GF-TADs
GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROGRESSIVE CONTROL OF TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Organisation for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

Standing Group of Experts on High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza in Europe

under the GF-TADs umbrella

First meeting (SGE HPAI 1)

2nd of May 2023 - Teleconference

REPORT

Participants: 89 including Delegates, experts, speakers, Secretariat, and guests from 36 countries (Annex I).

Executive summary

Chaired by the President of the GF-TADs for Europe, Dr Bernard Van Goethem, the First Standing Group of Experts on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza for Europe (SGE HPAI 1) gathered WOAH Delegates, representatives from Quadripartite organisations, and experts to discuss the increased occurrence of HPAI outbreaks in the European region in 2020-2023 and key challenges that the Region faces. Ahead of the WOAH 90th General Session, where HPAI will be discussed at global level including within high-level Panel discussions, it was an opportunity to provide an updated vision on the current state of knowledge, and feedback from countries in order to provide input to the Global Strategy on Avian Influenza (Agenda – Annex II). The initiative to establish the SGE HPAI under Regional GF-TADs originated from discussion at the recent Regional Commission Conference in Catania, Italy, where HPAI was one of two key technical items, and Steering Committee meeting at the margins of the same Conference, where HPAI is recognized as priority disease.

The participants were presented with several key presentations, including on epidemiological situation of HPAI, related activities carried out by FAO, EC, EFSA, WHO and WOAH, development of Global Strategy and feedback from European Members on HPAI survey, the draft Terms of Reference for the SGE HPAI, as well as draft Recommendations for further consultations.

The SGE HPAI 1 draft Recommendations highlighted the followings:

- Members ensure appropriate level of surveillance, biosecurity measures at farm level, make use of the necessary tools to prevent the spread of the disease in kept animals and continue timely reporting of avian influenza outbreaks. In addition, surveillance needs to be engaged, in accordance with the risk, in mammalian species, in carnivores, in areas with potentially high environmental contamination with HPAI virus.

- The joint efforts of Member Countries of the European Region to stop spreading of HPAI in kept animals should focus on providing the science-based risk assessment aiming at assisting veterinary services of Member Countries in securing high level of animal health and safe international trade.
- Members encourage research institutions and vaccine manufacturers to invest and collaborate on research and development of effective and safe HPAI vaccines adapted to different species of poultry in accordance with the standards in the Terrestrial Manual.
- Regional GF-TADs to contribute to revise the HPAI Global Strategy to support the regional efforts in the control and prevention of avian influenza viruses of high pathogenicity, including communication to relevant stakeholders and the general public.

Next meeting

The Second Meeting of the Standing Group of Experts on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza for Europe under the GF-TADs umbrella is provisionally planned for the end of 2023**.**

Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by WOAH Regional Representative, Dr Budimir Plavsic, who welcomed Delegates and other participants, including high-level guests.

The President of the Regional Steering Committee of the GF TADs for Europe, Dr Van Goethem, welcomed all participants to the inaugural meeting of the Standing Group of Experts on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.

He stressed that the spread of this devastating disease has had far-reaching consequences not only for the poultry industry but also for public health, delicate balance of our ecosystem, and food security.

As a GF-TADs priority disease with new epidemiological patterns, it has been decided by the President of the Regional GF-TADs for Europe to initiate a new Standing Group of Experts on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza to provide a platform for discussion and encouraging transparent communication between its members. Through this platform, SGE on HPAI, Members will aim to identify regional needs, recognize the unique challenges faced by each country's veterinary services in the fight against HPAI.

Integrating the Recommendations of the meeting of the Conference of the Regional Commission for Europe in Catania in 2022 will be an important step in defining technical guidance for the Region. Dr Van Goethem underlined that establishing the milestones and developing a roadmap will provide clear and measurable targets that will guide our progress. He stressed that with the establishing SGE HPAI we embarked on a vital mission to combat the threat of HPAI.

High level guests

Dr Monique Eloit, WOAH Director General, opening remarks:

Dr Eloit highlighted that this meeting would give us an opportunity to listen to leading experts in the region and to listen to feedback from regional partners ahead of the Regional Commission session at the GS90.

The GF-TADs provides an effective platform for regional and inter-institutional coordination and cooperation. At all levels, this instrument is engaging its resources to offer a tangible mechanism for collaboration. Collective experience will be of value to review together the Global Strategy on HPAI.

