Annex 5

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REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE STATUS AND ENDORSEMENT OF OFFICIAL CONTROL PROGRAMMES OF MEMBERS

18-20, 22, 25 and 27 October 2021

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A virtual meeting of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on the Evaluation of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Status and endorsement of official control programmes of Members (hereafter the Group) was held from 18 – 27 October 2021.

1. Opening

Dr Montserrat Arroyo, Deputy Director General for International Standards and Science of the OIE, welcomed and thanked the Group for its commitment and the extensive support towards the OIE mandates. She extended her appreciation to the institutions that kindly allowed the experts to participate in the meeting. She highlighted that the official recognition of animal health status was an important activity for the OIE and acknowledged the amount of work before, during and after the *ad hoc* Group meeting and the efforts required in reviewing the dossiers, particularly considering the high number of dossiers received each year with regard to FMD. She also thanked the Group for its availability and commitment throughout the year in responding to the request of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases on FMD-related matters.

Dr Arroyo reminded the Group of the confidentiality of the dossiers received for official recognition and thanked the experts for abiding by the undertaking of confidentiality. She underlined the OIE procedures for protecting the confidentiality of information and for declaring potential conflicts of interest.

2. Adoption of the agenda and appointment of chairperson and rapporteur

Dr David Paton chaired the Group, and Dr Manuel Sanchez acted as rapporteur, with the support of the OIE Secretariat. The Group endorsed the proposed agenda.

The terms of reference, agenda and list of participants are presented as Appendices I, II and III, respectively.

3. Evaluation of a request for the official recognition of an FMD free zone where vaccination is not practised

The Group assessed a request from a Member for the recognition of an FMD free zone where vaccination is not practised. The dossier was referred back to the applicant Member.

4. Evaluation of requests for the official recognition of FMD free zones where vaccination is practised

a) Russia – Zone III Eastern Siberia

Russia was recognised as having a zone free from FMD where vaccination is not practised in May 2016 and two zones free from FMD where vaccination is practised in May 2021. In August 2021, Russia submitted an application for the recognition of a new zone free from FMD where vaccination is practised consisting of two Subjects (Republic of Tuva and Republic of Buryatia) and one administrative Raion of the Republic of Altai (Kosh-Agachsky Raion).

The Group requested additional information and received answers from Russia.

i) Animal disease reporting

The Group considered that Russia had a record of regular and prompt animal disease reporting.

ii) Veterinary Services

The Group acknowledged the provision of a comprehensive set of legislation related to FMD activities and the organisation of the Veterinary Service in Russia. The Group agreed that the Veterinary Authority had current knowledge of, and authority over, FMD susceptible animals in the proposed zone.

iii) Situation of FMD in the past two years

The Group noted that the last FMD outbreaks in the proposed free zone were reported in Zakamensky Raion of the Republic of Buryatia in 1965.

iv) Routine vaccination and vaccines

Russia explained that the viral strains in the vaccine were selected based on the circulating field viruses in Russia and its neighbouring countries. The Group agreed that the vaccine complies with the provisions of the *Manual of Diagnostic Test and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* (*Terrestrial Manual)*.

Russia described that the vaccines are purchased using federal budget and vaccinations are overseen by the *Veterinary Service* and provided to producers free of charge. Russia indicated that cattle, sheep, goats, buffaloes, yaks and camels are vaccinated, but not pigs.

The Group noted that according to the Russian vaccination programme, cattle are vaccinated from four months of age onwards, then every three months until they reach the age of 18 months, and after 18 months, vaccination is maintained twice a year. The Group acknowledged that Russia submitted tables with the number of animals per species and the number of FMD vaccine doses administered per region. However, it was not possible to estimate the vaccine coverage from the data provided.

The Group expressed concerns regarding the population immunity levels in cattle. Considering the vaccination regime and the time of collection of blood samples, the population immunity was lower than expected, particularly in young animals. The Group also noted that the small ruminant population was not included as part of the serological survey either for demonstration of absence of virus transmission or for demonstration of population immunity.

v) Surveillance in accordance with Articles 8.8.40. to 8.8.42.

