1st GF-TADs Regional Conference of Standing Groups of Experts on priority transboundary animal diseases in the European region

22-25 September 2025, Belgrade, Serbia

FINAL REPORT

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Executive summary:

The Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) is a joint initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). It promotes coordinated global and regional action to prevent and control transboundary animal diseases (TADs) through capacity building, partnerships, and harmonised disease control programmes.

The GF-TADs for Europe, established in 2005, brings together FAO, WOAH, the European Commission (EC), and regional partners to address priority diseases such as African swine fever (ASF), Lumpy skin disease (LSD), Rabies, high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI), Foot and mouth disease (FMD), and Peste des petits ruminants (PPR).

To enhance coordination and synergy, the **1st GF-TADs Regional Conference of Standing Groups of Experts on Priority Transboundary Animal Diseases** was held in **Belgrade, Serbia**, gathering over **110 participants from 42 countries**, along with **180 online attendees**. Participants included Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs), senior officials, and experts from FAO, WOAH, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), EFSA, ANSES, FLI, CIRAD, and other key institutions.

The conference brought together the activities of the four Standing Groups of Experts (ASF, LSD, Rabies, and HPAI) and other priority diseases (FMD and PPR) in a single, comprehensive event to strengthen collaboration, exchange scientific knowledge, and promote a coordinated approach to disease prevention and control.

The programme included:

- The **12th meeting of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for Europe (RSC-12),** reviewed regional progress, composition of the RSC and discussed changes related to the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Committee and GF-TADs Action Plan 2023–2027. While proposals were discussed, members agreed that further work is needed for the formal endorsement of the updated ToR and Acton Plan.
- The **19th Meeting of the Regional Core Group (RCG)**, focusing on strategic alignment, cross-regional collaboration, and the implementation of the WOAH 8th Strategic Plan.
- The **Commemoration of World Rabies Day 2025**, reaffirming Europe's commitment to the "Zero by 30" goal to eliminate dog-mediated human rabies deaths by 2030.

Across **nine thematic sessions**, experts shared recent scientific advances, national experiences, and good practices in managing priority TADs. Interactive discussions enabled participants to identify shared challenges, lessons learned, and next steps for regional cooperation.

Overall, the conference successfully reinforced regional coordination, maximized synergies between ongoing initiatives, and strengthened Europe's collective capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to TADs. Its outcomes provide a solid foundation for implementing the GF-TADs **2023–2027 Action Plan**, enhancing preparedness, and sustaining progress toward resilient animal health systems across the region.

Background:

The Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) is a collaborative initiative between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH). Established in 2004, GF-TADs seeks to empower global and regional alliances to combat Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) through capacity building and the implementation of control programs tailored to regional priorities.

The European branch of GF-TADs, established in 2005, focuses on addressing regional priority TADs, including: ASF, LSD, Rabies, HPAI, FMD and PPR. It facilitates cooperation among FAO, WOAH, the EC and regional alliances, promoting the exchange of legislation, international standards, national experiences, and best practices. GF-TADs Europe aims to develop a shared vision and actionable plans for the control of priority TADs, while encouraging member countries to contribute to the establishment of a favorable epidemiological situation across the region. and regional alliances, promoting the exchange of legislation, international standards, national experiences, and best practices. GF-TADs Europe aims to develop a shared vision and actionable plans for the control of priority TADs, while encouraging member countries to contribute to the establishment of a favorable epidemiological situation across the region.

The Standing Groups of Experts (SGEs) have played a central role in this mission, with a strong track record in Europe in addressing LSD since 2016, ASF since 2014, Rabies since 2019, and HPAI since 2023. These groups have convened multiple meetings, developed programs, and disseminated science-based best practices, significantly advancing regional efforts to control these diseases.

Given the ongoing challenges posed by TADs in Europe, it was decided to merge the meetings into a single consolidated event. This approach aims to maximize the impact of various initiatives, foster synergies, and promote a coordinated regional strategy for controlling priority diseases. Considering the re-emergence of FMD, PPR, and Sheep and Goat Pox, the conference also provided a timely and unique opportunity to address these emerging challenges comprehensively.

Goal:

The primary goal of GF-TADs Europe is to strengthen regional and global capacities to prevent, control, and ultimately mitigate the impact of priority TADs across the European region. Through a collaborative and coordinated framework, GF-TADs promotes a harmonized, science-based approach that aligns national, regional, and international strategies for disease management.

Its overarching objective is to build a resilient and well-coordinated system for TADs prevention and control, enabling member countries to implement evidence-based interventions, enhance animal health systems, and safeguard public health, food security, and economic stability throughout the region.

Specific objectives of the Conference:

The 1st GF-TADs Regional Conference of Standing Groups of Experts on Priority Transboundary Animal Diseases in Europe was convened with the overarching objective of strengthening regional coordination, harmonizing technical approaches, and reinforcing collective capacities to prevent, control, and progressively eliminate priority TADs. Specifically, the conference aimed to:

- Provide a unified platform for the SGEs (LSD, ASF, Rabies, and HPAI) to review progress, share experiences, and align their initiatives under the GF-TADs Europe 2023-2027 Action Plan.
- Facilitate evidence-based dialogue among policymakers, CVOs, technical experts, and international partners to identify strategic priorities, operational challenges, and opportunities for collaboration in disease prevention and control.
- Enhance regional coordination mechanisms through the RSC, ensuring coherence and complementarity with global and regional frameworks established by FAO, WOAH, and the EC.

- Promote the exchange of scientific knowledge and best practices in areas such as epidemiological surveillance, diagnostic capacities, vaccination strategies, and biosecurity measures, fostering innovation and a One Health-oriented approach.
- Address emerging and re-emerging transboundary animal diseases, including FMD, PPR, and Sheep pox and goat pox (SPGP), by strengthening early warning systems and defining coordinated regional response strategies.
- Reinforce political commitment and regional solidarity through high-level engagement, ministerial participation, and strategic advocacy, highlighting the importance of sustained investment in animal health systems.
- Raise awareness and visibility of regional and global disease control initiatives through thematic and commemorative events, notably the celebration of World Rabies Day 2025, emphasizing Europe's commitment to the "Zero by 30" goal.
- Support the implementation and refinement of the GF-TADs Europe Action Plan 2023-2027 by aligning technical outcomes with policy objectives and ensuring that all regional efforts contribute to measurable and sustainable progress.

Collectively, these objectives aimed to consolidate regional collaboration, strengthen institutional capacities, and promote a coherent, science-based, and operationally effective framework for the progressive control of transboundary animal diseases across Europe.

Conference Outline and Structure:

The 1st GF-TADs Regional Conference of Standing Groups of Experts on priority TADs was designed as a comprehensive, multi-day event combining strategic discussions, technical sessions, and side events to promote synergy among all stakeholders involved in the control of TADs. It deliberately balanced policy-level coordination and technical exchange, ensuring that outcomes were both scientifically grounded and operationally relevant for implementation across the European region.

The event took place in Belgrade, Serbia, and brought together in-person and virtual participants from more than 42 countries. The agenda was carefully curated to integrate plenary sessions, disease-specific technical meetings, and celebratory and awareness-raising events, all contributing to the overarching objectives of strengthening collaboration and advancing the GF-TADs Europe 2023-2027 Action Plan.

Overall Structure

The conference program was organized into three main components:

1. Strategic Session - Governance and Regional Coordination

- Included the 12th Meeting of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for Europe (RSC-12).
- Focused on reviewing progress, strategic planning, and updating governance mechanisms for GF-TADs Europe.
- Featured high-level opening addresses from senior representatives of WOAH, FAO, DG SANTE, and the host country, Serbia.

2. Technical Sessions - Disease-Specific Discussions

The technical component of the conference was structured into nine sessions, focusing on regional priority diseases and thematic issues related to surveillance, prevention, and control.

- Opening and Plenary Sessions: Set the tone for the conference, outlining regional challenges, global policy directions, and expected outcomes.
- Disease-Focused Sessions dedicated to LSD, PPPR, HPAI, Rabies, ASF, and FMD.
- Each session featured expert presentations from reference laboratories, FAO and WOAH experts, and country representatives, who shared their national experiences, control strategies, and research findings.
- Interactive Discussions following each session, participants engaged through an electronic platform to respond to targeted questions, allowing for dynamic feedback and the identification of shared challenges and solutions.

3. Side Events - Complementary and Thematic Activities

Two side events were integrated into the main conference program to reinforce strategic objectives and broaden stakeholder engagement:

- Side Event 1: Meeting of the Regional Core Group (RCG) for Europe
  - Marked the inauguration of a restructured RCG format, ensuring balanced regional representation and alignment with WOAH's 8th Strategic Plan.
  - Covered updates on subregional initiatives, cross-regional collaboration, and governance planning ahead of upcoming WOAH sessions.

- Side Event 2: Commemoration of World Rabies Day 2025
  - Highlighted Europe's commitment to the "Zero by 30" global initiative for eliminating dog-mediated human rabies deaths by 2030.
  - Featured partner statements, a joint pledge, and symbolic activities to raise visibility and political commitment.

Session Flow and Methodology

The conference methodology emphasized integration, inclusivity, and interaction:

- Integration: By merging the separate SGEs (LSD, ASF, Rabies, and HPAI) into one conference, GF-TADs Europe maximized synergies across disease areas, promoting cross-learning and a coherent regional approach.
- Inclusivity: The hybrid format enabled broad participation, allowing on-site and online attendees to contribute equally through interactive tools, Q&A platforms, and digital polling.
- Interaction: Structured Q&A sessions facilitated dialogues ensured active engagement from all participants, encouraging practical, solution-oriented discussions grounded in field realities.

Outputs and Linkages

The structured agenda ensured that every session contributed directly to the conference's broader objectives:

- Consolidation of the GF-TADs Europe Action Plan 2023-2027.
- Agreement on updates to the Regional Steering Committee's Terms of Reference.
- Strengthened alignment of regional and global frameworks for TADs control.
- Reinforced political and technical commitment to regional disease eradication goals.

In summary, the conference's carefully designed structure provided a coherent and effective framework for strategic coordination, technical exchange, and multi-sector collaboration. Its outcomes laid a solid

foundation for continued implementation of GF-TADs Europe's vision - fostering a unified, science-based, and regionally responsive system for the progressive control of transboundary animal diseases.

Audience and Participation:

The 1st GF-TADs Regional Conference of Standing Groups of Experts on priority transboundary animal diseases brought together a diverse and strategically selected group of participants representing the full spectrum of stakeholders involved in animal health, disease control, and regional cooperation across Europe. The event served as a pivotal platform for fostering dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaborative action among national authorities, international organizations, scientific institutions, and technical experts.

In total, the conference was attended by 110 participants on site, representing 42 countries, along with an additional 180 online participants who joined virtually from across Europe. *Composition of Participants*

1. Government Representatives:
   CVOs and senior officials from relevant Ministries and national veterinary services formed the core of the audience. Their participation ensured that national perspectives, regulatory experiences, and policy priorities were fully integrated into the regional dialogue.

2. International and Regional Organizations:
   Senior representatives from FAO, WOAH, and DG SANTE participated actively throughout the event. These organizations contributed strategic guidance, technical updates, and policy insights, underscoring the importance of continued interagency collaboration in addressing TADs.

3. Technical Experts and Reference Laboratories:
   The conference featured presentations and contributions from leading reference laboratories and research institutions, including:

   - EU/WOAH Reference Laboratory for ASF and HPAI (Belgium and Italy)
   - CIRAD-WOAH Reference Laboratory and FAO Reference Centre
   - IZSVe, Italy (FAO Reference Centre and WOAH/EU Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza)
   - ANSES Nancy Laboratory, France (WOAH/EU Reference Laboratory for Rabies)
   - Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute (Germany)
   - EFSA (European Food Safety Authority)
   - IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency)

   These institutions brought scientific depth to the discussions, sharing evidence-based best practices, epidemiological data, and updates on diagnostic, surveillance, and control methodologies.

4. Regional GF-TADs Mechanisms and Subregional Representatives:
   Members of the RSC and SGEs – covering LSD, ASF), Rabies, and HHPAI - participated actively in both plenary and breakout sessions. Their engagement was crucial in aligning the priorities of ongoing disease-control programs with the strategic objectives of GF-TADs Europe.

5. Research, and Training Institutions:
   The audience also included representatives from, epidemiological training canters, and public health research bodies, emphasizing the importance of education and capacity building in sustaining regional progress against TADs.

6. Observers and Partners:
   Additional participants included observers from international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO Europe and WHO Ukraine), reflecting a growing commitment to the One Health approach, which integrates animal, human, and environmental health perspectives.