OFFLU was mentioned as being at the center of interorganizational efforts and a leader on improving diagnostic tools, surveillance, and new innovative vaccines for better control of HPAI, which we all wait for.

Dr Eloit acknowledged the dedication of veterinary services in fighting HPAI, and the efforts also made by the private sector. However, in recent years, despite continued efforts, the disease persisted to pose a significant threat in the region.

She expressed her vision that there is a huge need to build capacity of the veterinary services in all Member countries not only to protect animals but limit the risk of spillover to human populations, and also to create higher resilience of the farming systems by ensuring animal health is sufficiently included at a high level in the business models of the value chain.

Dr Eloit emphasized that as we approach the General Session, it is worth to remind and commit to WOAH's core values: transparency, scientific excellence, and collaboration.

Dr Van Goethem thanked Dr Eloit and added that he hoped that SGE HPAI would be as useful as SGEs for other diseases, and it is time to look at vaccination as a more systematic tool to help in controlling the disease.

Dr Thanawat Tiensin, FAO Animal Production and Health Division, opening remarks:

The meeting is an opportunity to exchange experience and knowledge. At the same time FAO has a Global consultation on HPAI in Rome. Both meetings will provide the basis for better solutions.

As already stated, the impact of the disease in Europe and in the world is very important. In more than 70 countries, millions of birds have been culled to curb the disease. There are devastating consequences for industry and food safety, and there is a need for a coordinated approach to the disease.

There is also a need for additional knowledge, along with continued efforts for intersectoral cooperation. Such complex challenges cannot be solved by one ministry or sector, or organisation, and needs multisectoral approach. We are working together on revising the HPAI Global Strategy.

FAO will support all partners and donors engaging with HPAI and is currently extending its efforts into Latin America and Caribbean, as well as in Central Europe.

This year is a special for FAO - the First FAO Global Conference on Sustainable Livestock Transformation will take place in September 25-27, and the HPAI topic will be on the agenda.

Global and Regional Epidemiological Situation of HPAI outbreaks

Dr Jenny Hutchison, Head of WAHIAD, highlighted the following points.

WOAH produces periodical situation reports for high pathogenicity avian influenza which are available on the WOAH website. Data presented by Dr Hutchison were extracted on 4th of

April. Typically, by this time (the beginning of May) we have passed the peak of the seasonal trend and will be expecting further declines until late autumn, with lowest in September and the next peak in February.

Between October 2021 and September 2022, 97% of outbreaks reported were due to H5N1, mostly in Europe and North America. In the next period from 1 October 2022, we see a different situation with southerly spread in the Americas through Central and South America.

Globally, the recent situation (from 1 October 2022 to 7 April 2023) was characterised by reduced viral diversity with the H5N1 virus subtype predominating; spread to new areas; increase in numbers of cases detected in mammals in 11 countries; and sporadic human cases. The virus demonstrated more flexibility to adapt to more mammalian hosts, with reports to date from 30 species.

Between 2018 and 2022, 92% and 75% of 199 countries reported surveillance activities in poultry and domestic non-poultry birds, respectively, with surveillance in wild birds being lower (63%).

In Europe, the 2021–2022 season was the largest epidemic so far, with 9172 outbreaks both in poultry and non-poultry, and there was unusual persistence of HPAI viruses over the summer. Forty-one countries and territories reported HPAI cases. Most of the poultry outbreaks were reported in France, Hungary, and Italy; in non-poultry, most were reported in Germany, UK, France, and the Netherland.

In 2020–2021, the predominant virus subtype was A (H5N8), but this was replaced by A (H5N1) in the subsequent 2021–2022 and 2022–2023 epidemic seasons. In Europe, the proportion of countries carrying out surveillance activities in general is higher than worldwide in poultry and wildlife bird populations.

Report from the WOAH Reference Laboratory and OFFLU, regarding HPAI.

Professor Ian Brown explained the current situation from a scientific perspective.

It is important to try to understand why the current spread is happening. Spread to the Americas is the major development, and maintenance of infection there and in the European/African flyway is concerning. The global spread of related viruses is mediated by wild birds that have been know for long time. The difference today is the increasing infection pressure with many more individual wild birds infected and many more species and now reaching ecosystems into which it did not previously reach.