The Group acknowledged that the early detection system for FMD in the proposed zone uses passive surveillance. Russia described its passive surveillance based on investigations of FMD suspicions and clinical examinations during routine disease prevention activities that are carried out from three to five times a year. The Group noted that a common FMD surveillance strategy was applied in Russia regardless of the vaccination status in the different zones; regular serological surveillance was performed in the proposed free zone with structural protein and NSP tests and follow-up field investigations and testing in case of suspicious or inconclusive results. The results of the surveys conducted in 2020 and 2021 in the proposed free zone showed zero NSP reactors in the second paired sampling, leading to the rule out of the possibility of FMD virus transmission. The Group found the number of NSP reactors in the first test (screening) surprisingly low, considering the expected percentage of false positive reactors in surveys with large number of samples.

Russia indicated that NSP surveys are only conducted in cattle. Considering that the small ruminant population is almost six times higher than cattle in some Raions and that FMD clinical signs are not usually evident in sheep and goats, the Group recommended that serological surveillance be conducted not only in cattle but also in small ruminants.

Although the procedure of the survey included two stages of sampling (selecting the settlements and then the animals), a two-stage approach was not followed in the study design nor in the sample size calculation. In addition, the criteria used for the selection of epidemiological units was not clearly explained. A two-stage sampling design is recommended to account for clustering in the design of surveillance activities and in the statistical analysis of surveillance data (as described in Article 1.4.3., point 1.e. of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*).

The Group recommended Russia to review the design of the serological surveys to be able to rule out the presence of FMD virus transmission with a satisfactory level of confidence and sensitivity. Given the low number of NSP positive reactors in the serosurveys, the Group recommended assessing the protocol for the NSP test in the surveys to ensure a high sensitivity of the screening test. The Group suggested that the survey design, including the selection criteria for the epidemiological units and animals and sample size calculation, should be established for each zone with clear justification regarding the choice of survey design to ensure adequate power and to seek the best representativeness of the population in the samples.

The Group acknowledged the Russian laboratory's participation and satisfactory results in inter-laboratory proficiency testing schemes in 2019, as well as its participation in 2020.

vi) Regulatory measures for the early detection, prevention and control of FMD

The Group noted that reporting of FMD suspect cases is enforced by law and FMD is included in the list of priority diseases for immediate notification to the Veterinary Authority. Information was also provided on awareness campaigns and training conducted for farmers and veterinarians to promote reporting of FMD suspicions.

Russia provided documented evidence on the regulatory measures for movement of animals and animal products between zones of different animal health status. Russia also provided the numbers of non-compliant movements detected and amounts of confiscated animal products. Additionally, following a request from the Group, Russia provided a clear description with regard to the control of animal movements including those of transhumance between Subjects. Russia described the specific activities in place to control and monitor transhumance using mobile and stationary control posts to prevent the movement of animals from infected zones into the rest of the country. Russia also provided a set of measures implemented to prevent the introduction of FMD virus across the borders with neighbouring countries with undetermined FMD status including indoor housing of FMD susceptible animals in the Subjects bordering infected countries.

The Group noted that legislation was in place for the treatment of swill, but it was unclear whether or not and how such a legislation was enforced and monitored. Therefore, the Group recommended that if this practice was to be continued, Russia should have a system to monitor the enforcement of the legislation and its compliance by relevant sectors.

The Group agreed that sufficient regulatory measures were described in the dossier for the early detection, prevention, and control of FMD.

vii) Description of the boundaries of the proposed free zone

The proposed free zone consists in two Subjects (Republic of Tuva and Republic of Buryatia) and one administrative Raion of the Republic of Altai (Kosh-Agachsky Raion). The Group agreed that the boundaries of the proposed zone were well defined and appropriately displayed with clear maps.

viii) Description of the system for preventing the entry of the virus (into the proposed FMD free zone)

The Group acknowledged the comprehensive legal framework provided by Russia on the identification and registration of animals, as well as for the traceability of animal movements using an electronic certification system. Each animal is assigned an individual number shown on its ear tag, brand or tattoo. The dossier stated that records of farms and animals are updated yearly at the end of the calendar year through a comprehensive census. Russia also explained that live animals imported into Russia or transported between the member states of the Euroasian Customs Union must also be identified either individually or as a group, by ear-tags, microchips, rings or tattoos.

