of 15 years presented in the Global FMD Control Strategy.

THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE CONFERENCE RECOMMEND THAT:

► TO COUNTRIES:

1. FMD be recognised as a high priority disease that should be combatted synchronously on a global scale for the benefit of all countries;
2. FMD global control be considered as possible with existing means and methods;
3. The joint FAO/OIE Global FMD Control Strategy and Implementing Plan – with the 3 Components – be strongly supported as the framework to engage into or continue FMD (and other animal diseases) control worldwide, under the GF-TADs mechanism when accepted by countries;
4. All countries that are not FMD-free, develop and implement a national FMD control program using the objectives, guidance and tools of the global FMD Control Strategy with the FMD-PCP as the preferred tool when appropriate for FMD-endemic countries to design and implement the strategy and monitor progress over time;
5. Countries use the possibility of OIE-officially endorsed FMD Control Programmes at Stage 3 of the PCP as a recognition of the effective management of FMD control in the country and continue by entering the official OIE recognition pathway for FMD-free status whenever feasible (based on zoning or the country as a whole);
6. Countries develop the veterinary services capacity using the OIE PVS Pathway (to create the required enabling environment), so as to ensure the sustainability of FMD (and other animal diseases) control programmes put in place including FMD-PCP when appropriate and to improve the economic and social resilience to major animal health events;
7. Countries consider the good governance of veterinary services, based on an appropriate animal health legislation, veterinary education and statutory bodies, as a pre-requisite to reach the higher FMD-PCP stages (Stage 3 and beyond);
8. The national FMD control programmes be based on robust animal health systems and effective public-private partnerships, and notably encourage the role of the private sector and of local communities, as key actors in FMD and other animal disease prevention and control measures;
9. Countries improve the surveillance, reporting and official notification of FMD (and other animal diseases) – both in domestic and wildlife species – including immediate alert, follow-up and final reports at national and global level using the OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS/WAHID).
10. Rumor tracking is also encouraged at global level using, when appropriate, the FAO-OIE-WHO GLEWS (Global Early Warning System) reporting system as well as other regional information systems compatible with global systems.
11. Countries make use of the existing articles of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* to combine these with the FMD-PCP approach in the appropriate stages, in particular zoning, compartmentalisation, containment, protection zones and commodity-based trade and actively participate in the FMD standard setting process through their national OIE Delegate;
12. The risk of infection from African buffalo must be considered when developing national FMD control programs. There is little evidence that other wild ungulates play a role in the maintenance of FMD with the exception of *Syncerus caffer* and so efforts to control FMD must be regionally and locally appropriate and are best targeted at reducing or preventing the disease in domestic animals including feral animals, thus most effectively protecting both livestock and wildlife, as well as human livelihoods.

► TO REGIONAL AND GLOBAL TECHNICAL PARTNERS:

13. The strengthening of the laboratory and epidemiology expertise and the networks, as foreseen by the Global FMD Control Strategy, be supported;
14. The international community, including the countries themselves, supports the Global FMD Control Strategy and in particular fund the regional support units for progressive control of FMD in each virus pool, to give the technical and other guidance required to achieve PCP progress. Within each virus pool control strategies will have to be developed to suit the epidemiology of FMD, socioeconomic status and resources available;
15. There should be global investment in ensuring reference laboratories are equipped to perform the likely increased load for vaccine matching studies and services. Countries are encouraged to submit field virus strains for vaccine matching and to monitor the spread and emergence of new viruses;
16. The setting of regional vaccine banks be established when and where appropriate using existing OIE antigen/vaccine banks or other efficient regional vaccine banks as models, or special funds for FMD vaccine delivery and application (*i.e.* FAO APHCA) as key contribution for funding partners and country/regional commitment;
17. Applied research should be conducted to improve vaccines, diagnostics and the understanding of infection and transmission mechanisms, to develop better spread models and determine the presence of virus in products destined for commodity trade;
18. Regular GF-TADs regional and global Steering Committee meetings as well as regional roadmaps meetings be organised;

► TO OIE AND FAO (THROUGH THE GF-TADS):