The analysis of migratory routes of transatlantic flyways tells us that the virus has made it across new flyways and became extremely capable of spreading among wild birds. It would be a disaster if virus reaches Antarctica with many populations of unique wildlife.

An important question is also whether the virus could return into wild bird populations next summer in the Northern Hemisphere as it did in previous years and what drivers are for infection outcomes. To investigate this question, one solution is to take a look at the wild birds species capable of hosting the diseases. He divided them into four groups, depending on observed susceptibility to H5N1, from Primary to Quaternary hosts. The last group despite being exposed to virus remained unaffected. The fact that marine birds are in those groups is an important factor in understanding the current spread. A suitable representative experimental model is needed to assess factors influencing infection outcomes in wild birds.

One of the conclusions is that wild birds shape virus persistence and emergence at population level through immune escape variants of the virus which carry a fitness for host population, persist, and spread. Understanding the genetics of the virus is key to understanding virus fitness and phenotype. Research is being carried out on the diversity of the virus over many years and on the emergence of genetic clades. It was found that reassortment of the polymerase gene segments has contributed significantly to the genotypic diversity and drives virus replication. H5 HPAI continues to evolve.

In domestic animals, for ducks, low infectious dose of clade 2.3.4.4b HPAI will result in efficient transmission; for chickens, high infectious doses are needed, and will nonetheless result in poorer transmission. The current H5N1 strain is a “super strain” in comparison with others.

Prof Brown mentioned mass mortality events in mammalian species but stressed that it is hard to confirm if there is mammal-to-mammal transmission, few reports were made in pets and no human-to-human transmission has been reported.

The virological investigations for the unprecedented 2021-up to present H5N1 epidemic showed that the virus present the following traits: 1. Acquisition of N1 NA conferred fitness in ducks and wild birds; 2. Increased fitness in wild birds enabled multiple reassortment events driving the virus replication; 3. Mutations in H5 HA restored thermostability and potentiall for creation of increased virulence.

During the H5 HPAI crisis, OFFLU and its network have been giving regular updates, technical advice, protocols, and other useful links.

In Catania, Ian Brown announced Avian Influenza Matching (AIM) Pilot aiming at better information to inform vaccine strain selection. The goal is to look at all the circulating strains and characterise them to help the selection of appropriate vaccines for poultry. The Summary report of currently circulating H5 viruses will be available in May 2023 on the OFFLU website.

He asks VS to signal what vaccines they use, to help work on the fitness for purpose of these strains and receive advice on what could be used.

FAO activities on avian influenza in Europe and Central Asia

Dr Daniel Beltran-Alcrudo described the assistance provided by FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) to countries with AI. At country level, the focus has been on Ukraine through an Emergency Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) project. Due to the ongoing conflict, many of the activities were moved to an online format, such as trainings on AI diagnostics, or using the laboratory mapping tool (LMT). Also, the assessment of AI surveillance systems using the Surveillance Evaluation Tool (SET) is planned online. Other activities conducted include a feasibility assessment of compartmentalization of some major poultry farms, or the procurement for laboratory diagnosis.

The Virtual Learning Centre (VLC) is an online platform to provide broad high-quality trainings around the world. Learning hubs are located in FAO Regions and Sub-Regions, including FAO REU. Advantages offered by such approach include the ability to reach out to large audiences (up to 500) in remote areas, they are scalable and cost-effective, reduced environmental footprint, and are certified (through assessments). Most importantly, these trainings can and are fully customized (language, region, country…). The VLC utilizes its Network of Training Focal Points (one per country) to conduct Training Needs Assessment (TNA) surveys that will guide VLC’s focus, and the nomination procedures for participants.

Using the latest technological solutions, different training courses have been developed and adapted to different audiences with good levels of engagement. The Avian Influenza Preparedness course is a tutored, 4-week, certified training originally developed in English (2022) and more recently delivered in Russian for 245 participants from 14 countries in Nov-Dec 2022, and in Ukrainian (245 participants in Mar-May 2023). Dr Beltran-Alcrudo also mentioned the relevant courses on Stamping out in English (Nov-Dec 2022) and Russian (May-June 2023 for participants from 14 countries).

