

5th PACE Annual Coordination Meeting

Final Declaration

The fifth annual coordination meeting of the Pan-African programme for the Control of Epizootics (PACE) took place from June 28th until July 1st, 2005 in the meeting rooms of the Meridien President hotel in Dakar (Senegal). Twenty-seven (27) PACE member countries of east, central and west Africa took part in the meeting : Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda.

Representatives of the FAO, OIE, ECOWAS, CIRAD-Emvt, PANVAC, AU-CTTBD, GTZ IS, SATEC, USDA/APHIS and EISMV were also present at the meeting.

The opening ceremony of the meeting was presided by H.E. Dr. Oumy Khaïry Gueye SECK, Minister of Animal Husbandry of Senegal in the presence of the representatives of the European Commission in Senegal, the Director of the AU-IBAR, as well as several other honourable guests.

During this opening ceremony, three allocutions were pronounced.

The Representative of the Director of AU-IBAR thanked the Minister of Animal Husbandry and the Senegalese authorities on behalf of the President of the Commission of the African Union and of the Director of AU-IBAR, which was unable to attend the meeting. He gave an overview of the results achieved by the Programme with regard to the strengthening of animal diseases surveillance systems, the eradication of rinderpest, the control of other priority epizootics such as CBPP and the further development of the animal resource information system (ARIS) software. He explained the progress made with regard to the PACE extension phase, nevertheless stressing that delays have been noted in certain national programmes. He ended his speech by thanking the European Union and all other partner organizations for their support to the Programme.

The Representative of the Delegation of the European Commission in Senegal expressed his satisfaction regarding the fact that this important meeting was held in Dakar, providing an opportunity to assess the PACE programme implementation so far. He underlined the quality of the reports presented, in particular with regard to the monitoring of national programmes, based on performance indicators which enable a global overview of implementation progress and constraints of the programme at country level. Regarding the PACE Senegal component, he rejoiced the re-launch of the activities, now that the process of appointing a new national programme coordinator has been completed. He provided information on the novel approach of the European Commission, favouring budgetary support, rather than project-based support and suggested that further support to the livestock sector in countries could very well be channelled through this budgetary support.

Doctor Oumy Khaïry Gueye SECK, Minister of Animal Husbandry of Senegal, wished a warm welcome to all participants and thanked the AU-IBAR and the PACE coordination for having chosen Senegal as the venue for this 5th annual PACE meeting. She also thanked the European Union for the support it provides to the countries within the framework of PACE and to the livestock sector in general. The Minister of Animal Husbandry further expressed her joy at presiding this PACE coordination meeting, as she considers the Programme to have a genuine impact in the field and to achieve considerable results. She congratulated the three countries (Benin, Eritrea, Togo) which, as Senegal, have managed to be declared infection-free from rinderpest by the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) in May 2005. As far as the sustainability of the activities deployed by PACE is concerned, especially with regard to animal diseases surveillance systems, H.E. the Minister of Animal Husbandry recalled the efforts her Department is deploying in order to generate the necessary funds from the national budget, needed for the proper operation of the epidemio-surveillance activities. She underlined the interest the President of the Republic, H.E. the Hon. Abdoulaye WADE, and the Hon. Prime Minister take into the development of the livestock sector in Senegal. She wished every success to the debates which would follow and thereafter declared the 5th PACE annual coordination meeting open.

The proceedings of the meeting which were conducted throughout four days, have enabled the participants to address the various topics highlighted in the agenda :

- The state of progress of the PACE programme, including the start-up of the extension phase;
- The evaluation of the epidemiological surveillance systems operations;
- The progress made with regard to rinderpest eradication;
- The situation of the national and regional veterinary diagnostic laboratories;
- The progress made with regard to the implementation of CBPP control strategies;
- The overview of activities conducted by the Data-Management Unit;
- The financial situation of the PACE programme;
- The preparation of procedures for the closing of the national work-programmes.

Following fruitful debates, the participants adopted the following recommendations :

1. Recommendation regarding the PACE extension

Considering that the Rider to the PACE Financing Agreement defines the final closure of the Programme as being February 2007 and that of the national programmes in October 2006.

Considering that the start-up of this extension phase has been hampered by delays varying from 3 to 5 months if not more, in around 20 countries, mainly because of constraints related to the closure of programme-estimates and the de-commitment of unused funds.

Considering that the extension phase had been approved in order to grant sufficient time to the national programmes to complete the scheduled investments, consolidate their animal diseases epidemio-surveillance systems and proceed along the OIE pathway for the recognition of their rinderpest free status.

Convinced that the implementation of scheduled activities in the programme-estimates will give every opportunity to the countries to prepare the take-over by the national budgets of the funding of the activities which have been initiated by PACE, in particular the recurrent costs of the animal diseases surveillance systems.

The participants of this meeting launch an appeal to the European Commission, in close collaboration with the appropriate services of the African Commission, to identify the means which will enable countries to benefit from the two full years of programme implementation of the PACE extension phase.

Moreover, it is recommended :

To AU-IBAR

- To take all necessary action, in particular towards the Delegation of the European Commission in Kenya, in order to obtain an agreement, enabling countries to benefit from two full years of PACE implementation.

To the PACE Coordination Unit (PCU)

- To pursue the monitoring of programme-estimate closure operations and the de-commitment of unused funds from the countries in order to guarantee an efficient disbursement of the funds earmarked for the extension phase.
- To prepare a letter, signed by the PACE Regional Authorizing Officer and the Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Kenya, in order to inform all EDF National Authorizing Officers and the local EC Delegations regarding the urgent need to close all completed PACE-related commitments.

