



## **Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever in Europe** under the GF-TADs umbrella

### **Twenty fourth meeting (SGE ASF24) – 3-4 April 2025** Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Following the discussions, after reviewing the reports on the current epidemiological situation from the SGE Members<sup>1</sup>, and after discussions on the importance of biosecurity for the control of African swine fever in particular in ‘backyard’ production systems,

#### **the SGE ASF 24 recommends that:**

1. Biosecurity is considered one of the key prevention tools at the disposal of countries to prevent the introduction and spread of ASF to, from and within the domestic pig population.
2. All countries should enhance and regularly monitor the application of biosecurity in commercial and small non-commercial, so called ‘backyard pig’ farms.
3. Biosecurity should be based on a public-private partnership involving livestock producers, veterinarians and official authorities. Good biosecurity requires the adoption of a set of attitudes and behaviours to reduce risk in all activities.
4. Investing in laboratory biosafety measures protects both laboratory personnel and public health. Beyond having adequate facilities, adopting the right mindset and safety culture is crucial for effective biosafety management.
5. Sweden should be withdrawn from the list of members of the SGE ASF, once its self-declaration of free status has been published on the WOAH website. However, Sweden is welcome to attend future meetings as observer and share its experience.
6. Field missions by GF-TADs experts should continue in recently affected or at-risk countries to rapidly provide support and science-based expert advice to the veterinary authorities. Interested countries should contact the SGE ASF secretariat.
7. FAO and WOAH ASF reference laboratories are readily available to provide expert support to WOAH Members in the region.
8. All countries should implement previous SGE ASF recommendations to prevent, control and eradicate ASF.
9. The twenty-fifth meeting (SGE ASF25) of the Standing Group of Experts on African Swine Fever in Europe under the GF-TADs umbrella should be held in face-to-face format in Belgrade, Serbia, in September 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo\*, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Ukraine

\* This designation is without prejudice to position on status, and is in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the International Court of Justice Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

**Annex: Biosecurity, particularly in small non-commercial ('backyard') farms for the prevention, control and eradication of African Swine Fever**

1. A biosecurity plan describing the appropriate biosecurity measures (management measures and infrastructures) should be established in peace times, as preventive measures in the absence of ASF, in all pig establishments and along the value chain (production, movement and transport of domestic pig and their products).
2. Countries should implement those biosecurity measures in a sufficiently flexible way to suit the type of pig production considering local circumstances and technical developments.
3. Regular and objective on-farm biosecurity assessments should be conducted using a standardised protocol that supports the continuous improvement of biosecurity practices. These assessments should help the competent authority to categorise the domestic pig establishments based on their biosecurity level and guide appropriate risk management measures.
4. Countries should define small non-commercial 'backyard farms' within their context and implement targeted strategies to prevent ASF, including appropriate biosecurity requirements.
5. In case of ASF outbreaks, countries should reinforce the biosecurity measures to prevent ASF further spread to other pig establishments and the environment.
6. Laboratories handling ASF virus (ASFV) should implement biosafety procedures according to international standards (WOAH Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals, Chapter 11.4) and based on risk assessment to prevent contamination and ensure accurate results. Staff should be continuously trained to maintain high laboratory biosafety standards and respond to emerging threats.
7. Regular awareness campaigns should be organised to educate key stakeholders along the swine value chain on ASF prevention, emphasizing safe feeding practices, biosecurity, and early disease detection and reporting.
8. Studies to better understand the key aspects associated to biosecurity implementation, including the socio-cultural factors influencing biosecurity adoption and compliance, in particular in small non-commercial ('backyard') production systems should be performed.
9. Economic analysis should be conducted to measure the financial benefits, such as reduce losses from pig diseases and document successful case studies to demonstrate the return of investment of the biosecurity best practices.
10. Members and stakeholders should actively participate in the standard-setting process by providing comments on the Terrestrial Animal Health Code chapter on biosecurity that is currently circulated for Member comments with the intention to be adopted at the 93<sup>rd</sup> WOAH General Session in May 2026.

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