The Outbreak Costing Tool - OutCosT – developed by FAO REU and the Autonomous University of Barcelona is a novel spreadsheet-based FAO tool to calculate the cost of outbreaks and their control. OutCosT can evaluate both real outbreaks that took place in the past, or to evaluate the cost of future potential outbreak scenarios. The tool, originally developed for swine diseases and also adapted to ruminants, is now being adapted to poultry diseases, to be validated with data from AI and Newcastle disease outbreaks from multiple countries in different regions of the globe.

Discussion

Dr Plavsic moderated a question and answers session.

Dr Nikola Babovski, Delegate from N. Macedonia, thanked for the establishing the SGE on HPAI. The GF-TADs mechanism was a beneficial in fighting against many transboundary animal diseases. It is a perfect moment to continue with the regional approach, and to find joint solutions for priority diseases including HPAI management in countries from risk zones. He expressed his confidence in the SGE and assured that N. Macedonia veterinary services will continue working together.

Dr Galib Abdulaliyev explained that his country had high risk areas for Avian Influenza due to migratory birds and was considering vaccination in industrial farms, especially during migration periods. Also, he stressed that they have to prepare guidelines and requirements on the trade of poultry products. Some countries have special trade requirements if birds are vaccinated, and their meat and eggs would be considered as not fit for export/import. It should be clearly determined that vaccination does not influence food safety of bird products. More comprehensive discussion of this issue will be appreciated.

Dr Plavsic enquired a possible insight from Dr Ian Brown about vaccine development.

Dr Brown mentioned that EU is developing a strong framework for rapid licensure and EU Laboratories carry out the evaluation of a number of products. There is a lot of interest from farmers to invest into vaccine development. However, main manufacturers of such vaccines do not see a market or opportunity for their products and do not invest in R&D in this area. We can use technologies from COVID to speed vaccine development. Also, he stressed that good vaccines were potentially available on a market, and it is up to individual countries to secure an access to such vaccines. He encouraged to use the data and information available to challenge the pharmaceutical companies to provide evidence for safety and efficacy of vaccines. It is important to consider what specification for vaccination programme would be.

Dr Plavsic commented that the WOAH international standards recognise vaccination as one of tools and probably we need further dialogue between countries how to regulate trade. Dr Van Goethem confirmed that this is exactly the issue that SGE will discuss and how countries will apply the WOAH standards in relation to trade.

Dr Visal Kayacik expressed concern that the wild bird effect was increasing; along with commercial farm cases: this shows that commercial enterprises are not applying biosecurity

measures sufficiently. She enquired about the revision of the biosecurity guidelines for poultry commercial farms.

It was agreed that biosecurity is the most important prevention measure, and competent authorities should find a way to validate the efficiency of the measures applied.

Biosecurity is included as part of the Recommendations – especially now that the viral load is very high in the environment.

EU activities on Avian Influenza

Dr Francisco Reviriego-Gordejo informed participants on the activities of the European Commission on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.

In the EU, the legal framework is relatively new and complex, but it provides a solid basis. The EU Commission is implementing regulation which includes notification, surveillance, prevention, and control. As well, Commission is implementing Decision on emergency measures, in particular regionalization.

Roles of different actors are defined in the legal framework for disease prevention: Operators, Veterinarians, Member States, and Laboratories.

Justified by the presence of a risk, including a risk for human health on the whole of EU territory and by the fact that the virus is continuously evolving, an early warning system has been set up. The system targets both poultry and wild birds and aims at detecting LPAI along with HPAI in poultry species not showing significant clinical signs.

The harmonized control measures comprise the identified phases: suspicion, confirmation and lifting of restrictions and repopulation of affected establishments.

Establishment of restricted zones, where harmonised set of measures applies, is based on simple principles, declaring immediately after detection, always a protection zone of minimum 3km radius, and surveillance zone of minimum 10 km radius; if needed, further restricted zone around or adjacent to the PZ and SZ; for at least 30 days after the stamping out.

EFSA and EU Reference Laboratory (EURL) provide scientific expertise and evidence for applied measures, diagnostic tools, and risk assessment.

The EU can provide support to specific countries, in the form of technical assistance and in some cases co-financing for emergency measures and surveillance programs. Auditing on the recent HPAI epidemics is ongoing, and the main lessons learned are analyzed.