19. The FAO establish a more robust FAO/OIE FMD Secretariat within the FAO-OIE GF-TADs FMD Working Group;
20. FAO and OIE explore fund raising options, based on the conclusions of the Bangkok conference;
21. To enhance effective results of technical interventions FAO and OIE continue to emphasize the importance of socio-economic analysis (including livelihood, livestock sector strategies and value chain factors) that can guide FMD control programs to be more successful;
22. For FMD control programs, key beneficiaries of the program, including farmers, farmer associations and traders be consulted at all stages of design and implementation;
23. Based on this understanding, FAO and OIE assist national Veterinary Services to advocate for the political and other stakeholders support for appropriate FMD control activities;
24. OIE and FAO assist countries to assemble evidence to demonstrate impacts of early control gains, so as to further secure political and other stakeholder support for FMD control;
25. A monitoring system for the Global Strategy implementation be put in place, under the responsibility of the Global GF-TADs Steering Committee; the GF-TADs FMD WG to report on an annual basis on the global and regional progress, including where appropriate the country FMD PCP stages from regional FMD roadmaps; this information to be made available in the GF-TADs Steering Committee and the Annual Assembly of OIE Delegates;
26. The Global Strategy be reviewed regularly and if needed updated on the basis of this monitoring work;
27. The FMD portfolio of activities (national budget and external support) be established every 2 years by the GF-TADs FMD WG, to best support the implementation of the Global Strategy;
28. The provisional GF-TADs FMD acceptance process, for the external evaluation of the relevant country FMD-PCP stages, be finalised;

29. The FAO-OIE CMC-AH and FAO-OIE-WHO GLEWS be made sustainable and be continually improved, to best serve the countries;
30. Institute for Animal Health, Pirbright, UK, be considered as the Global Coordinating Reference Laboratory for FMD, for the first phase of the Global Strategy. Support for reference laboratory services should be increased. Capacity building of FMD diagnosis at national and regional level be promoted through the network of FMD reference laboratories. Establishment of a reference laboratory should be promoted for each of the virus pool regions. Twinning programmes should be applied to speed up achievement of reference status for these laboratories;
31. The Global Strategy be considered as the preferred framework to develop new animal disease global control programmes under the GF-TADs mechanism and if relevant dedicated specific GF-TADs WG be set up for this purpose;
32. International agencies pursue dialogue with IATA/ICAO and other relevant agencies such as UNCTAD and WCO, to develop agreements that would facilitate shipping of FMD samples to reference laboratories or alternative approaches to shipping virus material safely be explored;
33. OIE continue to review and update the standards for FMD in the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* and *Manual* to reflect the latest technical advances and in doing so to ensure that the standards of FMD for international trade purposes are only applicable to those domestic and wildlife ruminants that have been scientifically proven to be of epidemiological significance.

► TO DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

34. The international community of development partners considers funding the Global Strategy, on the bases of the budget presented during the Global conference;
35. The international community of development partners devotes special attention to (i) strengthening Veterinary Services using OIE standards and guidelines, (ii) initiate and sustain FMD control programmes in the least developed countries – with particular emphasis on Africa, Asia, Middle East, Andean Region and Eastern Europe, (iii) regional and global activities to ensure the proper awareness, monitoring, resources mobilisation and commitment, coordination and harmonisation;
36. At regional and global level, priority activities include support to: (i) surveillance and diagnostic laboratories including twinning programmes at all levels; (ii) development of FMD regional roadmaps where appropriate (iii) reinforced FAO-OIE GF-TADs FMD Working Group to stimulate and monitor and report on the implementation of the Global Strategy;
37. Sub-regional training workshops be supported under agreed mechanisms with international agencies (FAO, OIE) and partners, including relevant regional organisations, to draft country disease control plans based on the results of the OIE PVS Gap Analysis. These plans covering a list of 3 to 5 regional/national priority diseases (including FMD) - as proposed by the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committees - would be prepared first at national level respecting donors requirements and, when possible, be discussed and analysed with FAO/OIE animal health and socio-economist experts. When finalised, the plans should then be presented using, when appropriate, to the GF-TADs framework.
38. **The third Global Conference for the control of FMD be held in Africa (date and venue to be confirmed).**