



OIE Regional Commission for Europe

Tenth meeting of the Regional Core Group of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (RCG-10)

2 and 3 December 2019, London, UK

Final Report - Draft¹

Summary

The 10th meeting of the Regional Core Group (RCG-10) was held in London from 2 to 3 December with the direct participation of 9 out of 11 OIE Delegates of Member Countries, and online presentation by one Member. The Agenda of the RCG10 was focused on topics related to activities of the OIE Council, Code Commissions, relevant OIE projects and new OIE strategies (Communication, Aquatic Animal Health), communication activities and tools (ASF, AMR, Rinderpest, Rabies) and animal welfare.

The meeting was open and chaired by Dr Maris Balodis, OIE Delegate of Latvia and President of OIE Regional Commission for Europe. He introduced three new members of the RCG (OIE Delegates of Montenegro, Belarus and Georgia), and confirmed the OIE Regional Representation in Moscow is new RCG Secretariat, responsible for the preparation of the RCG-10 as previously agreed. He underlined small changes in the format of the agenda with providing more presentations by members than earlier, which will ensure their higher involvement prior and during the meeting and enable better ownership of all the activities by overall RCG.

Although Dr Christianne Brusckke, Delegate of The Netherlands and OIE Council member was not able to participate meeting, she presented relevant information by teleconference, particularly regarding the evaluation of the OIE General Session, the OIE 7th Strategic Plan and the Observatory project.

Dr Javier Francisco Dominguez Orive presented outcomes of the last meeting of the OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Code Commissions and proposed common positions of the Regional Commission for Europe for adoption during next General Session. He underlined the necessity to give reasonable timeframes to Member Countries to provide comments and proposals.

Three OIE Delegates actively presented recent OIE activities in their countries: Georgia (WHO-FAO-OIE Joint Risk Assessment), Kazakhstan (PVS Orientation training) and Montenegro (Seminar of OIE Focal Points on Communication).

Dr Herzog, Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe presented draft on new Terms of references for RCG (ToR), aligned with 7th Strategic Plan and OIE Basic Text, and plan for the preparation of the Regional Work Plan Framework. He reminded members on the decision that new Secretariat will be OIE Regional Representation for Europe in Moscow, to better reflect the regional context of RCG, which is defined in the new ToR.

Activities related to the upcoming 88th General Session were presented, particularly development and adoption of 7th Strategic Plan, elections of Director General and activities of importance for the Regional Commission for Europe to be carried out prior and during the General Session.

OIE representatives presented the following activities and initiatives: draft OIE Communication Strategy and communication activities (ASF, Rabies, development of new OIE web site), OIE projects (WAHIS plus, Observatory, Aquatic Animal Health Strategy, Global ASF initiative), The OIE Platform on Animal Welfare (report of external evaluation, draft 3rd Action Plan for 2020-2022, and revised TOR for Platform), and draft TOR for 'OIE network of National Contact Point on Long-Distance Transportation in Europe'.

¹ To be endorsed on the next RCG meeting

Updates were provided on the activities of the GF-TADs for Europe, particularly related to Standing Groups of Experts for ASF, LSD and Rabies. RCG congratulated on the very effective work of this instrument for Europe, which is based on the strong leadership of Dr Bernard Van Goethem, effective coordination and high commitment of Members, OIE and FAO representatives and other stakeholders, and sustainable financial support provided by the EU. The progress was presented for strengthening of regional capacities of GF-TADs for Europe, supported by RCG, and OIE (organizational improvement, increasing of human resources, effective coordination between OIE and European Commission).

The full programme of OIE activities in the region was presented together with a review of possible gaps for the funding of these activities.

Follow-up actions were identified during the discussions, which is detailed in the report below. Many topics were supplemented by presentations, which shall be considered as an integrated part of this report, fully available on the OIE web site (pages devoted to RCG activities).

During the second day of RCG-10, Mr David Kennedy (Director-General for Farming and Biosecurity) on behalf of Minister of UK, Mr Lord Gardiner, welcomed RCG, congratulated on effective and important work, and provided a short presentation of the main activities of his Directorate.