To the PACE National Programme Co-ordinations

- To take all necessary action to submit all binding documents for the closure of all outstanding programme estimates of the first phase of PACE by the end of July 2005 to the services of the National Authorizing Officer and the local Delegations of the European Commission.

2. Recommendation regarding the funding of the 2nd year of the extension phase

Considering the overall financial situation of PACE, highlighted in the updated financial report as presented by the PACE Financial Controller, which gave the participants additional insight into the commitments, expenses and balances of (used and unused) funds;

Considering the needs for additional investments as expressed by the country representatives in view of the take-over of epidemio-surveillance activities by the member States.

Taking into account change made to the approval pathway for national programme-estimates during the PACE extension period, requiring the drafting of a technical and budgetary framework document which defines the budgetary ceiling and the main outlines of the activities to be conducted for each country;

The participants recommend :

To the PCU

- To design the upcoming technical and budgetary framework document for the second year of the extension phase in such a way that it takes into account the investments which will enable the countries to strengthen their animal diseases epidemio-surveillance systems, without exempting the Government of their commitment to assume full financial responsibility for the recurrent costs of these national epidemiological surveillance systems.

3. Recommendation regarding the strengthening of the epidemio-surveillance systems

Considering the positive results recorded with regard to the optimisation of the epidemio-surveillance systems since august 2004;

Considering the paramount importance of sustainability of these epidemio-surveillance systems;

Having reviewed the results achieved in terms of the operation of the epidemio-surveillance systems in west and central Africa;

The participants recommend :

To the PACE Epidemiology Unit

- To continue the support to PACE member countries with regard to the implementation of optimisation measures for their ESS according to a detailed time frame and based on appropriate and verifiable performance indicators.
- To conduct epidemio-surveillance systems evaluations in East African member countries.

To the PACE members countries

- To implement the recommendations of the Heads of States and Governments Summit of the African Union regarding the allocation of 10% of the national budget to the agricultural sector (July 2003, Maputo) and the recommendations of the Cotonou (June 2002) and Addis Ababa (March 2004) PACE meetings in order to reinforce the financing of the epidemio-surveillance systems operations.

4. Recommendation regarding the Rinderpest eradication

Considering the importance of Rinderpest eradication from Africa and the World.

The participants recommend :

- To the countries that have not yet submitted their dossiers for freedom from Rinderpest disease or infection, to speed up their preparation, including emergency preparedness plans, in order to submit them to OIE by August 2005.
- To the following countries which are eligible for the free from infection status based on this historical absence of Rinderpest, Burundi, Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, The Gambia and Rwanda, to prepare a dossier to be submitted to the PACE Epidemiology Unit for comments by July 2005.
- To undertake intensively epidemiological surveillance activities in the Somali ecosystem (SES) on cattle and wildlife populations as per the protocol agreed on.

Moreover, they launch an appeal to other African countries (Angola, Comoros, Libya, Mozambique and Seychelles) which do not participate in PACE and are not yet recognized as rinderpest free by OIE, to draft their dossier and submit it to UA-IBAR.

5. Recommendation regarding the control of CBPP

Considering the socio-economic importance of CBPP in many African countries affected by the disease,

Considering the outcomes of various technical meetings held on CBPP control in Rome (2003), Accra (2003) and Conakry (2004);

The participants recommend

- To countries affected to implement the control strategic framework as indicated in the recommendations of the Conakry meeting of CBPP control (February 2004).
- To countries that are faced to maintain vigilance in order to avoid being affected with CBPP.
- To countries charged with conducting studies on the role of antibiotics in CBPP control (Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria) to expedite research activities pertaining to this subject matter.
- To all countries concerned to report outbreak of CBPP as the occur to AU-IBAR, OIE and other international organisations.

6. Recommendation regarding the disease reporting

Considering that the disease reporting is one of the major components of Epidemio-surveillance and its rate is an indicator for transparency and requirement for the progress along the OIE pathway.

Considering that during recent months, the number of reports filed and countries reporting to international and regional organisation has declined.

Convinced that this situation will be improved.

The participants recommend,

That PACE member countries

- which didn't yet adopted the new IBAR reporting format should introduce and continue improving the submission of monthly reports.
- should speed-up the introduction of the new OIE disease reporting (immediate notification of all events epidemiological significance, six monthly report in place of monthly report).

To UA-IBAR / PACE

- That the ICU work in close collaboration with the OIE Information Department in harmonising disease reporting procedures and create facilities in ARIS version II to simplify reporting to IBAR and the OIE

7. Recommendation regarding the national and regional laboratories of diagnosis

Considering the role of the national and regional reference laboratories on the epidemio-surveillance systems.

Considering the importance of the implementation of the Quality Assurance system within the national and regional laboratories,

The participants recommend :

To AU/IBAR

- To pursue the search of ways and means to support the UA-IBAR regional reference laboratories.
- To sensitise the appropriate national authorities in PACE members countries on the need to ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for the national veterinary laboratories.

To AU/IBAR and PCU

- To plan for a significant budget envelop for the implementation of the external quality assurance system.

To the PACE National Coordinators

- To facilitate the use of the ARIS software for laboratory staff in order for their data to be integrated to the data base.
- To sensitise the appropriate veterinary national authorities to ensure the sustainability of funding of the national laboratories.

8. Recommendation regarding PANVAC

Considering the importance of the use of good quality vaccines in the animal disease control programmes.

Aware of the satisfactory progress made by the African Union in the institutionalising process of the PANVAC.

The participants recommend :

- To the Directors of Veterinary Services, to request the PANVAC certificate for every batch of vaccine used during the annual vaccination campaigns against priority livestock diseases.

They appeal to the Commission of the African Union to conclude the institutionalisation process of PANVA as soon as possible, in particular by the recruitment of its staff.

Done in Dakar, on July, 1st 200