Representation and Engagement

The diversity of participants underscored the regional and cross-sectoral nature of GF-TADs Europe. Active participation from 42 countries demonstrated a shared commitment to addressing transboundary animal diseases collectively. Interactive sessions, including electronic Q&A discussions and thematic group dialogues, ensured that all voices-from policymakers to field veterinarians-were represented in shaping the conference's conclusions and future directions.

High-level speakers, including Dr Budimir Plavsic (WOAH RR for Europe), Dr Madhur Dhingra (FAO), Dr Bernard Van Goethem (DG SANTE), and Dr. Viorel Gutu (FAO RR for Europe and Central Asia), provided overarching strategic perspectives and reaffirmed institutional support for GF-TADs initiatives.

Overall, the conference audience exemplified a multi-disciplinary alliance committed to advancing the control of transboundary animal diseases through cooperation, innovation, and shared responsibility. The breadth of participation and engagement was instrumental in reinforcing regional solidarity, strengthening professional networks, and laying the groundwork for effective implementation of the 2023-2027 GF-TADs Europe Action Plan.

Highlights of the Conference:

The 1st GF-TADs Regional Conference of Standing Groups of Experts on priority Transboundary Animal Diseases marked a milestone in strengthening regional cooperation and technical coordination across Europe. By integrating the work of the SGEs, the Regional Steering Committee, the Regional Core Group, and the commemoration of World Rabies Day 2025, the conference successfully aligned strategic and operational perspectives and enhanced collaboration among 42 countries and international partners.

The following key highlights summarize the main achievements and moments of the conference:

1. Unified and Collaborative Format

For the first time, all Standing Groups of Experts on LSD, ASF, Rabies, and HPAI, were convened in a single, consolidated event. This new integrated format maximized the impact of ongoing initiatives, encouraged cross-disease learning, and reinforced a shared commitment to regional coordination under the GF-TADs Europe framework. The approach was widely praised by participants as a model for future collaboration.

2. Strong Institutional and Political Support

The opening session, moderated by Dr Budimir Plavsic (WOAH RR for Europe), featured high-level remarks from Dr Madhur Dhingra (FAO), Dr Bernard Van Goethem (DG SANTE, EC), and Mr. Predrag Rojevic (State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Serbia).

These interventions reaffirmed the political and institutional commitment of FAO, WOAH, and the European Commission to strengthening Europe's preparedness and response capacity for TADs, while acknowledging the critical role of member countries in sustaining progress.

3. Technical Excellence and Knowledge Exchange

Nine sessions provided in-depth presentations and technical discussions led by leading experts from international and national institutions, including FAO, WOAH, EFSA, IAEA, CIRAD, IZSVe, ANSES, and the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute.

Topics covered:

- Regional epidemiological updates and control measures for ASF, LSD, HPAI, Rabies, PPR, and FMD.
- Application of innovative diagnostic and surveillance technologies.
- Lessons learned from outbreak management and vaccination strategies.

Interactive Q&A platforms allowed participants to engage directly with experts, ensuring two-way knowledge exchange and the identification of shared challenges and best practices.

4. Strengthening of Regional Governance

The Regional Steering Committee reviewed its Terms of Reference, including updates to acronyms, clarification of donor organization definitions, strengthening of the Secretariat's role, and the introduction of enhanced mechanisms for decision-making and communication among member countries. The Committee agreed to continue discussions and to endorse the revised Terms of Reference at the next RSC meeting (#13).

Additionally, Dr. Keti Margariti (Albania) was elected as the Second Vice President of the RSC, reinforcing regional leadership representation and inclusivity.

5. Reinforced Regional Networks through the Regional Core Groupe (RCG)

The 19th Meeting of the Regional Core Group (RCG) introduced its restructured format to ensure more balanced regional representation and improved coordination among subregional offices.

Discussions centred on aligning RCG priorities with the WOAH 8th Strategic Plan, strengthening cross-regional cooperation (particularly with the Middle East, Asia-Pacific, and Africa), and planning for the upcoming Governance Review Committee (GRC) session in Paris (November 2025).

6. World *Rabies* Day 2025 Commemoration

The conference celebrated World Rabies Day 2025, reaffirming Europe's commitment to the "Zero by 30" global initiative-aiming for zero human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030.

The event included a joint pledge by FAO, WOAH, and DG SANTE representatives, symbolic group activities, and the participation of 110 in-person attendees.

The commemoration enhanced public awareness, strengthened political will, and underscored Europe's leadership in rabies elimination efforts.

7. Enhanced One Health Collaboration

Engagement from WHO Europe and WHO Ukraine highlighted the increasing integration of One Health principles within GF-TADs activities. The discussions reinforced the importance of intersectoral

collaboration across animal health, public health, and environmental sectors to effectively tackle zoonotic and emerging diseases.

8. Interactive and Inclusive Engagement

The conference utilized hybrid participation tools and interactive feedback mechanisms to ensure inclusivity and real-time engagement.

Participants actively contributed through digital polls, Q&A sessions, and electronic discussion platforms, enabling transparent communication and the collection of data-driven insights to inform regional strategies.

9. *Strengthened* Commitment to Future Regional Cooperation

By merging multiple SGEs, RAGs and integrating side events, the conference demonstrated the value of coordinated, multi-sectoral engagement in addressing regional disease challenges.

The outcomes reaffirmed the shared commitment of all participants, national authorities, international organizations, and scientific institutions to sustaining progress, improving coordination, and ensuring effective implementation of the GF-TADs Europe Action Plan.

10. Summary

The 1st GF-TADs Regional Conference of Standing Groups of Experts on priority transboundary animal diseases was a resounding success, consolidating strategic direction, technical expertise, and political commitment in one comprehensive platform. It strengthened regional solidarity, advanced the harmonization of disease control efforts, and laid the groundwork for future collaboration to enhance animal health and biosecurity across Europe.

Session 1 - First Plenary

Chaired by Dr Bernard Van Goethem, President of GF-TADs Europe

The opening session of the conference focused on providing comprehensive updates on GF-TADs activities in Europe, highlighting regional coordination, epidemiological surveillance, and progress on the management of priority TADs. Speakers presented detailed overviews of ongoing programs, challenges, and strategic initiatives.

- Report of Activities under GF-TADs in Europe (2024–2025)- **Dr Bernard Van Goethem (DG SANTE)** provided a summary of GF-TADs activities in Europe over the past year, emphasizing the progress achieved in regional coordination and capacity building for the control of priority TADs. Key highlights included the consolidation of efforts across Standing Groups of Experts (SGEs), development of action plans aligned with the 2023-2027 GF-TADs Europe Action Plan, and strengthening of collaboration among member countries, FAO, WOAH, and the European Commission. The presentation reinforced the importance of harmonizing disease prevention strategies and sharing scientific expertise to enhance regional preparedness.
- Update from the 12th Regional Steering Committee (RSC) of GF-TADs for Europe- **Dr Budimir Plavsic (WOAH)** presented outcomes from the 12th RSC meeting, detailing progress in governance, strategic planning, and operational alignment of regional initiatives. Key points included revisions to the Committee's Terms of Reference, updates on membership and secretariat arrangements, and the roadmap for continued implementation of GF-TADs Europe objectives. The session underscored the role of the RSC as a central platform for coordinating technical and policy-level actions across the European region.
- Update from GF-TADs Management Committee- **Drs. Madhur Dhingra (FAO) and Baba Soumare (WOAH)** provided a joint update from the GF-TADs Management Committee, offering global perspectives on transboundary animal disease control and highlighting collaborative frameworks for international engagement. The presentation emphasized investments in veterinary capacities, promotion of science-based policies, and strengthened coordination between global and regional GF-TADs mechanisms.
- Update from WOAH-WAHIS: Epidemiological Situation of Priority Diseases and Transparency in Notification- **Dr Peter Melens (WOAH)** provided an overview of the epidemiological situation of priority TADs in Europe from 2023-2025, drawing on data reported through the WOAH World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS). He highlighted improvements in disease notification transparency and the application of standardized reporting methodologies. Emphasis was placed on the critical role of accurate and timely epidemiological data in informing disease control strategies and regional preparedness measures.
- Update from FAO Activities in Europe and Central Asia- **Dr Mark Hovari (FAO)** presented FAO's recent activities across Europe and Central Asia, focusing on the priority diseases. Specific presentation topics included: FMD, PPR, ASF and SPGP.
- Update from WOAH Preparedness and Resilience Department- **Dr Alexandre Fediaevsky (WOAH)** provided insights into WOAH's activities in preparedness and resilience for TADs in Europe. The presentation covered regional strategies for early detection, response planning, and strengthening veterinary services, with emphasis on integrating technical expertise and field-level interventions to mitigate disease risks.
- Overview of European Commission (EC) Activities in Animal Health- **Dr Barbara Logar (DG SANTE)** presented the latest updates on the animal disease situation in the European Union and ongoing control measures. Key points included: Implementation of regionalization strategies to improve targeted disease control and eradication; Adoption of vaccination programs as complementary measures to other control strategies, including stamping out, biosecurity, and surveillance; Introduction of novel regulatory measures, such as the use of poultry compartments to facilitate safe movement between Member States. Dr. Logar emphasized that these initiatives aim to

strengthen EU preparedness and harmonize disease control measures across Member States, aligning with GF-TADs Europe objectives.

Session Summary

Session One reviewed GF-TADs Europe key activities and strategic updates, highlighting regional progress, ongoing challenges, and collaborative efforts to strengthen disease prevention, control and eradication. Discussions emphasized transparent reporting, cross-sector coordination, and capacity building to improve preparedness against priority TADs.

Session 2 - SGE LSD

Chaired by Dr Bernard Van Goethem, President of GF-TADs Europe

Session Two focused on LSD, presenting a combination of regional experiences, outbreak management strategies, and technical updates from reference laboratories. The session highlighted collaborative efforts under GF-TADs Europe to prevent, control, and monitor LSD across affected and at-risk countries.

- Report from SGE-LSD 2016-2025- **Dr Mereke Taitubayev (WOAH)** provided an overview of the activities and achievements of the Standing Group of Experts on LSD from 2016 to 2025. Key highlights included the coordination of regional control strategies, development of harmonized guidelines, knowledge-sharing among member countries, and capacity-building initiatives. The report emphasized the sustained efforts in outbreak prevention, surveillance, and the integration of international best practices.
- Member Experience: Kazakhstan- **Dr Azamat Umirkul (Kazakhstan)** presented Kazakhstan's national experience in managing LSD, including outbreak response, vaccination campaigns, and surveillance measures. The presentation highlighted the importance of rapid detection, coordinated veterinary services, and engagement with local stakeholders in effectively controlling the disease.
- Member Experience: Italy- **Dr Giovanni Filippini (Italy)** shared Italy's approach to LSD outbreak management, detailing measures enforced during outbreaks, including vaccination strategies, biosecurity practices, and regulatory frameworks. The presentation provided practical insights into operational challenges and successes in mitigating LSD spread within Europe.
- Member Experience: France- **Dr Marie-Christine Le Gal (CVO of France)** presented France's national perspective on LSD management, focusing on preventive measures, early detection, and inter-institutional collaboration. The presentation emphasized lessons learned and best practices that can be applied across similar epidemiological contexts.
- Member Experience: Switzerland- **Dr Martin Reist (Switzerland)** outlined Switzerland's preventive and control measures for LSD, including surveillance protocols, outbreak preparedness, and vaccination strategies. The presentation highlighted the value of a proactive approach to LSD management, ensuring readiness even in countries not currently affected by the disease.
- Report from EU/WOAH Reference Laboratory- **Dr Nick De Regge (EU/WOAH RL)** provided technical updates from the EU/WOAH Reference Laboratory, covering recent developments in LSD diagnostics, virus characterization, and laboratory-based surveillance. The presentation emphasized the importance of standardized laboratory protocols, timely reporting, and data-sharing to support national and regional LSD control efforts.

Session Summary

Session Two highlighted joint efforts by countries, laboratories, and international partners in controlling LSD across Europe and neighboring regions. It emphasized the integration of surveillance, vaccination, and biosecurity measures, underscoring the importance of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and science-based approaches to strengthen preparedness under the GF-TADs Europe framework.

Interactive discussion

Question #1

What are the top three barriers in your country/region that would prevent or are preventing effective vaccination campaigns for LSD?

Participants identified several key barriers to effective LSD vaccination, including limited vaccine availability, financial constraints, and trade-related concerns. Logistical challenges, administrative delays, and insufficient veterinary capacity further hinder large-scale vaccination campaigns. Social factors—

such as farmers' reluctance to vaccination, low awareness, and misinformation—also reduce adherence to vaccination. Overcoming these obstacles requires timely vaccine supply, adequate funding, human resources, harmonized trade regulations, and effective communication to build trust and improve coordination among all stakeholders.

