

## **PACE Programme: 13<sup>th</sup> Advisory Committee Meeting**

**26-27 October 2006**

**Nairobi, Kenya**

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### **Advisory Committee Members present:**

Chairman: Dr B. Vallat (OIE<sup>1</sup>)

Secretary: Dr D. Sibartie (OIE)

Members: Dr M. Traore (AU/IBAR<sup>2</sup>)

Dr P. Steinmetz (EC<sup>3</sup>, Brussels)

Mr O. Moller (EC<sup>3</sup>, Nairobi)

Dr T. Barrett, (IAH/ WRL<sup>4</sup> for Rinderpest, Pirbright)

Dr A. Diallo (FAO<sup>5</sup>-IAEA<sup>6</sup>)

Dr J. Domenech (FAO-AGAH<sup>7</sup>.)

Dr E. Camus (CIRAD/EMVT<sup>8</sup> WRL for CBPP<sup>9</sup>)

The Advisory Committee (AC) of the Pan African Programme for the Control of Epizootics (PACE) met on 26 and 27 October 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya.

Introductory speeches were made by Dr Modibo Traore, Director of AU/IBAR, Mr O. Moller, EC Representative in Nairobi, Kenya, Dr Bernard Vallat, Director General of the OIE and Mr Fred Nandasaba, Senior Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development of Kenya as the representative of the Government of Kenya. The latter officially opened the meeting in the presence of all AC members, representatives of donors and invited guests.

Awards of merit were presented by Dr Traore on behalf of Mrs R. Kurwijila, AU Commissioner in charge of Rural Economy and Agriculture, to the following Institutions/Programmes: CIRAD, Italian Cooperation, DFID (Department for International Development, United Kingdom), IAEA, Swiss Cooperation, FAO, OIE, EC (Brussels and Nairobi), IAH/WRL, the French Cooperation and AU-IBAR, the latter award being presented by Dr Vallat. After the presentation of the awards, Dr Traore warmly thanked the AC members on behalf of the AU Commission and AU-IBAR.

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<sup>1</sup> OIE: World Organisation for Animal Health

<sup>2</sup> AU/IBAR: African Union/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources

<sup>3</sup> EC: European Commission

<sup>4</sup> IAH/WRL: Institute for Animal Health/World Reference Laboratory

<sup>5</sup> FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

<sup>6</sup> IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency

<sup>7</sup> AGAH: Animal Health Service

<sup>8</sup> CIRAD/EMVT: Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement/Élevage et Médecine Vétérinaire des Pays Tropicaux.

<sup>9</sup> CBPP: Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia

Presentations were made by the PACE personnel and their collaborators as follows:

- Progress in the implementation of PACE Programme (PACE Coordination Unit),
- Financial situation of PACE (Finance Management Unit),
- Analysis of the draft final report of the PACE Programme (PACE Coordination Unit),
- Progress made towards rinderpest eradication in Africa, with emphasis on Somali Ecosystem (Epidemiology Unit),
- Avian influenza update in Africa and PACE contribution to its control (PACE Epidemiology Unit)
- Sustainability of national epidemio-surveillance systems (PACE Epidemiology Unit)
- Presentation and analysis of the assessment of ARIS report (Information and Communication Unit)
- PACE analysis on future actions (PACE Coordination Unit)

The AC congratulated the PACE team for the good quality of documents distributed and the excellent technical presentations. It discussed the various issues raised and made the following recommendations:

### **1. General Recommendation.**

At this last PACE AC Meeting, the AC members wish to express their appreciation to IBAR and the PACE team for the good progress achieved in almost every component of the PACE Programme. However, some components of the Programme were less successful than others and this can be largely be attributed to the failure of some national project coordination teams to master the complex EC funding rules thus causing considerable delays in the implementation of programmes. It is also observed that some EC Delegations provided more support than others and that was a key factor in the results obtained in some countries.

The AC thanks all the donors for funding the Programme particularly the EU which provided significant resources via the EC.

The AC fully supports the governance of the Programme and recommends that it serve as a model for future national, regional and continental activities in the field of animal health. However, it advises that in future, more emphasis be placed on training of veterinarians responsible for the implementation of livestock programmes at continental, regional and national level and the involvement of financial managers in the support of veterinary teams.

### **2. Final evaluation report and preparation for the future.**

The AC notes the report made by the evaluation team and acknowledges the positive remarks made on the accomplishment of the Programme. However, it feels that the report does not

address several important issues although all relevant background materials including previous recommendations made by the AC were made available to the team. The AC is also disappointed to note the absence in the report of adequate recommendations for the future based on the lessons learnt.

The AC recommends that a 2-3 day workshop be organised before February 2007 for a select team of experts and donor representatives to propose a new programme that would recommend relevant governance model for the future and address priority animal health issues in Africa including strengthening of Veterinary Services and insuring sustainability of PACE achievements. This workshop will also address necessary actions to be taken as soon as possible while awaiting the launching of a new continental programme using existing funds e.g. from EC, African Development Bank (ADB) at country or regional level, including the grant of 21.5 million euros available from EC. A consultant could be recruited for the preparation of the workshop and for editing the proceedings.