New rules for use of vaccination for several diseases including HPAI were recently set. Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/361 lays down possibilities for Member States when deciding on using vaccination. Currently, vaccination is allowed, but it is not taking place on a large scale. There are small scale vaccination trials to see how the different available vaccines for different species operate . In principle every Member State is welcome to start vaccination. There are some preliminary results of these trials, and there will be a presentation of what is the current state of play during the 90th WOAH General Session.

Now EFSA is producing a scientific opinion on suitable vaccines and type of vaccination strategies. EU is interested in making its legislation understandable by everyone, so no trade concerns are raised regarding vaccination. EU is transparent in explaining how its vaccination policy is fully in line with WOAH standards.

EFSA activities on early warning and active surveillance in wild birds

Dr Lisa Kohnle gave an overview of the current work of EFSA on HPAI.

EFSA core activities are to provide independent scientific advice in form of risk assessment for EU Commission and Member States, and promotion of scientific cooperation. EFSA is not involved in legislation development or adoption.

Regarding HPAI activities, EFSA, together with ECDC and EURL, is involved in providing regular updates at European and global level with quarterly monitoring reports on the disease situation in poultry, captive and wild birds. Based on ADIS data (complemented by affected countries) and WOAH/WAHIS data, these reports and an online dashboard (http://hpai.efsa.aus.vet) provide information that is being collected and summarized to illustrate the most recent disease situation on maps and charts. Also, EFSA produces annual reports following the requested collection, validation, and analysis of data on surveillance activities (active serological surveillance in poultry and passive virological surveillance in wild birds are mandatory in the EU) submitted to EFSA by EU Member States. The next report for 2022 will be available soon. Dr Kohnle highlighted the current analytical activities on systematic literature reviews; on control measure effectiveness; on available vaccines and possible vaccination strategies as complementary prevention and control measures (July 2023); and surveillance, restriction, and risk mitigation measures in vaccinated areas (March 2024).

By EFSA initiative, the Migration Mapping Tool (https://euring.org/research/migration-mapping) was re-activated after its creation during the first HPAI epidemic in Europe to provide weekly updates on wild bird abundance and movement, covering 50 wild bird species that are recommended for passive surveillance of HPAI.

To develop an early warning system, this tool is currently being upgraded to the “Bird Flu Radar”, which estimates the probability of HPAI virus introduction in wild birds on a weekly basis and at a resolution of 50*50 km. It also offers an alert messaging system, for which interested stakeholders may sign up. The prototype is currently available at http://15.236.78.66:3838/hpai/ .

EFSA has also been working on active surveillance in wild birds to identify key hosts, key areas, and key times of the year that are most suitable for sampling (2 pilot countries: Ukraine, Georgia) to best preview the strains that are coming into Europe. Combining ornithological and genomic data is recommended to decide when and where to conduct active surveillance in wild birds. Several surveillance nodes across Europe were identified, on which efforts should be focused.

Terms of References for the SGE HPAI for Europe

Dr Plavsic presented the draft Terms of Reference of the Standing Group of Experts on HPAI. He described the objectives and principles at the core of ToRs such as: to define roles and responsibilities, define the purpose of our specific work, using the experience from other regions, particular Americas, our local context, and of the other three SGEs under GF-TADS for Europe. The document is available on Standing Group of Experts on HPAI for Europe - WOAH – Europe

The main activity will be exchanging best practices and sharing experience and scientific knowledge between countries aimed to improve surveillance, control measures and regional cooperation. All One Health partners from Europe to be onboard, already confirmed by WHO office in Europe.

The basic idea is to have all European Delegates, their animal health officers, and recognized HPAI experts meet at least once a year and provide an effective communication and coordination platform based on experience with other SGEs (ASF, LSD and rabies). Dr Van Goethe, elected President of the Regional Steering Committee, will act as Chair, while WOAH - Europe will serve as Regional Secretariat.

Dr van Goethem thanked Dr Plavsic for his presentation and asked him to resent the draft ToR to CVOs' and other participants. He requested Delegates to return their comments and suggestions to Dr Plavsic before May 12 for consolidation by Secretariat and adoption by Members at the next meeting.