Question #2

Considering cross-border spread of LSD, what early warning or surveillance mechanisms should be strengthened or established in your country to improve detection and response?

Participants highlighted that effective early detection and response to LSD depends on robust clinical and laboratory surveillance, rapid diagnosis, and strong cross-border coordination. Key priorities include timely reporting of suspicious cases, active monitoring, enhanced awareness among farmers and veterinarians, and sufficient trained personnel. Strengthening border and post-import controls, harmonized contingency planning, joint simulation exercises, and continuous awareness raising campaigns were also emphasized as critical for emergency preparedness, even during long disease-free periods.

Challenges such as limited human resources, financial constraints, and lack of 24/7 reporting mechanisms were noted as potential barriers. Overall, a coordinated, multi-country approach combining surveillance, laboratory capacity, border monitoring, regional cooperation, and sustained investment in human and technical resources is essential for timely detection and effective control of LSD across borders.

Question #3

Do you find it important that LSD-affected countries share samples with the EURL/WOAH Reference Laboratory for determining the whole genome sequence of LSDV strains causing an outbreak?

Participants emphasized that sharing samples with EURL and WOAH laboratories is essential for effective LSD control. Genome sequencing supports outbreak investigation, transmission analysis, early warning, and risk prediction, while promoting transparency and international collaboration. Although logistical and legal challenges exist, access to genomic data is critical for disease prevention and control as well as monitoring virus evolution.

Discussion summary

Overall, the feedback confirmed that sample sharing underpins science-based, coordinated, and transparent LSD management at national and regional levels, enabling countries to implement evidence-informed strategies for surveillance, outbreak response, and regional cooperation.

Session 3 – PPR

Chaired by Dr Bernard Van Goethem, President of GF-TADs Europe

Session Three focused on PPR, highlighting regional activities, national experiences, disease surveillance, vaccination strategies, and the progress made toward PPR control and eradication in Europe and neighboring regions. Presentations emphasized collaborative approaches under GF-TADs Europe and FAO-led initiatives.

- RAG Presentation: Roadmap Activities in Western Eurasia- **Drs. Abrar Akbarov (Uzbekistan) and Mereke Taitubayev (WOAH)** presented the activities of the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) for PPR, detailing the roadmap for Western Eurasia. Key elements included regional coordination, technical cooperation programs (TCPs), and strategic support to member countries in their efforts to control PPR and achieve official disease-free status.
- Member Experience: Romania- **Dr Cristian Siposean (Romania)** provided an update on Romania's national PPR situation, including surveillance programs, outbreak monitoring, and control measures. The presentation emphasized the country's commitment to early detection, vaccination where needed, and alignment with regional strategies under GF-TADs Europe.
- Member Experience: Albania- **Dr Keti Margariti (Albania)** shared Albania's experience in PPR management, including preparedness, vaccination campaigns, and emergency response strategies. The presentation highlighted challenges and successes in controlling PPR at the national level while contributing to regional coordination.
- Member Experience: Türkiye- **Dr Sabri Hacıoğlu (Türkiye)** presented Türkiye's approach to PPR control, focusing on surveillance, vaccination, and veterinary interventions. The presentation provided insights into operational measures and lessons learned from ongoing national efforts.
- *Kosovo* Update*- **Dr Bafti Murati** provided an online update on PPR activities in *Kosovo**, including outbreak monitoring, preventive measures, and regional collaboration initiatives. The presentation emphasized the importance of coordinated action and alignment with neighboring countries' strategies.
- Member Experience: Georgia- **Dr Tengiz Chaligava (Georgia)** presented Georgia's PPR outbreak history, control measures, vaccination campaigns, and surveillance activities. The presentation highlighted country-specific strategies and contributions to regional PPR control efforts, reinforcing the importance of evidence-based approaches and coordinated responses.
- Member Experience: Azerbaijan- **Dr Galib Abdulaliyev (CVO of Azerbaijan)** highlighted Azerbaijan's achievement of official PPR-free status. The presentation detailed the measures taken to reach this milestone, including Sero surveillance programs, vaccination strategies, and alignment with international standards for disease freedom.
- FAO Presentation on PPR Activities in Europe and Central Asia- **Dr Mark Hovari (FAO)** summarized the activities and achievements of FAO's Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) regarding PPR. FAO REU is leading multiple Technical Cooperation Programs (TCPs) in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia, aimed at strengthening national capacities and supporting regional PPR control. Key initiatives include supporting countries to achieve disease free status, support control in case of emergencies and provide training through Virtual learning training courses.
- Overview of PPR Phylogenetics in Europe (2024-2025)- **Dr Arnaud Bataille** (CIRAD-WOAH RL, FAO Reference Centre, EURL for PPR) presented genomic analyses of PPR virus (PPRV) strains collected across Europe during 2024-2025. Using partial and full genome sequencing, the presentation provided insights into virus transmission routes, the relationship between circulating strains and neighboring regions, and the implications for surveillance and control measures. The data support evidence-based strategies for outbreak prevention, regional coordination, and ongoing efforts to achieve disease freedom in affected countries.

Session Summary

Session Three highlighted significant regional progress in controlling PPR, emphasizing coordinated technical cooperation, country-specific strategies, and genomic surveillance. Presentations underscored the importance of vaccination, outbreak preparedness, and capacity building through FAO TCPs and virtual learning initiatives. The session reinforced regional collaboration, scientific evidence-based planning, and ongoing efforts to achieve and maintain PPR-free status across Europe and adjacent regions under the GF-TADs Europe framework.

Interactive discussion

Question #1

"What has been the most challenging aspect of your recent PPR activities, both as control measures in case you experienced outbreaks of this disease or preparedness?"

Participants identified some key challenges in PPR control and preparedness, including limited animal movement control, insufficient transparency, subtle clinical signs that hinder early detection, and difficulties in raising stakeholder awareness. Effective surveillance, up-to-date contingency planning, and adequate funding and resources were also highlighted, with challenges varying by regional context.

The exercise confirmed that successful PPR control depends on robust movement controls, transparent reporting, continuous stakeholder engagement, and strong surveillance systems. Financial and logistical constraints, particularly in areas without recent outbreaks, further complicate preparedness. Overall, timely detection and effective response requires coordinated efforts combining awareness raising, resource allocation, and active participation of all relevant stakeholders.

Question #2

"What regional and cross-border strategies should be strengthened to support PPR eradication by 2030?"

Participants emphasized that effective regional and cross-border coordination is essential for achieving PPR eradication by 2030. Strengthening frameworks like GF-TADs, harmonizing vaccination campaigns, controlling animal movement, and enhancing surveillance and information sharing were identified as critical measures. Adequate funding, laboratory capacity, and stakeholder engagement are also necessary to sustain cross-border control activities. Overall, eradication requires a collaborative, multi-country approach that integrates prevention, early detection, rapid response, and joint planning to manage both legal and illegal animal movements.

Question #3

"Do you see a need to establish a Standing Group of Experts (SGE) for PPR in Europe?"

Participants strongly supported establishing a SGE for PPR in Europe. The SGE is expected to enhance information sharing, coordination, and preparedness, even in regions currently free of PPR. Suggestions included a subgroup approach or extending its scope to related small ruminant diseases, such as SPGP, reflecting interconnected risks.

Discussion summary

Overall, the SGE for small ruminants would provide a platform for risk assessment, joint planning, and harmonized strategies, ensuring continued vigilance and early-warning capacity. Establishing the SGE is widely viewed as a proactive step to strengthen regional preparedness and support PPR eradication goals across Europe.

Session 4 - SGE HPAI

Chaired by Dr Bernard Van Goethem, President of GF-TADs Europe

Session Four focused on High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI), with presentations covering national experiences in surveillance and vaccination, zoonotic risk assessment, viral evolution, and global coordination strategies. The session emphasized the integration of One Health approaches, scientific evidence, and regional cooperation to enhance preparedness and control.

- Country Experience: Surveillance and Monitoring in Serbia- **Dr Miso Kolarević (Serbia)** presented the Avian Influenza surveillance program in Serbia, detailing its characteristics, scope, and results. The presentation highlighted the methods used for monitoring HPAI, including active and passive surveillance systems, data collection, and reporting mechanisms. Key outcomes demonstrated the program's effectiveness in early detection and rapid response to outbreaks.
- Country Experience: Vaccination in France- **Dr Guillaume Gerbier (France)** shared France's experience with HPAI vaccination, including cost-benefit and effectiveness analyses. The presentation emphasized the strategic use of vaccines as part of a comprehensive control program, integrating biosecurity measures and surveillance to minimize the impact of outbreaks while optimizing resource allocation.
- Experience with Avian Influenza Vaccination in the Netherlands- **Dr Annemarie Bouma (The Netherlands)** *(online)* provided insights into the Netherlands' approach to HPAI vaccination, highlighting the integration of One Health principles, biosecurity practices, and vaccination strategies. The presentation illustrated how coordinated planning, field implementation, and monitoring contribute to effective disease control and risk reduction in poultry populations.
- Update on Monitoring and Preventing Zoonotic Threats in the WHO European Region- **Dr Marc-Alain Widdowson (WHO-EUROPE)** *(online)* presented surveillance and risk assessment activities aimed at controlling zoonotic threats, with a particular focus on influenza viruses. Emphasizing One Health approaches, the presentation highlighted collaborative strategies between human and animal health sectors, enhancing early detection, risk communication, and preparedness for zoonotic outbreaks in Europe.
- Genetic Evolution of HPAI Viruses in Europe: Insights from 2024-2025- **Dr Isabella Monne (IZSVe Italy)** provided an overview of the genetic evolution of HPAI viruses circulating in Europe during 2024-2025. The presentation examined changes in viral strains, associated zoonotic risks, and the role of migratory birds in virus dissemination during the current epidemic wave. Findings underscored the importance of genomic surveillance to inform control measures and assess potential public health risks.
- Updates on EFSA Risk Assessments on Avian Influenza- **Dr Alessandro Broglia (EFSA)** presented updates from EFSA on risk assessments related to HPAI, including recent cattle infections in the United States and potential pathways for virus introduction into the EU. The presentation emphasized EFSA's contribution to preparedness, prevention, and control measures, highlighting the value of wild bird surveillance for early detection and risk mitigation.
- OFFLU Updates and Global HPAI Strategy- **Dr Gounalan Pavade (WOAH)** provided an overview of OFFLU (the joint WOAH-FAO network of expertise on animal influenza) technical activities highlighting how the network has evolved in the past years in response to the changing epidemiology of influenza, including the emergence of new hosts and geographic spread. OFFLU's role in the WHO vaccine composition meetings for zoonotic influenza, where viral sequences and animal surveillance data provided through OFFLU directly informed candidate vaccine virus (CVV) recommendations. The OFFLU Avian Influenza Matching (AIM) project, releases regular updates on antigenic characterization of contemporary avian influenza strains to support avian influenza vaccination programmes. The Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of HPAI (2024-2033) was published in February 2025 to guide efforts to mitigate the impact of the disease over the next decade (2024 – 2033). The new strategy has been developed to respond to the global challenges

by adopting a One Health approach for sustainable poultry sector transformation to prevent outbreaks, protect livelihoods, safeguard biodiversity and reduce public health risk. The strategy provides a framework for global and regional coordination to support countries in the effective implementation of national plans that reflect the evolution of the disease and new scientific advances in prevention and control, adapted to their specific context. The strategy will be monitored at the global, regional and national levels, and progress assessed in relation to the outputs for each objective.

Session Summary

Session Four underscored the critical importance of surveillance, vaccination, and risk assessment in controlling HPAI. Presentations highlighted country-specific experiences, regional and global coordination, and the integration of One Health approaches to mitigate zoonotic risks. The session emphasized evidence-based strategies, capacity building, and international collaboration as essential components for effective prevention and control of HPAI across Europe.

Interactive discussion

Question #1

"Do you have National programs on HPAI prevention and control? Are they in line with the Global Strategy on AI and recommendations from SGEs HPAI-1 and -2?"

Participants reported that most countries have established national programs for HPAI prevention and control, incorporating active and passive surveillance, biosecurity measures, contingency planning, and One Health collaboration. Programs are generally aligned with the Global Strategy on AI and SGE HPAI recommendations, though some gaps remain in backyard poultry coverage, high-risk area monitoring, and resource allocation.