OIE Delegate of Georgia Dr Vasili Basiladze, offered to host RCG for next meeting, which was agreed for 20-21 April 2020.

Opening, introduction

The 10th meeting of Regional Core Group was open by the chair, Dr Maris Balodis, OIE Delegate of Latvia and President of OIE Regional Commission for Europe. He thanked Dr Christine Middlemiss, the OIE Delegate of the United Kingdom and her team for hosting the meeting and providing support. He informed participants on the objectives of the meeting, undelaying also the background of the RCG which main goal is to improve regional participation in the OIE standard setting process and to support the preparation, implementation and monitoring of a regional strategic plan for Europe, in compliance with the OIE 6th Strategic Plan.

Dr Balodis underlined this meeting was prepared very well and thanked the OIE team from Regional Representation in Moscow, new RCG Secretariat. Mr Chair also thanked Dr Fabien Schneegans for his support to the RCG in the last 12 months and his contribution to improve the quality and effectiveness of the work. During this RCG10, he was invited to present the GF-TADs activities as the former Sub-Regional Representative in Brussels and leader of GF-TADs Secretariat.

Mr Chair introduced the three new members of RCG, two of them being elected as new members of the Regional Commission for Europe during last General Session, namely: i) Ms. Vesna Dakovic, OIE Delegate and CVO of Montenegro, ii) Dr Ivan Smilgin, OIE Delegate, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food and CVO of Belarus, and ii) Dr Vasili Basiladze, OIE Delegate and CVO of Georgia.

All members of the RCG were represented (Delegate of The Netherlands partially and remotely), except the representative of the Russian Federation.

Dr Christine Middlemiss presented general information about Veterinary Services of United Kingdom, agricultural sector, animal populations, veterinary legislation, as well as budgetary aspects and programmes.

Session 1 – OIE Council activities

Dr Christianne Brusckke, Delegate of The Netherlands, and Member of the OIE Council, was not able to participate the meeting in London, but provided her presentation via teleconference. She briefly presented the current developments discussed at the OIE Council meeting of September 2019, particularly the evaluation of the General session, the 7th Strategic Plan, OIE regional websites and OIE-WAHIS and the Observatory project for a better implementation of OIE standards. The 7th Strategic Plan has been shared with the Council and will be distributed to the Delegates in February. A summary was shared with EU

member countries during a CVOs meeting but the members of the RCG are concerned about the level of information of the non-EU countries.

The participants have been proposed to send their comments to Dr Brusckhe before mid-December and the OIE representatives requested to transfer messages to the Director General for her attention, particularly in relation to: i) Delivery of the draft of 7th Strategic Plan to the OIE Delegates well in advance; ii) Proper definition of the Observatory activities, in line with the objectives defined in the beginning, and in order to stimulate countries to implement OIE standards (avoiding the risk of some countries not to be fully transparent); and iii) Providing detailed information to Member Countries about Observatory project.

Follow-up actions:

o Include these topics in the agenda of the next RCG meeting, for further discussion	RCG Secretariat
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Session 2 – Regional Core Group activities and developments

Dr Montabard presented the state of play of the activities since the last RCG meeting in Madrid:

- Preparation of the 87th General Session: they all have been fulfilled on time, mainly to prepare the election to the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe and the European common positions on 4 chapters (ASF, rabies, animal health surveillance and killing of reptiles).
- Activities of AW Platform: i) report of the external evaluation of the AW Platform, shared early July with the RCG and the Steering Group of the platform, published on the Platform' website; ii) revised version of the draft ToR of the Platform, presented in the Session 7 (Animal Welfare), integrates the comments of the RCG on the draft version presented in Lyon (May 2019); and iii) 3rd Action Plan of the AW Platform: described in the Session 7.
- Insertion of the OIE Delegates' e-mails addresses in the regional website: still under discussion as sensitive regarding data protection, at least web pages with a restricted access.
- Update on the OIE genomic project: postponed to another RCG meeting.