The AC also points out that the resources allocated by EC to Alive (8 million euros) will be used for the preparation of programmes directed against avian influenza. The funds to be committed by donors during the International Conference of Bamako will be taken into account in the preparation of the continental programme. The AC also appreciates the commitment of IAEA to continue the support of veterinary laboratories through TC projects.

The AC also recommends that the on-going documentation exercise be completed by a review of regional and national documents indexed and classified according to subjects. These documents should be stored by IBAR in Nairobi and in Bamako and PACE should allocate specific resources to publish selected and peer reviewed outputs delivered by the Programme.

### **3. Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP).**

The AC reaffirms the importance of the control of CBPP in Africa. It fully supports the proposal of the Executive Committee of Alive (African Livestock) to give priority to research on CBPP laying particular emphasis and resources on the development of new, robust, efficacious and thermostable vaccines as well as improved laboratory diagnostic tests.

The AC recalls and supports the control strategies adopted during the Conakry Workshop in 2004 recommending vaccination for a period of three years in endemic zones, control of animal movements and adoption of control measures on a regional basis, pointing out that the application of such strategies has proven successful in some countries such as Guinea Conakry and some others in the South African Development Community (SADC).

For control measures to be effective in African countries, the AC recommends that CBPP control be considered as a Public Good and vaccination campaigns be financed at least partially within any after-PACE programme.

The AC also recommends that trials using antibiotics be pursued in order to enable the OIE to modify if relevant, the Chapter on CBPP in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code.

### **4. PANVAC and the quality control of veterinary drugs, vaccines and biologicals.**

The AC being fully conscious of the importance of the quality control of veterinary vaccines, drugs and other biologicals in the prevention and control of animal diseases, expresses concern about the poor quality of veterinary products being widely used in Africa. It takes into consideration the general context and the varying legislations and institutional

mechanisms existing at regional and sub-regional levels as well as the progress achieved in certain regions such as the WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union).

Now that PANVAC functions as a specialised AU Institution being responsible for the quality control of veterinary vaccines and biologicals at the continental level, the AC recommends that the Alive Platform consolidate on this issue and facilitate the processes involved in quality control of these products and that the AU initiate a specific study to strengthen the missions of PANVAC to consolidate its activities in the medium and long term. In this respect, appropriate resources should be sought to enable PANVAC to meet the strategic objectives identified in the study. The AC also recommends that the support currently being provided to PANVAC by the AU, IAEA and other partners continue in order to reinforce its activities.

## **5. Implementation of ARIS.**

The AC notes the progress made in the development and implementation of the Animal Resources Information System (ARIS). However, it stresses the importance of coordination and harmonisation of data regarding animal diseases and re-iterates its recommendation that seminars be held to discuss the existence and implications of current animal disease information systems with a view to harmonising the systems in Africa. This is essential in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to promote automatic connection of notifications made to the OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) through any regional systems including ARIS.

In this respect, the AC commends the seminars on the OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) organised by the OIE with the participation of IBAR and FAO, which will be held in Dakar, Senegal and Nairobi, Kenya in November and December 2006 respectively. It also re-iterates its recommendation adopted during the 12<sup>th</sup> AC meeting to organise a joint OIE/FAO/IBAR/IAEA workshop to harmonise the various systems in Africa such WAHIS, ARIS and TAD-Info. The Dakar and Nairobi seminars should provide an opportunity to initiate discussions on the harmonisation of existing animal disease information systems prior to the organisation of the joint OIE/FAO/IBAR/IAEA workshop.

The AC also recommends that an independent expert be contracted to support the development of a second software version taking into account all the findings of the assessment of PACE including laboratory data. This version will include connections with other existing systems. This aspect is considered by the AC as a priority for African countries and donors investing in electronic communications for Veterinary Services. Consultations on this matter will continue in the GF-TADS context.

## **6. Resumption of PPR vaccine trials.**

The AC notes that after long delays due to administrative problems, repeat trial of the PPR vaccine for use as a marker rinderpest vaccine in cattle has finally been approved. It is scheduled to start within the next 2 weeks. Based on the outcome of this trial a decision as to its use in targeted vaccinations in the SES can then be taken.

The AC recommends that if the outcome of the trial is positive a decision be taken on whether or not to amend the OIE pathway for freedom from rinderpest disease and rinderpest infection.

The AC acknowledges that the loss of the KARI Muguga Laboratory's status as an OIE Reference Laboratory is indeed disappointing. The laboratory suffers from chronic underinvestment and as a result its senior staff lack motivation.

The AC is of the opinion that if the laboratory is to regain and maintain its original status, management reforms and a considerable capital investment will be required to bring the laboratory infrastructure up to the standard of a modern reference laboratory. Funds to maintain its operation and provide staff training in quality assurance will also have to be found e.g. through an OIE 'Twinning' arrangement.