Overall, national programs are recognized as a key pillar of HPAI preparedness and control. Maintaining effectiveness requires continuous review, capacity building, adherence to international guidance, and collaboration across veterinary and public health sectors.

Question #2

"What is needed to get vaccination accepted worldwide, and what are the hesitations and limitations to apply wide-scale HPAI vaccination?"

Participants highlighted that global acceptance of HPAI vaccination requires harmonized international regulations, clear guidance from WOAH on vaccine efficacy and safety, robust surveillance and traceability systems (including DIVA strategies), and strong international coordination. Successful implementation also depends on farmer and industry engagement, public awareness, practical logistics, and evidence-based documentation of vaccine impact.

Key hesitations include trade restrictions, high costs, regulatory differences, uncertainties about virus transmission, and limited trust or awareness among stakeholders. Operational challenges, such as maintaining biosecurity and surveillance during vaccination campaigns, were also noted.

Overall, participants agreed that wide-scale HPAI vaccination can be effective if supported by safe and effective vaccines, harmonized international rules, robust post-vaccination monitoring, stakeholder acceptance, and adequate financial and operational resources. Vaccination should complement broader HPAI control strategies, including biosecurity, surveillance, early detection, and coordinated international policies, to ensure global acceptance and maximize disease prevention.

Question #3

"What are the challenges to implementing surveillance in wildlife for HPAI in your country?"

Participants identified operational, logistical, and resource-related challenges as the main obstacles to HPAI surveillance in wildlife. Key issues include limited sample availability, difficult access to remote habitats, timely sample transport, coordination across multiple authorities, and seasonal or financial constraints. Maintaining public awareness and engagement for passive surveillance was also highlighted as essential but challenging.

Countries with well-structured and coordinated programs reported fewer difficulties, underscoring the value of cross-sector collaboration, efficient organization, and innovative approaches such as drones or web-based reporting.

Discussion summary

Overall, effective wildlife HPAI surveillance requires adequate funding, trained personnel, robust logistics, public participation, and strong coordination at both national and transboundary levels to ensure comprehensive monitoring and timely detection.

Session 5 - SGE Rabies

Chaired by Dr Bernard Van Goethem, President of GF-TADs Europe

Session Five focused on rabies control and elimination in Europe, highlighting member experiences, progress reports, emerging challenges, and strategic plans for the coming years. Presentations emphasized the integration of surveillance, vaccination, and One Health approaches.

- Standing Group of Experts on Rabies for Europe: Members' Vaccination and Rabies Control Progress, 2017-2024- **Dr Anne Meyer (Episystemic, Epidemiologist Expert)** The review highlighted overall good coordination among Members regarding ORV implementation, though it faced interruptions due to administrative, political, budgetary, and pandemic-related challenges. Most rabies cases reported by Members were detected through passive surveillance (93%), while over half of the samples originated from active surveillance, indicating a need to strengthen passive surveillance and awareness efforts. By the end of 2024, rabies had been eliminated from much of the region but remained endemic in the eastern SGE Members' area, where cases have increased since 2023. Some Members also reported disease resurgence and re-incursion events. The presentation concluded with recommendations to strengthen ORV, enhance surveillance (particularly passive surveillance), and improve regional coordination and information sharing. After the presentation, Dr Daniel Beltrán Alcrudo commended the progress achieved by the SGE RAB Members and emphasized the need to address the rabies situation in Central Asia and Türkiye, where dog-mediated rabies remains prevalent and elimination efforts are still at an early stage.
- 2025-2026 Plans of SGE RAB Members- **Dr Denise Dubois (WOAH)** summarized the rabies control plans for 2025-2026, reported by 16 SGE RAB member countries. Thirteen Members plan to conduct ORV campaigns, either nationwide or in selected areas of their territory. Most campaigns will use aerial bait distribution, except for two Members that will apply manual or mixed distribution methods. Active surveillance, linked to ORV monitoring, will be implemented seasonally and focused on vaccinated zones, while passive surveillance is carried out annually across the entire territory. Members also reported plans for complementary actions, including public awareness initiatives, training, and cross-border collaboration. Dr Bernard Van Goethem expressed concern that some Members located in endemic areas have not planned ORV campaigns, urging them to reconsider in order to prevent reinfection and protect neighbouring countries.
- Sylvatic Rabies Re-emergences in Central Europe- **Dr Emmanuelle Robardet (ANSES WOAH/EU Reference Laboratory for Rabies)** The regular phylogenetic analyses have improved the monitoring of the spatial and temporal evolution of rabies cases following major re-emergence events since 2020, involving the Central European (CE), North Eastern Europe (NEE), and C variants. The C variant, first detected in Ukraine and Moldova, was identified for the first time in Poland and Romania in 2024, highlighting continuous infection pressure from the eastern borders. To address this fragile zoonotic situation, countries must strengthen passive surveillance, maintain close regional cooperation, and ensure sustained long-term oral vaccination programmes for foxes, as interruptions can rapidly reduce coverage and facilitate virus spread.
- Measures to Prevent Rabies Resurgence in the European Union- **Dr Florence Cliquet (ANSES WOAH/EU Reference Laboratory for Rabies)** highlighted strategies implemented to maintain rabies-free status in EU Member States. Maintaining a strong general surveillance system for both humans and animals remains essential to preserve rabies-free status. This includes sampling and testing suspected wild or domestic animals and promptly reporting results. Effective coordination among authorities, timely investigation of suspected cases, and sustained veterinary and laboratory capacity are key to preventing further transmission.
- Rabies Elimination in Ukraine- One Health Approach, Communication, and Lessons Learned- **Dr Olena Kuriata (WHO Ukraine)** The presentation highlighted Ukraine's progress toward rabies

elimination under the Global "Zero by 2030" initiative. Key challenges include surveillance gaps, cross-border transmission, and limited vaccination coverage, all exacerbated by conflict-related disruptions. WHO's support in developing the National Elimination Strategy and promoting a One Health approach was underscored. Innovative communication efforts, including targeted educational materials and multi-stakeholder campaigns, were presented as key drivers of progress toward the 2030 goal.

Session Summary

Session Five underscored Europe's progress in rabies control while highlighting emerging risks and the need for continued vigilance. Presentations showcased successful vaccination campaigns, surveillance innovations, and collaborative approaches integrating veterinary and public health sectors. The session reinforced the importance of maintaining rabies-free status, advancing One Health strategies, and supporting coordinated regional efforts under the SGE RAB framework. A proposal will be submitted to Members to enhance the quality and consistency of annual data under the GF-TADs framework.

Interactive discussion

Participants provided their responses to interactive questions via an online platform, which served as a basis for the in-person debate. The discussion was moderated by the SGE Rabies Secretariat and rabies experts from ANSES.

The key highlights from the in-person debate, which focused on three main topics:

1. **Passive surveillance**:

- the importance of focusing efforts on passive surveillance, noting that already testing dead foxes (e.g., roadkills) offers high detection probability at low cost.
- importance of stakeholders' awareness illustrated by specific country example (88% of participants had selected "encouraging stakeholder awareness" as a top priority).
- The importance of simultaneously strengthening stakeholder engagement in reporting and increasing laboratory capacity to effectively handle the resulting rise in sample submissions.

2. **ORV sustainability**:

- Funding availability identified as main challenge, followed by the need for better cross-border coordination
- Some Members detailed their current challenges. Dr Cristian Siposean (Romania) explained that procurement delays and budget overruns hindered Romania's 2025 ORV campaigns. Dr Milan Rogosic (Montenegro) acknowledged EU financial support but noted administrative and legal difficulties, including delays in transfers, reimbursements, and securing advance funds across budget cycles.

3. **Ideas to improve cross-border cooperation:**

- to improve alignment in cross-border vaccination campaigns with the example of the establishment of bilateral agreements by some western European allowing aircraft to cross borders with an overlap zone for bait distribution.
- Dedicated working group for border coordination inspired by earlier experiences (e.g., between France, Germany, Switzerland, and Belgium).
- Dr Galib Abdulaliyev (CVO, Azerbaijan) emphasized the importance of regional cooperation among Caucasian countries, including coordination with border control, military, and air traffic services to ensure effective vaccine distribution in border areas.

The Chair closed the session by thanking the moderators and participants and urged the European Union to swiftly convene a meeting with Members facing funding challenges to discuss available options for EU reimbursement. Dr Van Goethem also emphasized the need to promptly reinstate bilateral meetings between neighbouring SGE RAB Members and stressed that efforts against rabies must continue to also prevent further recurrence in previously disease-free territories.

Session 6 - SGE ASF

Chaired by Dr Bernard Van Goethem, President of GF-TADs Europe

Session Six focused on African Swine Fever (ASF), emphasizing regional collaboration, innovative control strategies, preparedness exercises, and ongoing research. Presentations highlighted a decade of progress under GF-TADs Europe, the use of digital tools for surveillance, country-specific experiences, and the pursuit of long-term solutions including vaccine development.

- Report of SGE on ASF: A Decade of Collaborative Control (2014-2025)- **Dr Budimir Plavsic (WOAH)** provided a comprehensive overview of the work undertaken by the Standing Group of Experts on ASF over the past decade. Key achievements included strengthened regional coordination, development of standardized response strategies, sharing of best practices among member countries, and the implementation of risk-based control measures. The presentation highlighted lessons learned, challenges encountered, and the continued importance of international collaboration in reducing the impact of ASF across Europe.
- Usage of IT Tools to Support Prevention and Control Measures- **Dr Boban Djuric (CVO of Serbia)** presented an integrated digital platform designed to support ASF surveillance, control, and risk management. The system utilizes real-time data, smart monitoring, and biosecurity tools to enhance disease detection, improve outbreak response, and prevent spread. The platform exemplifies how innovative information technology can complement traditional veterinary approaches, enabling more rapid and coordinated interventions.
- Moldova's Experience in ASF Control- **Dr Nicolae Malancae (Moldova)** shared Moldova's national experience in ASF management, highlighting the importance of a clear chain of command, rapid response capacity, public awareness campaigns, and strategies to manage disinformation. Moldova's approach demonstrated how coordinated governance, effective communication, and stakeholder engagement are critical to controlling ASF outbreaks and maintaining regional biosecurity.
- ASF Contingency Plan in Poland- **Dr Joanna Szwast (Poland)** provided an overview of Poland's ASF contingency plan, detailing its legal basis at both national and EU levels, and outlining the minimum required content of the plan. The presentation emphasized the role of contingency planning in ensuring rapid and effective responses to ASF incursions, reinforcing the importance of legislative frameworks and operational readiness.
- Simulation Exercise in Austria- **Dr Beate Liehl (Austria)** presented Austria's experience conducting realistic ASF simulation exercises, despite being ASF-free. The exercises are designed to test contingency plans, train stakeholders, enhance early detection, and ensure rapid response. Additionally, they strengthen cross-border cooperation and preparedness for potential incursions, underscoring the value of proactive risk management in disease-free countries.
- Results of Community ASF Biosecurity Interventions (CABI) in the Western Balkans- **Dr Mark Hovari (FAO)** shared outcomes from FAO-led ASF biosecurity interventions in the Western Balkans. The presentation highlighted practical measures implemented at backyard farm and community (village) levels, improvements in ASF knowledge and biosecurity compliance. The results underscore the impact of targeted, person-to-person interactions with small producers to improve their knowledge and change their daily practices.
- The Search for the ASF Vaccine- **Dr Sandra Blome (FLI)** provided an update on ASF vaccine research, describing current scientific challenges, progress in vaccine development, and the complexity of achieving a safe and effective solution. While a commercially available vaccine remains elusive, ongoing research efforts continue to be critical for long-term ASF control strategies in Europe and globally.

Session Summary

Session Six demonstrated the multi-faceted approach required to manage ASF effectively, combining regional collaboration, innovative digital tools, national contingency planning, simulation exercises, biosecurity interventions, and vaccine research. Presentations emphasized the importance of proactive preparedness, evidence-based strategies, and coordinated efforts across countries and institutions. The session reinforced the commitment of GF-TADs Europe and its partners to controlling ASF and enhancing resilience against one of Europe's most challenging transboundary animal diseases.

Interactive discussion

Question #1

"What are the main challenges in your country/region to detect ASF outbreaks quickly?"

Participants highlighted multiple challenges to rapid ASF detection in domestic pigs and wild boar, spanning from: technical, logistical, behavioural, and awareness-related factors. Key obstacles include delayed reporting by farmers, limited detection of dead wild boar, declining public and stakeholder vigilance, and coordination gaps across sectors and borders. Laboratory capacity, trained personnel, and financial and human resources were also noted as constraints.