The involvement of RCG members prior and during meeting was successfully demonstrated. OIE Delegates of Georgia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro presented OIE events recently held in their respected countries (Joint Risk assessment in Georgia, PVS orientation Seminar in Kazakhstan and Seminar of OIE Focal Point on Communication in Montenegro), together with the main activities and achievements. All three delegates used the opportunity to present their Veterinary Authorities and overall management of Veterinary Services. The Delegate of Kazakhstan in addition presented his country's experience with several PVS mission from 2011, with a high priority they give to the PVS Pathway. He announced two new PVS evaluations planned next year.

Dr Herzog, Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, and Dr Plavsic, jointly presented a draft of the new Terms of references for the RCG, aligned with the coming 7th Strategic Plan and OIE basic texts. It includes a better-defined composition and functions of the RCG, provisions of the Regional Work Plan Framework and confirms the new RCG Secretariat (RR in Moscow). Briefly discussed and agreed among the members, it should be again reviewed before the next RCG meeting in April, in order to be endorsed by the Regional Commission during its meeting in the OIE General Session in May 2020. The RCG proposed the Regional Work Plan Framework to be regularly updated, addressing the real needs of the Europe region.

Follow-up actions:

o Consider including the OIE genomic project in the agenda of next meeting	RCG Secretariat
o Inform the members of the RCG about the OIE genomic project	Dr C. Brushke
o Draft a Regional Work Plan Framework to be discussed during the RCG 11	RCG Secretariat
o Draft data model with relevant information about Members, for the purpose of publishing on the OIE website for Europe (e-mail address and direct telephone number of Delegates and other representatives), in line with data protection standards	RCG Secretariat

Session 3 – OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Code

Representative of European Commission, Dr Javier Francisco Dominguez Orive, presented the outcome of the last meeting of the OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Code Commissions, and the topics of the OIE standards for which a common position of the Regional Commission for Europe could be proposed for adoption at the 88th General Session (2020). During discussions, following topics were discussed to be supported by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe for adoption (based on current comments, still to be reviewed):

- User's Guide
- Glossary Part A ('epidemiological unit')
- Animal Health Surveillance
- Notification of diseases, infections and infestations, and provision of epidemiological information
- Procedures for self-declaration and for official recognition by the OIE
- Veterinary legislation
- Draft new chapter on official control programmes for listed and emerging diseases
- Diseases, infections and infestations listed by the OIE
- Infection with classical swine fever virus.

The RCG also discussed the possible positions to support further developments of provisions on the quality of Veterinary Services, the Evaluation of Veterinary Services, and the draft new chapters on Veterinary Services (Chapters 3.1, 3.2, 3.X).

The RCG regretted the reduction in the time allowed this year for comments, with impact on the quality of comments and having repercussion in administrative burden.

Follow-up actions

○ Further analysis of proposed changes, and discussion during RCG-11, to define proposals to Members from Europe for common position at the General Session	RCG members
○ Include the topic in the agenda of next RCG meeting in Georgia	RCG Secretariat

Session 4 – the 88th General Session and events in 2020

In accordance with OIE's programme to develop and propose for adoption the 7th Strategic Plan (7SP) during the next General Session in May 2020, Dr Budimir Plavsic presented the upcoming activities related to this strategic goal. He explained the general schedule of activities including those which were in place in the previous year, starting from external environment and SWOT analysis, up to the drafting of the 7SP, which is planned to be completed in December 2019. The final version of 7SP will be presented to the OIE Council in February 2020 and will be shared with all OIE Members. He underlined that 7SP was developed in accordance with OIE mission and vision, with recognition of evolving trends and rising challenges, including complex cross-sectoral issues, societal expectations, trading patterns, national capacities and resources and new technologies, but also with a commitment to global goals. In relation to key values, SP was developed with the most relevant principles, including scientific excellence, independence, transparency, solidarity and good governance.

Dr Plavsic explained the 7SP does not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the wide range of its activities, but rather, it identifies five areas of strategic focus (scientific expertise, data management, responding to Member needs, collaboration with partners, efficiency and agility) where a significant change is required in order to respond effectively to the challenges identified over the coming years. For each of these areas of focus, a long-term overarching goal is defined and articulated through strategic objectives, corresponding to specific priority topics. In parallel, but also following adoption of the 7SP envisaged at the OIE General Session in May 2020, the OIE will elaborate an implementation road-map which will contain further specific detail on activities against each of the strategic goals and objectives, helping to prepare a multiannual budget. In addition, he explained organizational improvement within the OIE which is currently in place, to ensure OIE will be able to provide efficiency, to meet all requirements from 7SP, and to properly implement all envisaged activities.