The Group noted that live animals and animal products are subjected to inspections carried out at the border inspection posts (BIPs) prior to entry into the proposed zone and the country. Importation of live animals and animal products is permitted based on the results of a previous risk analysis conducted in accordance with the Customs Union Decisions and following the provisions of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (*Terrestrial Code*). Russia also explained that the control of movements of live animals and animal products between the different zones is ensured by the regional departments of the Veterinary Service.

The Group requested Russia to confirm whether fresh meat from slaughtered pigs originating from zones with undetermined FMD status can be released into a free zone without being subjected to a treatment that inactivates the FMD virus. Russia clarified that procedures equivalent to the ones described in Articles 8.8.23. and 8.8.31. applied to the meat products derived from pigs originating from an infected zone and slaughtered in the proposed free zone.

The Group considered the described measures adequate to prevent the entry of FMD virus into the proposed zone. Nevertheless, the Group emphasised the importance of continuous compliance with the provisions of the *Terrestrial Code* for importation of animals and their products from countries or zones with lesser animal health status, and for maintaining effective separation and control on movements of animals and their products between the zones of different animal health and vaccination status.

ix) Compliance with the questionnaire in Article 1.11.4.

The Group agreed that the format of the dossier was compliant with the questionnaire in Article 1.11.4.

Conclusion

Considering the information submitted in the dossiers and to the questions raised, along with the long interval since the last FMD introduction into the zone and the accompanying low risk of FMD recurrence, the Group agreed that the application was compliant with the requirements of Chapter 8.8. and with the questionnaire in Article 1.11.4. of the *Terrestrial Code.* The Group, therefore, recommended that the proposed zone of Russia be recognised free from FMD where vaccination is practised.

b) other application

The Group assessed another request from a Member for the official recognition of an FMD free zone where vaccination is practised. The Group concluded that the application did not meet the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*. The dossier was referred back to the applicant Member.

5. Evaluation of requests from Members for the endorsement of official control programme for FMD

a) Botswana

Botswana has six FMD free zones where vaccination is not practised that are officially recognised by the OIE. In September 2021, Botswana submitted an application to the OIE for the endorsement of its official control programme for FMD which includes plans for improved control in Zones 1 and 2 in the north of the country that have no official FMD status recognised by the OIE. The Group requested additional information and received clarification from Botswana.

i) Animal disease reporting

The Group noted that FMD is a notifiable disease as per legislation and considered that Botswana had a record of regular animal disease reporting to the OIE.

ii) Capacity of the Veterinary Services to control FMD

The Group was informed that Botswana had received a Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) evaluation mission in 2010, followed by a Gap Analysis mission in 2011, PVS legislation mission in 2015 and PVS evaluation follow up mission in 2019. The Group agreed that Botswana's Veterinary Services had the capacity to control FMD based on achievement of several officially recognised FMD free zones without the use of vaccination in the country and successful maintenance of their FMD-free status.

iii) Applicability of the official control programme for FMD to the entire territory

The dossier provided information that the official control programme was applicable to the whole territory of Botswana while following a zoning approach for FMD control. The Group was informed that according to this approach, Botswana is currently at Stage 3 of the Progressive Control Pathway (PCP) and the programme was aimed at eliminating virus transmission to eventually have no endemic FMD in the national domestic livestock population.

Botswana indicated that the country is divided into several zones for disease control purposes. These being the:

- 'FMD free without vaccination zones' that constitute the southern two-thirds of Botswana and consist of zones 3b, 3c, 4a, 4b, 5, 6a, 6b, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13;
- 'FMD vaccination zones' that comprise zones 1 and 2 (zone 2 is further divided into 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e and 2f) and zone 3d, of which zones, 2e and 3d act as protection zones; and
- 'Stock free zones' that comprise zones 16, and 17, which are reserved for wildlife. Botswana described that while zone 16 has a population of persistently infected African buffalo, there are no buffaloes in zone 17.