Global HPAI strategy and the survey analysis, with discussions

Dr David Castellan presented the GF-TADs initiative to revise the Global Strategy for Prevention and Control of H5N1 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and invited participants to provide inputs to the discussion of the questionnaire.

The key facts: 1996 – HPAI first detection; 1997- first reported outbreak in Hong Kong; 2005 - first version of the Global Strategy published; 2008 – the Global Strategy last updated. However, since 2010 the increased expansion, transmission, and dynamics have had a negative impact on economics.

The preliminary survey conducted among experts in advance of the FAO Global consultation 2023 on HPAI revealed that the current Strategy was not used widely, no action plan offered, and required revision.

The revision aims at considering the variety of contexts and epidemiological situations, taking a bottom-up approach in a very transparent process to support national, regional and global strategic plans.

All Member Countries from the WOAH European region were offered to answer the questions from the Survey in advance of this SGE HPAI. Dr Castellan gave a preliminary overview of the priorities expressed by Countries and regional experts in the Survey (23 respondents) and encouraged other countries to contribute to the Survey.

Key strategic objectives: sustainability of poultry farming; status free of disease; and to enhance cooperation, and faster exchange of information.

Dr Castellan was asked where vaccination would fit in. In the general model of diseases prevention and control, there are three levels, namely prevention of virus introduction into a system, prevention of virus transmission and spread, and finally interventions to safeguard hosts. Vaccination could be considered as preventive mechanism.

Among the key challenges the region or country is facing in the prevention and control the following issues were mentioned: risk of virus introduction with wild birds, lack of government support and compensation, and staff shortage.

Dr Middlemiss commented that as we know, the HPAI virus is very infectious, and something is beyond our control and of little impact at things we traditionally do for infection control. Sharing of more information about wild bird migration provided by surveillance will help us to tailor biosecurity messages. Also, large businesses in the poultry industry work across continents and they have a good understanding of the situation and what worked well, and their input could be useful. And of course, vaccination should not be a barrier for trade.

Dr Castellan agreed that there is still missing basic information of what is happening in wild bird populations because of large gaps in surveillance capacities in different countries. Upstream prevention measures at the poultry wildlife interface are needed.

Dr Van Goethem suggested a deeper look at the survey results when they are available, hoping that more participants will have completed the survey.

WHO activities on avian influenza in Europe

Dr Richard Pebody summarized the action of WHO on HPAI's zoonotic aspects in the broader context of pandemic preparedness.

During 2018-2023 human infection with zoonotic influenza was driven first by a mixture of different virus subtypes and recently by predominantly one subtype. Seven human cases have been detected around the world of this particular clade of H5N1 2.3.4.4b. Most cases occurring in Europe have been in poultry workers who are in close contact with poultry.

Dr Pebody reinforced that under the International Health Regulations, obligatory notification is required of all human infections caused by a new influenza subtype.

WHO provides regular risk assessment of zoonotic influenza viruses of potential concern. For H5N1 2.3.4.4b there is still no evidence of person-to-person transmission; with all of the recent cases reporting a recent history of contact with poultry.

Recently WHO launched a new initiative, Preparedness and Resilience for Emerging Threats (PRET), which is focused on improving pandemic preparedness for different groups of pathogens grouped by mode of transmission. The 5Cs components approach is at the core of the model: Emergency coordination, Collaborative surveillance, Community protection, Clinical care, Access to countermeasures. Pandemic Fund has been established to provide financial support for the implementation of PRET.

To improve influenza pandemic preparedness, a new innovative approach was introduced, Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP), focusing on improvement of access to vaccines and country capacity to fight the disease. An updated version of the PIP framework has been published for the 2024-2030 period.

Presentation, discussion and adoption of the SGE HPAI-1 Recommendations

Following preliminary discussions before and at the SGE HPAI-1, the draft Recommendations of the SGE HPAI-1 were presented by the President and available on the website Standing Group of Experts on HPAI for Europe - WOAH – Europe. Participants have two weeks to submit comments on these Recommendations, before they are considered as agreed by the SGE HPAI-1. SGE HPAI meetings are intended to organise at least once a year and the next one is suggested before the end of the year.

Closing remarks

Dr Van Goethem, President of the Steering Committee of the GF TADs for Europe, stressed the importance of regional coordination in the creation of strategies for the control of HPAI. He thanked the team for preparation of the First SGE HPAI meeting.