For upcoming elections of the OIE Director-General, scheduled for 88th General Session, Dr Plavsic presented key aspects, starting with a legal basis, and followed by other relevant details. In accordance with the Basic Texts of the OIE, General Rules and other texts adopted by the World Assembly in May 2011, revised in 2012 and 2013, particularly Chapter 8 and Article 26, the Director-General is appointed by the World Assembly by secret vote, following the proposal by the Council and in accordance with the conditions defined by the Assembly. The duration of the appointment of the DG is five years and at the end of this period may be renewed in accordance with the same rules adopted for the original appointment. He then reminded RCG members that Dr Monique Eloit was elected on 26 May 2015, and began her five-year term of office on 1 January 2016, as the 7th Director-General of the OIE, after having served as Deputy Director General for six years.

The Regional Representative also reported on activities of importance for Europe in 2020, and presented plans for following OIE events: i) Eleventh Regional Core Group Meeting (April); ii) 88th General Session (24-29.05.2019) with several relevant meetings (Regional Commission Meeting, 25.05.2020, Preparatory meeting of the Regional Commission for Europe (24.05.2020), Twelve Regional Core Group Meeting (24.05.2020) and GF-TADs Europe - SGE LSD, ASF, dates to be defined); iii) second SGE meeting on Rabies (June); iv) 29th Regional Conference for Europe, Catania, Italy (9-13 November); and v) numerous OIE seminars, workshops (separate presentation provided next day);. He also listed other relevant meetings of possible interest for RCG (Meeting of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and EAEU Member-countries, FAO, REMESA, and EufMD), not precisely defined at this moment.

Follow-up actions

○ Report activities relevant for 7 th Strategic Plan between December and April	RCG Secretariat, Dr C. Brushke
○ Report update of events and meetings of importance for Europe in 2020	RCG Secretariat

Session 5 – Communication

Dr Catherine Bertrand-Ferrandis, the Head of the OIE Communication Unit, presented the new communication strategy with modernised communication tools. Awareness tools on ASF, Rabies and AMR are available from the OIE website in Trello boards, proposing toolkits to be used by the countries to adapt to their communication needs and context.

She developed the participation and appropriation of the different OIE developed communication campaigns by European countries and worldwide, involving different stakeholders. Forthcoming, a second phase of the ASF communication campaign to be launched around the Chinese New Year 2020, working with IATA to distribute awareness material to the passengers. Mid-January, the OIE will also launch the second Rinderpest challenge. This game provides a fun and interactive learning toll for all the active partners to get ready to face a possible reoccurrence of the disease. Over the years, the appropriation by countries of the “*We need you*” campaign developed to raise awareness on the prudent and responsible use of antimicrobials shows the efficiency of the AMR Tripartite work. The “*Rabies ends here*” campaign now enriched with a guide to implement the campaign. The involvement of the countries in the OIE communication strategy was discussed with the participants. Posting success stories on our website will highlight the countries activities on animal health sector.

Dr Bertrand-Ferrandis informed the RCG about the new communication plan, based on a new institutional communication strategy to support 7SP. This focuses on ensuring the OIE is well known, even if with a change in OIE title and logo and recognised to improve the public’s trust in the organization, showing how veterinary public health benefits to the countries, making sure our messages are consistent on animal health and animal welfare. This better renown of the OIE will support the countries in their national discussion with other ministries and have a real impact on the improvement of their international trade.

Dr Montabard presented the different sections of the renovated regional website. Launched with 3 others in November 2019, these websites have harmonized structure and layout, provided with new features. This renovation seeks to improve the online communication. Available in English and planned to have a

Russian version, the website gives now updated information on regional projects and strategies, animal health data, events and regional contacts, focusing on topics of interest for the region. The website will evolve with time, to include information and new features, such as the new OIE–WAHIS once it is launched and to facilitate access to regional news and events. This initiative is part of the broader digital transformation of OIE tools and platforms, which intends to ensure that information, whether on OIE activities or animal health news, is rapidly and widely distributed.