Behavioural and social barriers—such as fear of sanctions, lack of trust in timely recovery after outbreaks, and stakeholder fatigue—further hinder timely detection, particularly in ASF-free areas where maintaining awareness is difficult.

Overall, effective ASF early detection depends on robust passive surveillance, rapid laboratory diagnostics, and strong cross-sector communication. Sustained awareness, stakeholder engagement, continuous training, supportive policies, and adequate resources are essential to ensure timely reporting and rapid response to outbreaks.

Question #2

"What are the key biosecurity measures to prevent ASF introduction into pig farms?"

Participants emphasized that biosecurity is the cornerstone of ASF prevention in domestic pig holdings, relying on a combination of technical measures, institutional support, and human compliance. Key preventive actions include: double fencing and secure farm design, strict control of human and vehicle movement, systematic cleaning and disinfection, quarantine of new animals, safe feed and water management, and regular veterinary oversight.

Human behaviour was repeatedly highlighted as the most critical factor: lapses in hygiene, complacency, or lack of awareness can undermine even the best infrastructure. Backyard and smallholder farms, where biosecurity is often minimal, were identified as priority areas for training, awareness campaigns, and veterinary supervision.

In conclusion, effective ASF prevention requires a comprehensive approach that combines well-supervised infrastructure with sustained education, stakeholder engagement, and consistent adherence to biosecurity practices. No single measure is sufficient; only an integrated, behaviourally reinforced strategy can reliably reduce the risk of ASF introduction and spread.

Question #3
"What are the main challenges in implementing wild boar management strategies for ASF prevention, control and eradication?"

Participants highlighted that effective ASF management in wild boar populations faces institutional, operational, financial, and behavioural challenges. Key obstacles include fragmented governance, unclear

mandates, limited cross-sector and cross-border coordination, and insufficient stakeholder engagement—particularly among hunters and landowners. Financial and human resource shortages, weak passive surveillance, limited carcass detection and disposal, uncontrolled wild boar movements, and low awareness further hinder effective management. Ecological factors, such as growing wild boar populations and restrictive hunting regulations, compound these challenges.

Discussion summary

Overall, participants emphasized that ASF prevention and control in wild boar relies as much on institutional coordination, stakeholder cooperation, and sustained resources as on technical measures. Effective management requires a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach integrating veterinary, environmental, and hunting authorities, supported by clear governance, transparent communication, mutual trust, and long-term financial and political commitment.

Session 7- FMD

Chaired by Dr Bernard Van Goethem, President of GF-TADs Europe

Session Seven focused on Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), covering regional experiences, technical advancements in virus characterization, and strategies for achieving and maintaining FMD-free status. Presentations emphasized collaborative efforts under GF-TADs Europe and the integration of scientific, operational, and policy approaches.

- RAG Presentation: Roadmap Activities in Western Eurasia- **Drs. Galib Abdulaliyev (Azerbaijan) and Mereke Taitubayev (WOAH)** presented the activities of the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) for FMD, detailing the roadmap for Western Eurasia. The presentation highlighted ongoing regional coordination, technical cooperation programs, and strategic support to member countries to prevent outbreaks and strengthen veterinary preparedness.
- Member Experience: Hungary- **Dr Szabolcs Pasztor (Delegate of Hungary)** provided an update on Hungary's national FMD situation, focusing on surveillance programs, outbreak prevention measures, and preparedness plans. The presentation highlighted lessons learned from past outbreaks and emphasized Hungary's proactive approach to maintaining FMD-free status.
- Member Experience: Slovakia**- Dr Martin Chudý (Delegate of Slovakia)** shared Slovakia's national experience in FMD control, including monitoring, risk assessment, and contingency planning. The presentation underscored cross-border cooperation and the importance of regional coordination in minimizing FMD risk.
- Member Experience: Türkiye- **Dr Sabri Hacioglu (Türkiye)** presented Türkiye's experience with FMD management, focusing on surveillance, vaccination policies, and outbreak response strategies. The presentation emphasized operational challenges and successful approaches for reducing disease risk in a high-mobility region.
- FMD Full Genome Sequencing and Strain Comparison- **Dr Guillaume GiraultI (EURL for FMD)** presented the latest findings on FMD virus genome sequencing in the region. The presentation covered full genome sequencing of circulating FMD strains, comparison across countries, and implications for understanding transmission dynamics. Insights from these analyses support evidence-based surveillance, targeted vaccination strategies, and regional outbreak preparedness.
- WOAH Procedures for Recovery of FMD-Free Status Without Vaccination- **Dr Min-Kyung Park (WOAH)** outlined WOAH procedures for regaining FMD-free status without the use of vaccination. The presentation explained the requirements of the WOAH international standards, including the provisions on the establishment of a containment zone, and the waiting times for recovery of status based on the implementation of different control measures, i.e. stamping-out, emergency vaccination, slaughtering or not the vaccination animals. Germany and Hungary's recoveries of FMD-free status were taken as examples in reviewing the different scenarios and pathways of recovery of disease-free status.

Session Summary

Session Seven highlighted comprehensive approaches to FMD control, combining national experiences, genomic surveillance, and WOAH technical guidance. Presentations emphasized the importance of early detection, coordinated regional action, and adherence to international standards for achieving and maintaining FMD-free status. The session reinforced collaborative frameworks under GF-TADs Europe, promoting evidence-based strategies, preparedness, and cross-border cooperation to reduce FMD risk across the region.

Interactive discussion

Question #1

"Which FMD serotype or serotypes are currently considered the highest risk for your country?"

Participants highlighted that FMD serotype O is widely perceived as the highest risk due to its global prevalence and historical outbreak patterns, with serotype A and SAT1 and SAT2 also considered significant depending on regional context. Some respondents noted that any serotype could pose a threat, particularly for FMD disease free areas.

Overall, participants emphasized the need for comprehensive surveillance and flexible preparedness strategies that account for multiple FMD serotypes. Risk assessments and contingency plans should remain adaptable, integrating historical data and regional epidemiological trends to address both known and emerging threats.

Question #2

"What do you consider a major risk to the occurrence of FMD outbreaks in your region?"

Participants identified human-mediated factors—particularly livestock movement and poor biosecurity practices—as the primary risk factors for FMD outbreaks. Uncontrolled animal transport, trade, and lapses in hygiene or farm-level biosecurity were highlighted as key contributors. Wildlife reservoirs and gaps in vaccination coverage were generally considered minor risks.

Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of stringent movement controls, enforcement of farm-level biosecurity, and risk-based monitoring of trade and transport. Effective prevention also relies on targeted awareness campaigns, farmer and transporter education, and coordinated action across regions and borders.

Question #3

"Which measure had the biggest impact in controlling the spread of FMD?"

Participants emphasized that controlling FMD spread requires an integrated approach combining multiple measures. Key strategies include strict farm-level biosecurity, controlling livestock movement through standstill orders and tracing, rapid detection and reporting of suspected cases, and timely definition of containment zones. Vaccination—whether emergency, suppressive, or routine in endemic areas—and stamping out of infected animals were highlighted as important, context-dependent tools. Import controls, surveillance, separation of infected and susceptible populations, and proper carcass disposal were also noted.

Discussion summary

Overall, no single measure is sufficient. Human-mediated factors, such as adherence to biosecurity protocols and prompt reporting, are critical. Participants agreed that coordinated, multi-faceted outbreak management combining prevention, early detection, movement control, and appropriate response is the most effective strategy to limit FMD spread.

Session 8 - Second Plenary

Chaired by Dr Keti Margariti, Second Vice President of GF-TADs Europe

Session Eight focused on the development of veterinary capacities, strengthening regional networks, and technical support mechanisms for the prevention and control of priority transboundary animal diseases (TADs). Presentations highlighted innovative digital platforms, regional collaboration initiatives, and ongoing programmatic activities to enhance preparedness and response across Europe and neighboring regions.

- The FAO Virtual Learning Centre (VLC)- **Dr Daniel Beltran Alcrudo (FAO)** presented the FAO Virtual Learning Centre (VLC), a digital platform designed to deliver veterinary capacity building for transboundary animal diseases. The VLC facilitates training, knowledge dissemination, and remote learning opportunities for veterinary professionals, enabling countries to strengthen disease prevention and control capabilities. The platform supports continuous education, standardization of practices, and rapid dissemination of technical guidance across the region.
- EuFMD Training- **Dr Dónal Sammin (EuFMD)** provided an overview of the training activities conducted by the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD). The training program focuses on developing veterinary capacity, enhancing preparedness, and reducing disease risks. Sessions are designed to build technical competencies, improve outbreak response strategies, and promote harmonized approaches for FMD and other TADs for prevention and control across member countries.
- The Animal Health Network for the Mediterranean- **Drs. Rachid Bouguedour and Francesco Valentini (REMESA)** *(online)* presented a collaborative Animal Health Network for the Mediterranean region. The network aims to strengthen the prevention and control of major TADs and zoonoses, including FMD, PPR, LSD, Rabies, HPAI, and ASF. Key activities included coordination of regional initiatives, knowledge exchange, and support for vector-borne disease (VBD) management. REMESA serves as a critical platform for harmonizing disease control strategies and enhancing regional veterinary collaboration.
- Update on ADEWB II project, Support to Western Balkan Countries- **Dr Toni Kirandjiski (ADEWB II)** provided an update on the activities of the DG SANTE funded ADEWB II project, focusing on its role in supporting Western Balkan countries in surveillance, contingency planning, biosecurity, vaccination programs, and laboratory strengthening for priority TADs. The presentation highlighted the development of an e-platform for reporting and data collection for SGEs, enabling enhanced regional cooperation and informed decision-making. ADEWB II supports both operational and strategic interventions to improve preparedness and responsiveness in the region.
- Activities of the Animal Production and Health Sub-Program (APH) of the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre- **Dr Ivancho Naletoski (IAEA)** outlined the activities of the Animal Production and Health Section (APH) of the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre in Vienna, Austria. The presentation covered programmatic activities on ASF, HPAI, Rabies, FMD, and PPR, as well as mechanisms for their implementation. Detailed operational information was provided in the annexes of the presentation, including support for disease surveillance, diagnostics, vaccination strategies, and regional capacity building. The APH Sub-Program plays a key role in integrating scientific expertise with practical interventions to strengthen regional and global animal health systems.

Session Summary

Session Eight highlighted the importance of capacity building, regional networking, and technical support to strengthen preparedness and control of priority TADs. Presentations demonstrated the value of digital learning platforms, coordinated regional initiatives, and evidence-based programmatic support. Collectively, these efforts enhance the capacity of veterinary services, promote cross-country collaboration, and contribute to the implementation of GF-TADs Europe objectives, ensuring timely and effective responses to transboundary animal disease threats.

AGENDA

Day 1, Tuesday, 23 September

Opening Session

Time	Title	Speaker
8:30	Welcome remarks	**Dr Budimir Plavsic**
8:30	Opening remarks	**Dr Budimir Plavsic** (WOAH RR, Regional GF-TADs Secretariat) **Dr Viorel Gutu** (FAO RR/RD, Assistant of DG of FAO) **Dr Bernard Van Goethem** (DG SANTE, President of GF-TADs for Europe) **Prof Dragan Glamocic**, HE Minister of Agriculture of Serbia
	Group photo	

Session 1: Plenary 1

	Update session	**Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**
8:50	Update from GF-TADs	 **Dr Bernard Van Goethem** is the Director of Directorate G - Crisis preparedness in food, animals and plants, in the European Commission's DG Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE). Dr Van Goethem joined the European Commission in 1987, first working in DG Agriculture before moving to DG SANCO in 1999. DG SANCO became DG SANTE in 2015. He is in charge of animal and plant health, hygiene of food and feed, official controls and imports, animal welfare and alert systems for the European Union. Dr Van Goethem studied veterinary medicine at the University of Liège, graduating in 1984 before going on to take a Diploma of Tropical Veterinary Medicine and Animal Husbandry at the Prince Leopold Institute, Antwerp and obtaining a degree in agricultural engineering at the Catholic University of Louvain-La-Neuve in 1988
9:00	Update from RSC	 **Dr. Budimir Plavšić, DVM, MSc, BIBA**, has served as WOAH Regional Representative for Europe since January 2019, leading global health initiatives and shaping international veterinary standards. He combines academic expertise with strategic leadership in international animal health, epidemiology, and veterinary policy. In his role, Dr Plavšić leads and coordinates GF-TADs activities in Europe and regional programs on priority animal diseases, As a permanent member of the Executive Committee of the Regional One Health Coordination Mechanism, he has contributed to fostering of crucial collaboration among the Quadripartite partners fostering One Health collaboration among FAO, UNEP, WHO, and WOAH. A certified PVS Pathway expert, he has successfully managed programs achieving disease-free status for FMD, rinderpest, and BSE. With extensive project management experience, he advances veterinary services, public health, and global animal health standards. With a Doctor of Veterinary Science (DVM), a Master of Science (MSc) and a Bachelor of International Business Administration (BIBA), Dr Plavsic's professional journey reflects a unique blend of scientific rigour and strategic acumen. He has dedicated his career to

improving animal health and welfare, public health, and promoting international standards. By managing complex projects and building global partnerships, he contributes significantly to the global conversation on animal health and welfare.