Considering the presence of persistently infected African buffalo in parts of the territory of Botswana, it should be acknowledged that final eradication of FMD will not be possible in the whole country.

iv) The detailed plan of the programme to control and eventually eradicate FMD in the country or zone

Upon request, Botswana provided a timeline and detailed steps indicating its progressive plan to control FMD in the different zones covering the area with undetermined FMD status. Botswana stated its objective to attain FMD free status with vaccination for zones 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d by 2025; and to submit an application to the OIE by 2024 to achieve recognition of FMD free status without vaccination for zones 2e and 2f. Botswana also mentioned a plan to eventually declare zones 1 and 3d as free from FMD with vaccination. The strategy described in Botswana's complementary information using different 'disease control zones' to eventually expand the free zones without vaccination and also attain the official recognition of zones free from FMD with vaccination was considered adequate by the Group, also taking into account Botswana's experience in the achievement of several officially recognised FMD free zones and their maintenance.

v) Epidemiology of FMD in the country

In the dossier, Botswana described FMD outbreaks between 2002 and 2020 and the epidemiology of FMD in the country. Botswana has never recorded or detected any FMD virus serotypes other than the SATs.

Botswana reported that outbreaks of FMD in small ruminants have always been relatively rare in the country and mild compared to those in cattle, and therefore small ruminants normally were not vaccinated against FMD, even during outbreaks, due to their apparent insignificant role in the epidemiology of FMD in Botswana.

The Group was informed that incursion of African buffalo occasionally occurs in zones 1 (Chobe district) and 2, which are in close proximity to national parks, wildlife management areas, forest reserves and limited livestock farming areas. Therefore, vaccination against FMD has been historically conducted three times a year to mitigate the risk of FMD virus transmission. In zones further away from the areas with buffalo, cattle are vaccinated twice per year. Botswana described in the additional information the actions taken upon incursion of buffaloes into the vaccination zones. The Group considered that the actions taken including destruction of the buffaloes or driving them back were prompt and adequate.

vi) FMD surveillance

The Group noted that active and passive surveillance were in place and performed in general schemes as well as with a targeted approach in the different zones.

Botswana provided the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on the follow-up of NSP reactors. The Group noted in the SOP that resampling of serum and testing was required in the reactor animals only and additional animals will be sampled only if the reactor animals could not be found. The Group strongly recommended that the follow-up procedure in future cases of positive results should include clinical inspection, supplementary testing including collection of probangs of the animals found seropositive and serological testing of additional in-contact animals, and epidemiological investigation in accordance with Article 8.8.42. Point 1 of the *Terrestrial Code.*

Furthermore, based on the high proportions of goats with seropositive NSP results (particularly in zone 2), the Group strongly suggested that these be adequately followed up according to the aforesaid reference and studies on clustering be conducted to further investigate their potential role in the epidemiology of FMD in Botswana.

vii) Diagnostic capability and procedure

The dossier stated that laboratory diagnosis of FMD is conducted in two national laboratories, namely Botswana National Veterinary Laboratory (BNVL), a division of the Department of Veterinary Services, and Botswana Vaccine Institute (BVI), an OIE Reference Laboratory for FMD.

The Group noted from the dossier that the BNVL is an ISO/IEC 17025:2005 accredited laboratory and has 41 accredited tests with the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) of which two are FMD serological tests (liquid phase blocking ELISA (LPBE) and non-structural protein (NSP) ELISA). The BVI laboratory is an ISO/IEC 9001:008 certified laboratory and has additional testing capabilities that include virus neutralisation test (VNT), antigen capture ELISA, PCR, vaccine matching and sequencing. The Group noted that BNVL had participated in proficiency testing schemes organised by the OIE Reference Laboratory for FMD in the United Kingdom (Pirbright Institute) for NSP while BVI had participated in the testing schemes for PCR, antigen ELISA and virus isolation tests. The Group strongly encouraged Botswana’s continuous participation in such proficiency testing schemes. The Group also strongly encouraged BVI to apply for accreditaton of their FMD diagnostic tests with SANAS.