RCG supported the development on the new website of OIE for Europe, requesting for a careful and preparation of the texts before publishing. More details are expected to be available in the restricted pages (e.g. contact details of Delegates, CVOs, Focal Points), to ease the communication and the information about national veterinary services. Regional Representative confirmed there is a commitment of the OIE hierarchy to ensure data protection and careful preparation/endorsement of all texts before publishing online, which will be further developed by OIE RR/SRR for Europe.

Follow-up actions:

o Evaluate the possibility to insert contact details in the regional website	D. Montabord
o Insert all relevant information on the AW platform directly on the frontpage of the Europe website	D. Montabord
o To develop procedure for publishing information on the website	RCG Secretariat

Session 6 – OIE strategic activities/projects

The item *State of play of Joint OIE-EU Working group* is cancelled due to technical issues.

Update on the OIE-WAHIS project was presented by Dr Plavsic, who explained the temporal 4 stages to roll-out the new system (foundation, evolutive, advanced and optimisation), with time line for each stage, starting from the rebuilding of core modules and migration of current WAHIS data in March and July 2020 (release1 and 2), finishing the integration of historical data in July 2022, and completing integration of new modules and future innovations in 2027. He informed participants on training strategy with e-learning platform to be implemented by the OIE in 2020 (Training dates: Europe 26-28/2, Americas 17-19/2; Asia 19-21/2; Africa and Middle East 24-26/2).

OIE Regional Representative also presented details on Observatory project as a monitoring tool to support the improved implementation of OIE international standards, which have major objectives to identify Member’s capacity for assistance and successful practices, as well as to strengthen the quality and relevance of standards defined by Terrestrial/Aquatic Codes and Manuals. The pilot phase will be based on OIE standards on notification, surveillance, zoning and compartmentalisation applied to selected terrestrial animal diseases. Data sources for analysis will be various, to provide reliable information (e.g. WAHIS, PVS reports, official health status and self-declarations, FAO LEX, notification from WTO SPS, and similar). Dr Plavsic also presented the timeline and communication plan. In September 2019, OIE Council endorsed the key features (objectives, outputs, scope and pilot phase), while in February 2020 it is planned to endorse the scenario to define the three outputs and roadmap. In the same period, public communication will be implemented in addition to communication to Member Countries. During General Session presentation will be provided with other means of communication (e.g. brochures, web pages). RCG members expressed high interest in this project, and concerns for data sources, and outputs of observation, including possible negative impact on notification of animal diseases and health status.

Dr Plavsic also presented new OIE initiative: development of Aquatic Animal Health Strategy. Based on the growing importance in aquatic animal production and continuous threat of aquatic animal diseases, OIE recognized shared need on a global level to develop and implement collaborative actions to improve aquatic animal health and welfare worldwide, which is the ultimate goal and main driver. The strategy will be drafted by the Aquatic Animals Commission as a leading party, in collaboration with colleagues from the OIE, and in consultation with Members. The overall plan is to launch it at the 2020 General Session.

Dr Schneegans, former OIE Sub-regional representative in Brussels presented activities of GF-TADs in 2019 addressing following events: i) 28 May 2019: SGE LSD8, Paris; ii) 29 May 2019: SGE ASF13, Paris; iii) 16 – 19 June 2019: ASF Expert Mission to Belgium, iv) 10 – 11 September 2019: SGE ASF14, Sofia; v) 16 – 17 October 2019: SGE LSD9 including a session on Rabies, Athens. He also informed RCG on next steps ASF expert missions planned for Serbia (December 2019) and Slovakia (early 2020), LSD teleconference in February (TBC), next SGE on ASF in Slovakia (March) and LSD in Paris (May), second meeting of SGE for Rabies in Croatia (June) and project of drafting of a GF-TADs guidebook on ‘ASF outbreak investigations and data collection’. Regarding GF-TADs governance, Dr Schneegans informed participants that Regional Steering Committee meeting planned for November is postponed for next year. It was later explained that possible time will be October. He underlined main objectives, results and recommendations from all GF-TADs events, with overall remarks that SGE meetings attract growing number of participants, provide increased visibility of GF-TADs activities, even at political level (ASF) and that the European model is disseminated to Asia and the Americas. Dr Schneegans suggested to reinforce Regional Secretariat for Europe, provide diversification of financial support and to revitalize Global Secretariat, in accordance with recommendations from GF-TADs Evaluation report (October 2018).