9:15 *Update from GF-TADs Management Committee*

Dr Madhur Dhingra leads the Animal Health Prevention, Preparedness and Rapid Response Cluster at FAO, providing policy and strategic guidance for managing transboundary livestock and zoonotic diseases, emerging pathogens, early warning, and progressive biosecurity. With over 20 years of experience across Asia, Africa, and India, she has worked on risk assessments, One Health intelligence, and livestock systems strengthening through global partnerships such as GFTADs and the Quadripartite. She holds a PhD in spatial epidemiology (Université Libre de Bruxelles), an MSc in International Animal Health (University of Edinburgh), and an MVSc in Virology (India).

Dr Baba Soumare DDG WOAH holds a PhD in animal health economics with advanced specializations in tropical animal health, parasitology, mycology, and humanitarian operations. He has extensive experience as a food safety expert and field epidemiologist, leading investigations and control of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses across Africa, Asia, and beyond. Before joining WOAH, he directed FAO's Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), strengthening Animal Health and One Health systems in over 50 countries.

9:25 *Epidemiological update on priority diseases and WAHIS reporting, 2023–2025*

Dr. Peter Melens graduated as a veterinarian from Ghent University in 1990. After 15 years in large animal practice across the UK, he held senior roles in the State Veterinary Service and APHA, leading animal health surveillance and field operations in Scotland. In 2019, he joined WOAH as Deputy Head of WAHIAD and Business Lead for WAHIS, overseeing the strategic renovation of the World Animal Health Information System.

9:40 *Update from FAO's Regional Office of Europe and Central Asia*

Dr Mark Hovari, obtained his degree in Veterinary Medicine from the Szent István University in Budapest, Hungary (2012). He joined the same year the Epidemiology Unit of the Animal Health and Animal Welfare Directorate, National Food Chain Safety Office (2012-2018). During this time, he was involved in animal disease monitoring and control programs focusing on bovine tuberculosis, rabies, transmissible spongiform encephalopathies and wildlife diseases. Later he was involved in emergency preparedness activities and became a member of the National Disease Control Centre (NDCC). Internationally, he worked for two years at European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Rome, Italy (2016-

2017) on emergency preparedness for foot and mouth disease in Europe leading a team of four. Later he joined the Food and Agriculture Organization's Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (2019) working on Technical Cooperation Projects on African swine fever in Western Balkans, Lumpy skin disease in Central Asia and Regional project on ruminant biosecurity. Dr Hóvári helped to establish the FAO Virtual Learning Center for Europe and Central Asia and regularly represents FAO at the Standing Group of Experts on African Swine Fever in Europe.

10:00 Update from WOAH

Dr Alexandre Fediaevsky Dr Alexandre Fediaevsky is an official French Veterinarian, graduated from National Veterinary School from Maisons-Alfort. He holds a master's degrees on tropical animal production and veterinary public health and a PhD in epidemiology. Alexandre worked in Oceania for the Secretariat of the South Pacific Community, for the French Ministry of Agriculture, at DG SANTE and WOAH where he has coordinated GF-TADs activities before taking the lead of the preparedness and resilience department.

10:10 *The presentation will review the EU's latest animal disease situation and control measures, focusing on regionalisation, stamping out, biosecurity, surveillance, wider use of vaccination, and new rules on poultry compartments for cross-border movements.*

Dr Barbara Logar, Barbara Logar (MSc, DVM) graduated in veterinary science at the Veterinary Faculty of the University of Ljubljana. She is holding diplomas in veterinary public health (1987) and in animal breeding and animal health (1989). She concluded postgraduate studies in food safety (1993). Since 2021 she works as a Deputy Head of Unit G2 - Animal Heath in Directorate G (Crisis Preparedness in Food, Animals and Plants) in Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety of the European Commission. She joined the European Commission, in 2008 as a policy officer – veterinary legislative officer in the Unit responsible for animal health, where she was assigned with the development of the EU legal framework for animal health; "the Animal Health Law" and its complementary legislation. During that period and beyond, she worked on a broad set of EU animal health rules, covering both, terrestrial and aquatic animal health. From 2018 until 2021 she worked as a Head of Sector responsible 'Animal Health EU' in Unit G2, with the focus on managing the animal requirements for animals and products within the EU. Especially as from 2018 onwards she is also directly involved in the management of animal diseases in the EU. Before joining the European Commission, she first worked at the university institute for public health, later joined the veterinary services in Slovenia in 1996, where she continued her career until 2008, first as an official veterinarian in the regional veterinary office of Ljubljana and later moved to the Head Office where she first worked as a policy officer, then Deputy Director of the veterinary services in Slovenia and Head of sector for international affairs.

10:30 Coffee Break

Session 2: SGE LSD-15

11:00 Opening **Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**

11:05 *Report from SGE-LSD 2016-2025*

Dr Mereke Taitubayev has served as the WOAH Subregional Representative for Central Asia since 2014, coordinating work among Central Asian countries and promoting international veterinary standards at the national level. Graduated with distinction from the Veterinary Institute of the Agrarian University in 2002. He began his career in Kazakhstan as a bacteriologist and later headed the regional bacteriology division. From 2005–2010, he conducted PhD research on brucellosis in goats' milk, successfully defending his dissertation at Kazakh Agrarian University. He went on to lead the bacteriology department at the National Veterinary Laboratory in Astana and later the national strain laboratory. In 2010, he joined the Veterinary Service, progressing from expert to CVO (2013–2014). With over 20 years of experience, a PhD, six scientific publications, participation in several PVS missions, and more than 20 professional training certificates, Dr. Taitubayev brings deep expertise in zoonoses, surveillance, and risk analysis.

11:15 *Report from EU/WOAH Reference Laboratory*

Dr Nick De Regge is a bioengineer who earned his doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at Ghent University (2007). Since 2010, he has worked at the Belgian OneHealth institute Sciensano, where he became head of the Service of Exotic and Vector-Borne Diseases in 2021. His lab hosts the EU Reference Laboratory for capri pox viruses and serves as WOAH reference for Lumpy Skin Disease, Sheep pox, and Goat pox. His team focuses on diagnostics, pathogenesis, immune responses, virus transmission, and vaccine evaluation. He also serves on the Scientific Committee of the Belgian Food Safety Agency and is a visiting professor at Ghent University.

11:30 *Member's experience: Kazakhstan*

Dr Azamat Umirkul, in 2018, he graduated from the M. Auezov South Kazakhstan State University with a degree in Veterinary Medicine. In 2020, he obtained a master's degree in economics from the Academician A. Kuatbekov University of Peoples' Friendship. He began his professional career in 2019 as a veterinary doctor. He subsequently served as Chief Specialist of the Biological Safety Department at the Turkestan Regional Territorial Inspectorate of the Committee for Veterinary Control and Supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Later, he worked as an Expert and then Chief Expert at the Committee for Veterinary Control and Supervision. Since June 2022, he has been serving as Chief Expert of the Committee in Astana. He has participated in international meetings and workshops on epizootiology and biological safety and has completed advanced training in applied epidemiology within the "One Health" framework. He is fluent in Kazakh and Russian.

11:45 *Presentation aims to share the Italian experience on the management of LSD outbreaks and the measures enforced so far.*

Dr Giovani Filippini A summa cum laude Veterinary Medicine graduate from the University of Perugia with a specialization in Animal Health, he became Director General for Animal Health and Extraordinary Commissioner for African Swine Fever in 2024. He previously led the Zooprophylactic Institute of Sardinia, directed the ASF eradication project there, and served as Health Director of IZSUM (2015–2021)

12:00 *The first LSD outbreak was confirmed in France on June 29th. Since then, 79 outbreaks were diagnosed. Most of the outbreaks were in small unit, with less than 20 animals.*
Thanks to active cooperation and transparent sharing of information with Italy and Switzerland, a vaccination campaign was launched on July 18th. This vaccination was implemented with the support of EU Commission, and thanks to the European bank of vaccine.
Communication is key in this crisis management : to the general public, stakeholders and trade partners. Communication tools set by EUFMD are very useful in this context, as they are translated in several langages. France stays committed to sharing data with all its partners, in particular thanks to the WOAH notification channel.

Dr Marie-Christine Le Gal is Doctor in Veterinary Medicine and holds a Certificate of Advanced Veterinary Studies in Veterinary Public Health. After a first experience as deputy head of the Border Inspection Post at Roissy-Charles Gaulle airport (Paris-CDG) within the Ministry of Agriculture (2009-2011), Marie-Christine Le joined the Directorate General of Enterprises (DGE) in the Ministry of Industry in 2011 a project manager for the Agri-Food Industries. In 2013, she was appointed Deputy Agricultural Counsellor at the French Embassy in Rus: (covering Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan).
Christine Le Gal returned to France in 2017 where she joined the Directorate General of the Treasury as Deputy Head of the Investments and Rules in International Trade office. Fron 18 to 2023, she was Agricultural Counsellor for Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech public and the Baltic States at the French Embassy in Poland. After joining the Nation: institute of Origin and Quality (INAO) as Deputy Director in 2023, she was appointed Advisor the Minister of Agriculture in 2024, responsible for agricultural education, generation renewal, skills development and employment. Since the 1st of September 2024, Marie-Christine Gal is Deputy Director General for Food and CVO (Chief Veterinary Officer).

12:15 *Member's experience: Switzerland*

Dr Martin Reist holds a DVM, PhD, and Habitation in Veterinary Public Health, as well as an Executive MBA. His career has included roles in the pharmaceutical industry with Novartis, academia as Senior Lecturer at the University of Bern, and leadership positions such as Head of Monitoring at the Federal Veterinary Office, Co-Founder of Sanisys Inc., and CEO of the Swiss Cancer Institute. He is currently

Head of Animal Health & Welfare at the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office in Switzerland.

12:30	Interactive discussion	
12:50	Conclusions and Recommendations	
13:00	Lunch	

Session 3: PPR

14:00	Opening	**Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**
14:05	*RAG presentation, Roadmap activities in Western Eurasia*	 **Dr Abrar Akbarov**, Dr. Abrar Akmalovich Akbarov is the Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Veterinary and Livestock Development (CVLD) of the Republic of Uzbekistan, a position he has held since 19 April 2024. At the same time, he is the Uzbekistan delegate to the World Organization for Animal Health. He was born on 31 August 1981 in Yangiyul district, Tashkent region. He graduated from the Samarkand Agricultural Institute in 2004 and earned a master's degree from the Vitebsk State Academy of Veterinary Medicine (Belarus) in 2023. He holds a PhD in veterinary sciences. He was appointed Deputy Chairman of the State Veterinary Committee in 2017, continued as Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Veterinary and Livestock Development from 2019 to 2023, and has served as Deputy Chairman of the current CVLD structure since 2024. Dr. Akbarov's professional focus includes veterinary governance, border and transport biosecurity, risk-based inspection, and alignment with international standards to facilitate safe trade in animals and animal products. He is proficient in Russian.
		Dr Mereke Taitubayev
14:25	*Members experience: Update from Romania*	 **Dr Cristian Siposean,** Head of Notification and Monitoring of the Diseases Unit at the Animal Health Directorate, National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority. Serves as National Focal Point for animal disease notification (ADIS and WAHIS) and national rabies expert, as well as Rabies GF-TADs member. Experienced in applying GIS technology in animal health epidemiology, advising on animal diseases at national level, and acting as evaluator of veterinary programs for the European Commission.
14:40	*Members experience: Update from Albania*	 **Dr. Keti Margariti** is a veterinarian with extensive expertise in animal health, food safety, and veterinary public policy. She currently serves as Head of the Veterinary and Animal Welfare Sector at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Albania

and, since 2019, has been Albania's Permanent Delegate to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH). In this capacity, she plays an active role in shaping international standards on animal health and welfare, contributes to global initiatives to strengthen veterinary services, and represents Albania in numerous international meetings, training programs, and scientific fora.
She earned her PhD in Bacteriology through a joint program between the Agricultural University of Tirana and the University of Bari, Italy, with research focused on the identification of antibiotic-resistance genes in *Staphylococcus aureus* strains isolated from dairy cattle with mastitis. Her academic work and publications span antimicrobial resistance, zoonotic diseases, and veterinary public health, contributing valuable insights to both the scientific community and policy development.
Dr. Margariti has made significant contributions to strengthening Albania's veterinary system, aligning national frameworks with international standards, and promoting animal health and welfare as integral parts of food safety and public health.