Dr Plavsic thanked participants for their positive collaboration and the privilege to work with them, announcing several actions, including sending e-mail with draft ToR and recommendations during the same day, communication via regional webpages of WOAH and Twitter in following days, and sending of draft report next week.

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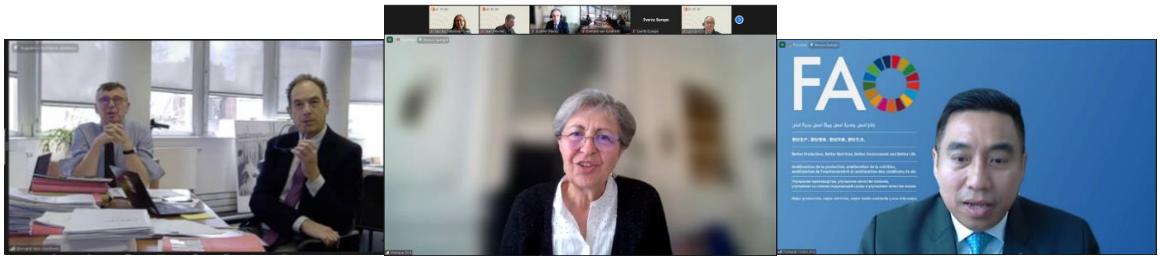
We would like to sincerely thank the European Union, WOAH, Global GF-TADs Secretariat, WHO, and FAO for kindly supporting the organisation of the SGE HPAI teleconference.

All presentations are available on the GF-TADs page of the WOAH of the Europe website Standing Group of Experts on HPAI for Europe - WOAH – Europe.



ANNEX I. List of participants

Country	Name and surname of person attending
WOAH Members	
Austria	Andrea HÖFLECHNER (Ministry of Health) Irene ZIMPERNIK Sandra REVILLA-FERNANDEZ (AGES)
Azerbaidjan	Galib ABDULALIYEV (CVO)
Belarus	Hanna SANDUL (Vet. Department, head of international relations)
Belgium	Herman CLAEYS Philippe HOUDART (Belgian Food Agency)
Croatia	Tatjana KARACIC (Ministry of Agriculture) Ljupka MALTAR (VFSD)
Denmark	Lone MORTENSEN (DVFA HQ) Sten MORTENSEN (DFVA)
Estonia	Kärt JAARMA (Agriculture and Food board) Anne-Ly VEETAMM (Agriculture and Food board)
Finland	Tuija GADD (FFA) Niina TAMMIRANTA (FFA) Tiia TUUPANEN (FFA)
France	Andréa JIMÉNEZ PELLICER (MASA) Guillaume GERBIER (MASA) Alexandre Fediaevsky (Ministry of Health)
Georgia	Vasili BASILADZE (NFA)

Germany	Christiane SOLTAU (BMEL)
Greece	Sokratis PERDIKARIS
Ireland	Audrey JENKINSON (DAFM) Paul CORKERY (DAFM)
Israel	Tamir GOSHEN (CVO) Michal PERI (IVS)
Kazakhstan	Laura KULBAYEVA
Latvia	Māra UZULE (FVS)
Lithuania	Vilija GRIGALIUNIENE (SFVS)
Malta	Paul Joseph PORTELLI Pantaleo GEMMA (AHWD)
Moldova	Vitalie CARAUS (ANSA)
North Macedonia	Svetlana TOMESKA MICKOVA (MKD) Vanja KONDRATENKO (Official Vet at Food and Veterinary Agency) Nikola BABOVSKI (AHV) Vladica MILANOV
Norway	Siri Margrete LOETVEDT (NFSA)
Poland	Monika SKOWRON (GIW) Kasia DOMANSKA (NVRI)
Portugal	Renata CARVALHO (DGAV)
Russia	Ilya CHVALA (FGBI ARRIAH) Nikita LEBEDEV (Rosselkhoznadzor)
San Marino	Francesca PIERGIOVANNI (Veterinary services)
Serbia	Boban DURIC (Veterinary Directorate)
Slovakia	Martin CHUDY Vilem KOPRIVA (SVFA) Barbara PAVLIKOVA (SVFA SR)
Sweden	Lena HELLQVIST BJÖRNEROT (CVO) Enisa MILJANIC Malin GRANT (NVI)
Swizerland	Erina PANCHAUD (FSVO)
The Netherlands	Wim PELGRIM (CVO)
Türkiye	Visal KAYACIK Fethiye Coven (Bornova Veterinary Control and Research Institute)
United Kingdom	Christine MIDDLEMISS Janet DIXON (DEFRA) Gordon HICKMAN (DEFRA)
Other participants	
President of GF-TADs for Europe	Bernard VAN GOETHEM
European Commission	Moritz KLEMM Iulia Delia COHEN Paco REVIRIEGO Zilvinas ILEVICIUS Francesco BERLINGIERI Simona FORCELLA
WOAH (Brussels)	Estelle HAMELIN Tomasz GRUDNIK Fernando DE ABREU
WOAH (Moscow)	Budimir PLAVSIC Jean PERCHET Marina SOKOLOVA Arsenty Polyakov
WOAH (Nur Sultan)	Aigerim ZHORGABAYEVA Mario LATINI