## **7. Rinderpest eradication.**

The AC considers that Rinderpest (RP) eradication remains a major objective of AU-IBAR and the International community. There is evidence that RP has been eradicated from most of the African continent and that the PACE participating countries have embarked on the OIE pathway for accreditation of freedom from disease and/or infection. The Somali Ecosystem (SES) is thought to be the last region in the world where RP virus could still be circulating. The AC is aware that PACE and the three Somali Ecosystem (SES) countries have developed a strategic plan for the eradication of RP in the SES in line with the Global FAO-GREP strategy with the final objective being to achieve global RP eradication by the year 2010 and in line with the OIE pathway for RP accreditation. It also acknowledges that the situation in the SES is characterised by:

- The absence of confirmation of any recent outbreak of rinderpest.
- The evidence of absence of virus circulation in most parts of the SES as demonstrated by intensive wildlife epidemio-surveillance.
- The absence of any report of clinical suspicions though Participatory Disease Search since 2003.
- The persistence of seropositivity in cattle in certain parts of the SES that may indicate RP endemicity in these areas.
- This persistence of seropositivity remains questionable and the evidence gathered so far neither confirms nor refutes the presence of RP virus circulation in the SES.

In view of the above and also taking into consideration that the PACE Programme will end in February 2007 and the impossibility of eradicating RP from SES by that date, the AC recommends that:

1. Any action taken should consider the 3 following options with regard to the SES situation, namely: i) lineage 2 virus is still circulating, without currently causing much trouble in the affecting areas indicating a possible inter-epidemic phase of the disease, ii) lineage 2 virus is still circulating but is dying out and soon will disappear altogether and iii) Lineage 2 virus has been present until recently but has now died out.
2. International experts and investigators from the three countries of the SES get together to:
  - i) analyse the particular situation in the Southern Somalia and contiguous areas of neighbouring countries, ii) define precise specific studies to determine whether or not RP virus is still circulating in this region, and iii) redefine the strategy and prepare precise plans for the continuation of surveillance and other activities in the various regions of the SES.

3. Arising from 2 above, maximum alert and epidemio-surveillance activities be maintained in order to immediately respond to any reoccurrence of RP outbreaks.
4. The quality and speed for the analysis of RP samples be improved through:
  - a) The support to the diagnostic capacities of the national laboratories in Kenya and Ethiopia.
  - b) The implementation of the testing protocol adopted in Dakar, Senegal in 2001 and reconfirmed in Accra, Ghana in 2004 be implemented using precise protocols for sample analysis following basic rules such as:
    - i) Sending all samples taken in case of suspicion of outbreaks to the two Reference Laboratories (IAH, Pirbright, UK and CIRAD-EMVT, Montpellier, France) as well as the Ethiopian and Kenyan laboratories for urgent analysis.
    - ii) Analysis of all sera from serological surveys in the KARI laboratory (Kenya surveys), Sebeta laboratory (Ethiopia surveys) and Muguga (Somalia surveys).
    - iii) Sending all sera from these serological surveys to the two Reference laboratories where randomised serum samples will be immediately analysed as part of quality insurance process. In case of positive results or discordance in the results of the national laboratories all samples should be urgently retested in the Reference laboratories.
    - iv) Sending all sera from wildlife to Reference Laboratories.
  - c) Support the cost of packaging and shipping of samples and agree on cost recovery protocols with the Reference Laboratories.
  - d) Sending a mission led by IBAR to visit the sites where positive samples have been found to interview livestock owners about the possibility of vaccines use.
5. The project proposal for the eradication of RP and OIE accreditation of freedom from disease and infection for the African countries which has been prepared by AU-IBAR SERECU with the support of FAO-GREP be urgently finalised and submitted to the European Union with the objective of avoiding any gap between the end of the PACE Programme and the beginning of this new project.
6. The strategy of the project proposal be built on the scenario stating that the virus could still be circulating but is most probably dying out.
7. The 4 year project proposal include a full time epidemiologist to be seconded to IBAR by FAO-GREP and substantial support from FAO-GREP Secretary and OIE be provided during this 4 year period and during any possible interim period between the end of the PACE Programme and the beginning of the new project.

## **8. Avian influenza**

The AC commends the role played by PACE to better prepare African countries in their fight against avian influenza.

For the future, the AC recommends that poultry owners (at least those having industrial or semi-industrial farms) be involved in the training and surveillance networks managed by Veterinary Services. All countries should also be advised to consider vaccination options based on risk analysis.

## **9. Acknowledgements**

On the occasion of this last AC Meeting, AC Members wish to express their appreciation to IBAR and PACE Team, Donors, PACE countries, other partners and the organisers for the good working spirit and consensual attitude that prevailed during the meetings. They are also grateful to the support and excellent hospitality accorded to them during the meetings.