Dr Budimir Plavsic provided an update on the initiative for the global control of ASF (2020-2025), based on a global initiative launched during 87th General Session in accordance with the Resolution No.33. The aim of the initiative is to use the GF-TADs mechanism as a platform to develop, improve and harmonise national, regional and global partnership and coordination to control ASF and minimise adverse impacts on animal health and welfare, international trade, and social wellbeing. He elaborated on joint activities of OIE, FAO and SCAD to draft the *Global ASF Control Initiative* with recognition of already existing initiatives, learning from experience from other global strategies, being flexible and adapted to changing epidemiological and financial environment, and fully associated to monitoring end evaluation mechanisms. Governance will be responsibility of GF-TADs Global Steering Committee (to provide guidance), GF-TADs Management Committee (to manage implementation) and Regional GF-TADs Secretariats, to coordinate activities. In addition, a Global Coordinator and global and regional Standing groups of experts for ASF will be devoted to providing technical support and platform to exchange relevant information and best practice in implementation. Global ASF control initiative shall ensure effective coordination, as a framework to highlight and share best practice as well as clear landscape for investment. In addition, it will enable adequate control activities, which are the responsibility of Member countries. Dr Plavsic presented logic framework and operational plan, as well as the timeline, announcing final version to be validated in mid-December and launched in early 2020, by GF-TADs Management Committee.

Follow-up actions:

○ Update the RCG on the OIE strategic activities/projects during next meeting	RCG Secretariat
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Session 7 – Animal Welfare

Dr Tomasz Grudnik updated the participants on the of the activities of the OIE Platform on animal welfare for Europe (OIE Platform) completed in 2019, issues related to the governance of the OIE Platform, proposed Action Plan for 2020-2022 and new initiatives on animal welfare. The main activities completed in the 2019 were: 3rd OIE Regional Workshop on stray dog population management for West Eurasia (including involvement of the three new countries), 2nd OIE regional workshop on the role of Veterinary Services on animal welfare disasters for Balkan countries and baseline survey for West Eurasia countries on welfare of working equids. The presented issues related to the OIE Platform governance covered two items: the external evaluation of the OIE Platform activities and revised Terms of Reference of the OIE Platform.

1. The external evaluation of the OIE Platform activities was conducted in 1st quarter of 2019. The final report of the evaluation was published in June 2019. The main recommendation was to encourage the Platform to: (i) to keep up momentum to seek for ways to reinforce its stakeholder engagement, including with Member Countries, (ii) to explore ways of providing a more tailored approach to address the needs of the countries, (iii) to develop its capacity to evaluate

achievements and visibility of impact, which will, among others, support the Platform's funding mechanism, (iv) to boost the frequency of communication and information sharing.

2. The presented revised Terms of References of the OIE Platform for Animal Welfare for Europe provide complementary provisions to existing framework regarding, the objectives and the governance of the OIE Platform including responsibilities, composition, appointment and renewal of the Steering Group and functioning/ as well as responsibility of the Secretariat of the Platform.

The proposed 3rd Action Plan of the OIE AW Platform for 2020 - 2022 continues with five previously identified priority topics, namely: transport of animals by land and sea, slaughter, stray dog population control, disaster management and working equids. The activities proposed in the 3rd Action Plan include a continuation of a series of long-term roadmaps and projects and build upon achievement on previous activities. The 3rd Action Plan also include the development of evaluation and monitoring tools.

In addition, Dr Grudnik presented a proposal for a new initiative of the OIE network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation of live animals in Europe. The proposed Terms of References define the main tasks for establishing operational communication links with the other contact points in Europe with aim facilitate the exchange of the relevant information and solving problems arising with long-distance and cross border transport of animals in the region.