14:55 Members experience: Update from Türkiye

In Anatolia, all newborn animals are vaccinated annually, followed by post-vaccination monitoring. Unvaccinated animals cannot be transported between provinces, and health certificates are withheld. Passive, active, and clinical surveillance is ongoing. No PPR seropositivity has been found in small ruminants or cattle in Thrace. A risk-based PPR vaccination strategy is implemented in Anatolia. We are planning to reapply for free status in the Thrace region.

Dr. Sabri Hacioglu, has a PhD in Virology and has been working with zoonotic and animal viruses since 2009. He is working at Veterinary Control Central Research Institute in Türkiye and head of virology laboratory.

15:10 Kosovo* update

Dr Bafti Murati, is a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine with over 30 years of professional experience in veterinary public health and animal health management. He holds a DVM and a Master's degree in Veterinary Medicine from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Belgrade, Serbia. Dr. Murati currently serves as Head of the Animal Health Sector at the Kosovo* Food and Veterinary Agency, where he has worked for more than 22 years. His earlier career includes service as a municipal veterinary inspector and farm veterinarian.

He is an active member of the Kosovo* Veterinary Chamber and the Federation of Pigeons of Kosovo*. His expertise spans prevention, control, and eradication of transboundary and zoonotic diseases, including Rabies, Brucellosis, Tuberculosis, Lumpy Skin Disease, Bluetongue, Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Avian Influenza, and African Swine Fever. Dr. Murati has participated in numerous international trainings and regional programs supported by the EU, FAO, World Bank, USAID, TAIEX, and other organizations, with a focus on veterinary epidemiology, surveillance, contingency planning, and disease control strategies. He has high proficiency in veterinary information systems and computer applications for animal disease management.

15:25 *Outbreak history, control measures, vaccination campaigns, and surveillance activities*

Dr Tengiz Chaligava- Veterinary epidemiologist and One Health expert with 15+ years of experience in national and international animal health programs. Specialist in FMD and brucellosis control, bio-surveillance, zoonotic diseases, and cross-border coordination. Proven leadership in strategic planning, training, and emergency preparedness through roles with the FAO, EuFMD, and WOAH. Published researcher with field expertise in risk-based surveillance, animal welfare, and public health threat reduction.

15:40 *Members experience: PPR free status of Azerbaijan*

Dr Galib Abdulaliyev is Head of the Animal Health and Biosecurity Department at the Food Safety Agency of Azerbaijan, Chief Veterinary Officer, Permanent Delegate to WOAH, Vice President of the WOAH European Regional Commission, and Chairperson of the Regional Advisory Group on FMD for West Eurasia.

A veterinary doctor with a PhD and academic rank of Assistant Professor, Dr. Abdulaliyev began his career as a researcher studying mineral metabolism in sheep under pasture conditions. He later served as Head of the Department for Livestock Development at the Ministry of Agriculture and as Director of the Azerbaijan State Scientific-Control Institute for Veterinary Medicinal Products.

He has contributed as country coordinator and component leader to EU, FAO, and World Bank projects addressing animal health, food safety, livestock development, and reforms in the veterinary system.

15:55 Coffee Break

16:25 *Activities of FAO's Regional Office of Europe and Central Asia on PPR*

Dr Mark Hovari

16:40	*The EURL-PPR obtained partial and full genome sequences of PPRV from samples collected across countries impacted by PPR in Europe, providing insights into routes of transmission and surveillance measures needed*		**Dr Arnaud Bataille** Arnaud Bataille has obtained his PhD at the University of Leeds (UK) on population genetics and disease ecology. He has worked in multiple countries (Ecuador, Netherlands, South Korea) on the evolutionary and ecological processes associated with animal disease emergence before joining CIRAD (Montpellier, France) in November 2015. His work focuses principally on the Peste des Petits Ruminants virus (PPRV). He leads research on the transmission and evolutionary dynamics of PPRV with the aim of elaborating better control strategies. He contributes to the development of new diagnostic tools and of vaccines against PPR. He is head of WOAH/FAO and EU reference laboratories for PPR.
16:55	Interactive discussion		
17:25	Conclusions and Recommendations		
19:30	Official Dinner hosted by WOAH		

** 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*

Day 2, Wednesday, 24 September

Session 4: SGE HPAI -3

Time	Title	Speaker
8:30	Opening	**Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**
8:35	*Characteristics, scope and results of Avian Influenza surveillance program in Serbia.*	 **Dr Mišo Kolarević**- Miso Kolarevic leads Serbia's special rapid response crew for veterinary sanitation measures during outbreaks of emergency animal diseases. He has contributed to national emergency responses, including natural disasters and the COVID-19 Headquarters, and coordinated two IAEA projects in Serbia. His experience includes FAO avian influenza monitoring, vector identification trainings, and participation in the DEFEND Horizon 2020 project. He is the author or co-author of over 50 scientific papers in Serbian.
8:50	*Country experience: vaccination (France, including cost-benefit-effectiveness)*	 **Dr Guillaume Gerbier,** National resource person on epidemiology for the French ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty. Responsible of the anticipation unit of the national animal health crisis unit. Deputy coordinator of the French animal health epidemiological surveillance platform. (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty, France)

9:05 *OH approach, biosecurity, vaccines and vaccination.*

Dr Annemarie Bouma graduated as biologist and as veterinarian. She did a PhD in 1997 on the epidemiology of Aujeszky's disease and did research at the National Reference Laboratory on several diseases until 2002. From 2002-2015 she worked as associate professor at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. Since 2011 she is working at the ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature, in the Hague. As policy officer she is involved in the prevention and control of various infectious animal diseases, like avian influenza, African swine fever, SARS-CoV-2 in mink, Foot- and mouth disease, and bluetongue. She also participates in issues regarding European legislation and WAOH. Currently she is working on a plan to come to a vaccination programme against HPAI, for LSD and for FMD in the Netherlands. (online)

9:20 *Surveillance, risk assessment, and One Health approaches to control zoonoses with focus on influenza.*

Dr Marc-Alain Widdowson, is a seasoned infectious disease and public health epidemiologist with specialty in epidemic viruses with wide international experience from working in different countries. Dr Widdowson is currently the head of Pandemic Threats, Communicable Diseases, and AMR at WHO-EURO. Previous to this position Dr Widdowson was the director of the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. Dr Widdowson graduated from the University of Cambridge in Biological Anthropology and Veterinary Medicine and completed a MSc in Communicable Disease Epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Early in his career he worked for the Department for International Development (DFID) in Zimbabwe and Bolivia on rabies, cysticercosis and foot-and-mouth disease, and after 2 years in the National Institute for Public Health in the Netherlands in the European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training, he moved to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for 18 years, and led the US CDC International Influenza Program. The last four years of working at CDC were in Kenya, working on global epidemiology and prevention of epidemic viral gastroenteritis, novel and seasonal influenza, Ebola, Zika, MERS-CoV and other epidemic viruses of global health security concern. Dr Widdowson has published more than 300 peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters, largely on the epidemiology and control of epidemic viruses and in 2023 Dr Widdowson was awarded a higher doctorate (ScD) from the University of Cambridge, based on this work, (online)

9:35 *How the virus has evolved, the zoonotic risk associated with the strains that circulated in Europe, as well as the role of migratory birds in the evolution of the virus and in their dissemination*

Dr Isabella Monne- leads the Viral Genomics and Transcriptomics Laboratory at IZSVe, hosting the EU/FAO/WOAH Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease. Since 2016, she has served as WOAH expert for these reference labs. Her research applies sequencing and bioinformatics to study the evolution of priority animal viral diseases, especially avian influenza. She has led and

	during the current epidemic wave.	contributed to numerous national and international projects and authored 166 peer-reviewed articles, with an H-index of 37.
9:50	*EFSA risk assessments on avian influenza, including Cattle infections in US and possible pathways of HPAI introduction into EU, preparedness, prevention, and control related to zoonotic avian influenza and wild bird surveillance for early detection.*	 **Dr Alessandro Broglia** Alessandro Broglia is a veterinarian and epidemiologist, with a degree from the University of Milan (Italy), PhD in parasitology at Free University of Berlin at the Institute of Parasitology and International Animal Health and post graduate in Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health from Royal Veterinary College, London.
10:05	*An overview of OFFLU's key activities and outputs from across the network and regional coordination to support the implementation of the Global HPAI strategy.*	 **Dr Gounalan Pavade**, Dr Gounalan Pavade is a veterinarian with a doctorate in Veterinary pathology. He is currently working as senior scientific coordinator for avian influenza at the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) at its Headquarters, Paris since 2010. His main activities at WOAH include scientific coordination of regional and international activities on avian, swine and equine influenza, managing the global animal influenza network called OFFLU (www.offlu.org) and collaborating with WHO influenza network on human-animal interface activities. He has published several papers on avian influenza and represented WOAH in international conferences and symposium.
10:20	Interactive discussion	
10:40	Conclusions and Recommendations	
11:00	Coffee Break	

Session 5: SGE RAB-7

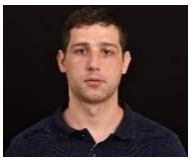
11:30	Opening	**Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**
11:35	*Findings from the analysis of rabies data from the SGE RAB Members - from 2017 to 2024*	 **Dr Anne Meyer** Dr. Anne Meyer is a veterinary epidemiologist providing expertise in data analysis, animal health surveillance, and risk assessment through her company, Episystemic. She has co-authored over 25 peer-reviewed articles and contributed to international guidelines, including WOAH's ASF Compartmentalisation Guidelines and FAO's ASF Surveillance Guidelines. Her work spans major animal diseases such as avian influenza, African swine fever, and trypanosomiasis, with a focus on strengthening surveillance systems and informing disease control strategies.

11:55	*The SGE RAB Secretariat will present SGE RAB Members plans for 2025-2026 as submitted by Members to the Secretariat*		**Dr Denise Dubois** is a veterinarian specializing in zoonotic diseases, currently serving at the World Organisation for Animal Health within the GF-TADs framework. She supports efforts to reduce the impact of priority transboundary diseases in the European region by strengthening veterinary capacities, surveillance, and international cooperation. Previously, she worked for over six years in public health in the Global South, at the Institute of Zoonoses Luis Pasteur in Argentina, focusing on zoonotic disease control, including rabies, Chagas disease, and dog population management. She holds a postgraduate degree in Veterinary Public Health and an Erasmus Mundus MSc in Infectious Diseases & One Health.
12:05	*An analysis on the recent re-emergences of rabies in the EU by providing information on general surveillance principles, diagnostic methods and the spatio-temporal and phylogenetic evolution*.		**Dr Emanuelle Robardet-** is a scientific manager in animal health epidemiology at ANSES, where she has focused on rabies surveillance and control since 2009. Director of the EU Reference Laboratory for Rabies mandate since 2020, she coordinates a network of European laboratories to strengthen rabies diagnosis, surveillance, and control methods. She has contributed to numerous international rabies projects, including WOAH twinning initiatives, and also works on bat-borne virus epidemiology through the OneBAT research project.
12:20	*Measures to maintain the rabies-free status of EU Member States, based primarily on awareness, prevention and implementation of ORV in risk areas.* EU		**Dr Florence Cliquet**- has led the Rabies Unit at ANSES since 1992, which serves as the EU Reference Laboratory for Rabies, a WOAH Reference Laboratory, and a WHO Collaborating Centre. An expert in rabies immunology, vaccinology, and epidemiology, she has contributed to major European research projects and supported rabies control programs worldwide. She advises French ministries and international organizations including the EC, WHO, WOAH, EFSA, IAEA, and EDQM, and has authored over 140 peer-reviewed publications.
12:35	Interactive discussion		– SGE-RAB Secretariat + WOAH Experts (Dr. Florence Cliquet & Dr. Emanuelle Robardet)
13:00	Lunch		
14:00	Recommendations & Conclusions		**Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**
14:15	*An overview of Rabies elimination in Ukraine: One Health approach, communication, and lessons learned*		**Dr Olena Kuriata-Pavlenko, DVM, OH Officer, WHO Ukraine** With 13 years in government and WHO roles, Olena has driven Ukraine's rabies elimination efforts, leading the National Rabies Elimination Strategy and public awareness campaigns under the Zero by 2030 agenda. She has fostered multi-sectoral partnerships and produced educational content to accelerate rabies control. Holding master's degrees in veterinary medicine and public administration,