WOAH (Tokyo)	Thitiwan PATANASATIENKUL Hirofumi KUGITA
WOAH (Buenos Aires)	Luis BARCOS
WOAH HQ (Paris)	Monique Eloit Itlala GIZO (HQ) Mariana DELGADO (HQ) Lina Awada (HQ) Jean Philippe DOP
FAO Europe (Budapest)	Daniel BELTRAN ALCRUDO Mark HOVARI
FAO HQ (ROME)	Bouda AHMADI (FAO Rome and GF-TADs Global secretariat) Thanawat TIENSIN
EFSA	Lisa KOHNLE
APHA (UK)	Professor Ian BROWN
WHO Europe (Copenhagen)	Richard PEBODY
UNEP	
GF TADS experts	David M.Castellan (Canada) Sheikh Fall

ANNEX II. Agenda

Standing Group of Experts on High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza in Europe
under the GF-TADs umbrella

First Meeting (SGE HPAI-1)

Draft Agenda

02.05.2023 – Teleconference, from 10.00 – 13.35
https://oie.zoom.us/j/94368554433

Chair: President of the GF-TADs for Europe Steering Committee (B. Van Goethem)
Please note that this event will be carried out in English with Russian interpretation.

Timing	Topic	Speaker
10.00 (2')	Starting of the meeting	Budimir Plavsic, SGE Secretariat
10.02 (6')	Welcome Remarks, objectives of the meeting, recommendations from Catania, establishment of SGE on HPAI, further coordination on HPAI within Europe and with other regions	Bernard Van Goethem, President of the GF-TADs for Europe
10.08 (6')	Opening remarks – global perspective on HPAI	Monique Eloit, WOAH DG
10.14 (6')	Opening remarks – HPAI in global focus	Thanawat Tiensin, Director of NSAH
10.20 (15')	Global and Regional Epidemiological Situation on HPAI	Jenny Hutchison, Head of the World Animal Health Information and Analysis Department
10.35 (20')	Report from WOAH Reference Laboratory and OFFLU, regarding HPAI	Ian Brown, Chair of OFFLU steering committee, Director of WOAH/FAO International Reference Laboratory at Animal and Plant Health Agency
10.55 (15')	FAO Activities on Avian Influenza in Europe and Central Asia	Daniel Beltran-Alcrudo, FAO Europe
11.10 (10')	Discussion	
11.20 (15')	EU Activities on Avian Influenza	Francisco Reviriego-Gordejo, EU Commission
11.35 (15')	EFSA Activities on HPAI	Lisa Kohnle, EFSA
11.50 (15')	Presentation of ToR for the SGE	WOAH, SGE Secretariat

12.05 (5’)	*Coffee break*	
12.10 (60’)	Presentation of HPAI Global Strategy. Presentation of the Survey analysis and discussions (based on the results of the survey circulated to participants, https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GF-TADs-AI)	David Castellan, Expert, AI Global task force
13:10 (15’)	WHO Activities in Relation to Avian Influenza	Richard Pebody, Infectious Hazards Management, WHO EURO
13.25 (5’)	Presentation of the draft Recommendations	Bernard Van Goethem
13.30 (5’)	Conclusions, closing remarks, next meeting	Bernard Van Goethem