The proposed initiative also gives opportunity to address need of EU countries, as recalled by Dr Herzog, to facilitate collaboration with non-EU countries in regard to issues of resting points, journey plans and reporting animal welfare issues to meet the EU requirements for long distance animal transport. The RCG supported the proposed initiative recognised as of high important for animal welfare and with strong political relevance. The RCG also supported initiative discussed between OIE and FEI, to use the same instrument for the facilitation of international movement of racing and sport horses.

Follow-up actions

○ Present the ToR to the OIE Platform and draft 3 rd Action Plan to the Steering Group of the Platform	T. Grudnik
○ Invite RCG representative (Dr Herzog) to participate/chair the next Steering Group (2020)	T. Grudnik
○ Update the RCG on the outcome of meeting of the OIE Platform Steering Group - before the RCG meeting in April	T. Grudnik
○ Provide summary of proposed solution to address challenges faced by EU countries regarding duration of journey and resting points to next RCG and possible approval during the next General Session	U. Herzog
○ To coordinate with OIE technical officers responsible for the facilitation of international movement of racing and sport horses revision and updating of Terms of references of the OIE network of National Contact Points on long-distance transportation of live animals in Europe	RCG Secretariat

Session 8 – Administrative topics

Dr Ekaterina Panina presented the scheduled OIE activities in Europe for 2020. It was noted that all events have been approved by the OIE HQ, budget was confirmed.

Countries and dates for number of these OIE events still need to be determined.

Dr Fabien Schneegans presented the possible financial gaps of some OIE activities. Financing sources are available for almost all the events driven by the OIE HQ, except one FP Seminar for Food Safety, which is cancelled. The GF-TADs Europe activities, mainly funded by the European Commission, need a diversification of funding sources. Some activities of the AW Platform still need additional funding (stray dogs roadmap for Balkans, disaster management and working equids topics and meeting of the new network of contact points for long distance transport). Some other possible remaining gaps are also identified.

Other topics (AOB)

Dr Basiladze, the Delegate of Georgia updated the RCG on a joint initiative of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan for cross-border collaboration on Rabies eradication, and his leading role between countries with similar epidemiological situation. The three countries, all with endemic Rabies and human cases (*one example was presented, when rabid wolf injured human with fatal consequences*), want to work together not only in line with “*Rabies: Zero by 2030*” strategy, but also including the oral vaccination of wild animals. Dr Basiladze proposed to inform the GF-TADs Secretariat for Europe, and to participate in the next meeting of SGE for rabies, in Croatia (June 2020).

On the second day of the RCG-10, Mr David Kennedy (Director General for Farming and Biosecurity) participated in meeting briefly on behalf of Mr Lord Gardiner, Minister of UK., who was not able to participate. He gave a short summary of the main priorities and activities of the sector, the work of the ministry investing in animal health, animal welfare and environment, involving farmers and industries when eradicating diseases. The EU reference laboratories have transferred their status to laboratories of other EU member countries but kept their capacity in terms of EU-RL and their status as OIE reference laboratories.

Next meetings of the Regional Core Group

Georgia proposed to host the next RCG meeting (RCG11) on 21-22 April 2020 in Tbilisi, which was accepted by all members. RCG agreed the main objectives for the next meeting will be related to follow up activities, the preparation of the 88th General Session of the OIE (May 24-29, 2020) and the Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, planned on 9-13 November, in the Sicilian town of Catania, Italy.

Delegate of Belarus proposed to host the following RCG meeting in December 2020. Delegate of The Netherlands proposed to invite RCG to organize the meeting in spring 2021.

Acknowledgements

The Members and Secretariat of the Regional Core Group for Europe would like to address their deep thanks to the OIE Delegate and government of United Kingdom for their warm hospitality.

Documents availability

All working materials are available on the OIE website for Europe (<https://rr-europe.oie.int/>), within the section of the Regional Commission for Europe:

<https://rr-europe.oie.int/en/the-regional-commission-for-europe-rc-europe/regional-core-group-of-the-oie-regional-commission-for-europe/>