		Olena brings a One Health perspective, linking human, animal, and environmental health.
14:30	Coffee Break	
15:00	**Side event 2: World Rabies Day**	
19:30	Official Dinner hosted by Serbia	TBD

Day 3, Thursday, 25 September

Session 6: SGE ASF-25

Time	Title	Speaker
8:30	Opening	**Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**
8:35	Report of SGE on ASF: 2014-2025	**Dr. Budimir Plavšić, DVM, MSc, BIBA**
8:50	*An integrated digital platform for ASF surveillance, control, and risk management that uses real-time data, smart monitoring, and biosecurity tools to support disease detection, outbreak response, and prevention through an innovative veterinary information system.*	 **Dr Boban Djuric** is a CVO of Serbia, with 30 years of experience in veterinary public health and animal health management. He has led Serbia's Animal Health Department since 2018, overseeing national programs for transboundary diseases, contingency planning, and biosecurity, and served as Chief Veterinary Officer in 2025. A specialist in parasitic diseases and food safety, he actively represents Serbia in international forums and training initiatives, with expertise in legislation harmonization, crisis management, and public communication.
9:00	*Moldova's experience in ASF control - chain of command, rapid response capacity, public awareness and disinformation management.*	 **Dr Nicolae Malancae**- is a Veterinary Inspector at the National Food Safety Agency of the Republic of Moldova, where he has served since 2023. Also, he is the National Focal Point for Animal Disease Notification, supporting international communication and reporting on transboundary animal diseases. From 2017 to 2022, he worked at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, contributing to the country's animal health and food safety legislative initiatives. He earned a master's degree in veterinary medicine from the State Agrarian University of Moldova (2016) and is currently a university assistant and PhD candidate at the Technical University of Moldova, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.
9:10	*The presentation contains short information of what for and why the contingency plan is needed. It includes a description of legal base binding in the past and currently at national and EU level, information*	 **Dr Joana Szwast-** is a veterinarian specialized in epizootiology and veterinary administration. Since 2009, she has worked at the Chief Veterinary Inspectorate, where she now leads the Unit for Animal Infectious Diseases. She has coordinated national programs on ASF eradication and other major animal diseases, including HPAI and rabies, and works on intra-EU trade, export requirements, and animal identification. She also lectures in international projects such as

	about minimum content of this plan.	the BTSF initiative and at the Veterinary Postgraduate Education Center in Puławy.
9:20	*Austria, though ASF-free, conducts realistic exercises to test contingency plans, train stakeholders, improve detection, ensure rapid response, and enhance cross-border cooperation.*	**Dr Beate Liehl** Holds a Master's and Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from the University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna, Austria. Over 20 years of diverse experience across veterinary practice, animal disease diagnostics and control, pharmacological research, nutrition research, and regulatory affairs. Professional background includes roles as Official Veterinarian, Head of Laboratory, Regulatory Affairs Specialist, and Animal Welfare Officer in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. Experienced in managing animal facilities, ensuring compliance with European legislation, and leading scientific projects.
9:30	*Results of Community African Swine Fever (ASF) Biosecurity Interventions" (CABI) in the Western Balkans*	**Dr Mark Hovari**
9:40	*The search for the ASF vaccine – an endless story?*	 **Dr Sandra Blome,** studied veterinary medicine at the University of Leipzig, Germany, and has a doctorate degree in veterinary medicine. Since 2008 she is senior scientist at the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut, Federal Research Institute for Animal Health (FLI), Germany, and responsible for the national reference laboratories for classical and African swine fever. Sandra Blome has long-term experience in working with transboundary viruses under high containment conditions up to BSL 3+ including animal experiments. She is deputy head of the Institute of Diagnostic Virology since 2015. Her research focuses on studies on pathogenesis of viral infectious diseases with particular emphasis on virus-host interaction and diagnostics/vaccine development.
10:00	Interactive discussion	
10:30	Conclusions and Recommendations	
10:45	Coffee break	

Session 7: FMD

11:15	Opening	**Chair - Dr Bernard Van Goethem**
11:20	*RAG presentation, Roadmap activities in Western Eurasia*	 **Dr Mereke Taitubayev**

11:30 *Eradication of foot and mouth disease in Hungary (2025)*

Dr Szaboles Pasztor, is the Delegate of Hungary to WOAH, Head of the Department of Food Chain Control within the Ministry of Agriculture, and former Chief Veterinary Officer. He is an experienced veterinary diplomat with an extensive history of working in government administration, skilled in veterinary legislative work, animal health and welfare, international relations and food safety.
He represented Hungary as Veterinary and Food Safety Attaché accredited to the European Union and was involved extensively with the EU decision-making procedure in the fields of animal health and welfare and food safety between 2012-2018.

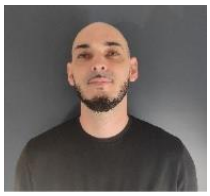
11:40 Members experience: Update from Slovakia

Dr Martin Chudý, has been appointed the Chief veterinary officer of Slovakia from May 2025 and delegate of Slovakia to WOAH from1-st of May 2024. From 1999 to 2008, he served as a Head Chief Veterinary Officers Office and his responsibilities included, among others, coordinating the activities and work of the Chief veterinary officer of Slovakia, monitoring relevant EU legislation, representing the State Veterinary and Food Administration of Slovakia at meetings in European institutions and coordinating public information and media communication regarding the activities and actions taken by the central Slovak veterinary authority of State Veterinary nad Food Administration of Slovakia. From 2008 to 2017, he worked in Brussels at the Permanent Representation of Slovak Republic to the EU as a diplomatic officer for veterinary care – the so-called veterinary attaché. From 2027 to 2024 he managed the animal health and animal welfare tasks in Slovakia. The main challenge for him was to manage and eradicated the outbreaks of FMD occurred in Slovakia in March and April 2025.

11:50 Members experience: Update from Türkiye

Thrace has remained FMD-free since 2010 through routine vaccination. In Anatolia, FMD is endemic. SAT1 is now dominant, while SAT2 and O outbreaks have declined. Serotype A appeared sporadically in 2024–2025. Vaccination is mandatory for interprovincial livestock

Dr Sabri Hacioglu, has a PhD in Virology and has been working with zoonotic and animal viruses since 2009. He is working at Veterinary Control Central Research Institute in Türkiye and head of virology laboratory.

	transport. Disease control relies on movement restrictions, quarantine, biosecurity, farmer training, and both passive and active surveillance. Preventive and emergency vaccinations are used to contain outbreaks.	
12:00	*FMD full genome sequencing and comparing strains: Overview for the region*	 **Dr Guillaume Girault,** has dedicated over 11 years to researching highly pathogenic and zoonotic bacterial diseases such as Anthrax, Brucellosis, Tularemia, or Glanders. He currently serves as a Project Leader at the Foot-and-Mouth Disease National, European, WOAH, and FAO Reference Laboratory at Anses in Maisons-Alfort, France, and he is the head of the EU-Reference laboratory for FMD. Dr Girault's expertise lies mainly in molecular biology, genomics, and phylogenetics. He oversees the EURL work program, which encompasses epidemiological studies across various countries, the development of diagnostic tools, and training activities for both EURL and EuFMD. His work aims to enhance the understanding of circulating FMDV strains to improve global FMD control. Project Leader, Deputy head of Biology of Picronaviruses Team, Head of EURL for FMD. (WOAH / EURL for FMD & FAO ANSES/SCIENSANO Lab.)
12:15	*presenting on the WOAH procedures for recovery of FMD free status without vaccination, taking the recent examples from Germany and Hungary in Europe.*	 **Dr Min-Kyung Park** Originally from South Korea, Dr Min-Kyung Park, completed her veterinary training at Washington State University in the USA, and also obtained a Master's degree in Public Policy and Management from the University of York in the UK during her employment at WOAH. While working in different positions over the past 12 years in WOAH, since 2021, Dr Park serves as the Head of the Status Department at the WOAH, which is the Department in charge of managing the procedures for the official recognition and maintenance of disease-free status recognition, as well as the publication of self-declaration of disease freedom. She is also the co-chair of the GF-TADs FMD Working Group with Dr Melissa McLaws from FAO. (WOAH, Head of Status Department)
12:25	Interactive discussion	ALL
12:40	Conclusions and Recommendations	
12:55	Lunch	

Session 8: Plenary 2

13:25	Opening	**Chair - Dr Keti Margariti**

13:30 *Digital platform delivering veterinary capacity building for transboundary animal diseases.*

Dr Daniel Beltran Alcrudo DVM, MSc, MPVM, PhD- is a veterinarian and epidemiologist with over 20 years of experience in livestock health and transboundary animal diseases. He holds degrees from the Universities of Zaragoza, Reading, Stirling, and UC Davis. Since 2007, he has worked at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), currently based in Budapest. His work spans disease management, policy, preparedness, surveillance, and training, with a focus on African swine fever, avian influenza, lumpy skin disease, Rift Valley fever, neglected zoonoses, and antimicrobial resistance. He has published extensively and developed tools such as FAO's OUTbreak COSting Tool (OutCosT) and online training courses.

13:45 *EuFMD Training – developing capacity, ensuring preparedness, and reducing risk*

Dr Dónal Sammin Since 2023, Dónal Sammin has served as Executive Secretary of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD) at FAO headquarters in Rome. He previously spent most of his career with Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine, leading field and laboratory investigations of animal diseases. In 2015, he became Head of DAFM Laboratories, managing a team of 340 staff across animal health, food safety, and plant health.

14:00 *REMESA; Animal Health Networks; Mediterranean; FMD and PPR; VBDs (LSD); Rabies; HPAI and ASF*

Drs Rachid Bouguedour and has over 30 years of experience leading veterinary services in Algeria. He served as Chief Veterinary Officer since 1993, driving reforms such as privatization, the health mandate, and modernization of veterinary medicine. He also led the Algerian Society of Veterinary Medicine and received the Maghreb Veterinary Union's Medal of Merit in 2000. He graduated from the National Veterinary School of Algiers (1981) and specialized at the Veterinary School of Lyon.

Francesco Valentini Since October 2022 has worked with WOAH in Tunis, promoting veterinary and public health across North Africa. He holds a post-graduate degree in Animal Health, Livestock Farming and Animal Production, and advanced training in Wildlife Management, Conservation Medicine, and Public Health. He actively contributes to the REMESA Secretariat and supports WOAH members with locally adapted services and programs.

14:15 *Project support for surveillance, WOAH status, contingency, ASF biosecurity, vaccination plans, labs, regional cooperation, and e-platform for reporting and*

Dr Toni Kirandjiski Dr. Toni Kirandjiski is a Macedonian veterinarian with over 25 years of experience in animal health, veterinary epidemiology, and international cooperation. He holds a DVM from the University of Zagreb and a Master's in Veterinary Epidemiology and Animal Health Programme Development from the University of Reading, UK.

	data collection on priority TADs.	He has served as Head of the Animal Health and Welfare Sector at North Macedonia's Food and Veterinary Agency, leading disease surveillance, eradication programmes, and the development of the national Animal Health Information System. Since 2010, Dr. Kirandjiski has worked as a senior consultant on EU-funded projects across the Western Balkans and Turkey, specializing in disease surveillance, contingency planning, laboratory networking, and EU legislative alignment. He has contributed to projects in Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, and Croatia. His scientific work includes publications on rabies and brucellosis, along with technical reports, manuals, and training materials. He is also a frequent trainer and invited speaker at FAO, WOAH, TAIEX, and EU BTSF workshops.
14:30	*The presentation describes the activities of the Animal Production and Health Section (APH) of the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre in Vienna, Austria.*	 **Dr Ivancho Naletoski-** holds a veterinary degree from Zagreb, Croatia, and a PhD on steroid hormone assays for non-invasive monitoring of female animals from Vienna, Austria. He earned a Master's in foot-and-mouth disease detection and control in Zagreb and a PhD in bovine viral diarrhea epidemiology in Skopje, North Macedonia. Since the early 2000s, he led the National Veterinary Institute in North Macedonia, overseeing multiple diagnostic labs and national disease control programs. He has extensive experience with international organizations (FAO, IAEA, WOAH, EU-FP, World Bank, GTZ) and, since December 2010, serves as Technical Officer for Animal Health at the FAO/IAEA Joint Centre.
14:40	Discussion	All
15:00	Coffee Break	
15:30	Conclusions (general and specific for each SGE/RAG)	**TBC**, GF-TADs Europe Vice-President, ALL
15:45	Closing ceremony	**TBC**, GF-TADs Europe Vice-President