viii) Vaccination

The Group noted that Botswana adopted vaccination against the three SAT serotypes in cattle as part of the control strategy in high-risk areas of FMD, mainly those bordering wildlife management areas with buffalo. Vaccine is provided by the BVI, which also provides guidance on the strains to be included based on antigenic matching with field viruses from FMD outbreaks. Vaccination is done two to three times a year depending on the likelihood of potential contact between buffalo and cattle. Botswana mentioned that vaccination programmes are monitored and evaluated by post vaccination monitoring (PVM), but could not be conducted in recent years due to the COVID-19 situation. The Group encouraged that these surveys resume as soon as the sanitary situation would allow. Botswana described that different vaccination strategies such as ring vaccination, targeted vaccination or suppressive (dampening-down) vaccination are implemented in selected areas depending on the situation in order to decrease the rate of FMD virus transmission in the areas with undetermined FMD status.

ix) Emergency preparedness and response plan

The Group noted that Botswana has an early warning system in place to rapidly detect and investigate reports of suspicions. Botswana presented official documents substantiating its emergency preparedness and response. The Group acknowledged that Botswana had adequate measures in place for preparedness in case an incursion of African buffalo into Zones 1 or 2 or into the officially recognised FMD-free zones would occur. These measures included the tracing and follow-up investigations related to potential contact with susceptible domestic animals.

Considering the recent FMD outbreaks of serotype O in the region, the Group highlighted that serotype O could be a potential threat, particularly taking into consideration that this serotype is not included in the vaccine used in vaccination zones of Botswana. Thus, the Group strongly encouraged continued surveillance to detect possible incursions of serotypes not regularly found in Botswana and for the laboratories to have the appropriate diagnostic capabilities to detect these serotypes. Botswana should also ensure the supply of appropriate vaccines as part of its contingency plan.

x) Compliance with the questionnaire in Article 1.11.5.

The Group agreed that the format of the dossier was generally compliant with the questionnaire in Article 1.11.5. of the *Terrestrial Code.* However certain parts of the dossier lacked clarity and the organisation was not fully in line with the format of the questionnaire. The Group underlined that Botswana should follow strictly the format of the questionnaire for any future submission of dossiers.

Conclusion

Considering the information submitted in the dossier and Botswana's answers to the questions raised, the Group considered that the application was compliant with the requirements of Chapter 8.8. and the questionnaire in Article 1.11.5. of the *Terrestrial Code.* The Group therefore recommended that Botswana's official control programme for FMD be proposed for endorsement.

The Group would draw Botswana's attention to the following recommendations and to provide documented evidence on the progress made on them as part of the submission of its annual reconfirmation for the endorsed official control programme for FMD in November 2022:

- the risk of undisclosed infection in small ruminants should not be overlooked and studies on clustering of positive serological results should be considered to further investigate the potential role of small ruminants in the epidemiology of FMD in Botswana;

- NSP reactors found in surveys should be followed-up in a timely manner including collecting sera and probangs from the reactor animals and testing of sera from other in-contact animals in accordance with Article 8.8.42. Point 1 of the *Terrestrial Code*;

- Botswana to clearly describe the plan and progress made with regard to the protection zones;

- Considering the recent FMD outbreaks of serotype O in the region, the Group would appreciate receiving information on surveillance activities aimed at detecting possible incursions of serotype O and contingency planning for appropriate vaccines supply, as well as evidence of laboratory diagnostic capabilities for serotypes other than SATs.

b) Other application

The Group assessed a request from a Member for the endorsement of an official control programme for FMD. The Group concluded that the application did not meet the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*. The dossier was referred back to the applicant Member.

6. Evaluation of the maintenance of the official recognition of FMD free status

a) Turkey

Background

At its February 2021 meeting, the Scientific Commission requested the submission of further documented evidence regarding the movements of live animals from the FMD-infected zone into the FMD-free zone during the religious ceremony (Kurban Festival), following the assessment of Turkey's 2020 annual reconfirmation of the FMD-free zone where vaccination is practised. This is to ensure that Turkey complies fully with the relevant provisions of the *Terrestrial Code* (Articles 8.8.8. or 8.8.12.) or provides a level of protection that is equivalent.

After two rounds of exchanges with Turkey and assessment of information by the Group and the Scientific Commission between March and July 2021, Turkey was requested to submit the following to be assessed by the Group at this meeting:

1. The risk assessment in relation to the movement of ruminants from the FMD infected zone (Anatolia) to the FMD-free zone where vaccination is practised (Turkish Thrace) considering the distribution, consumption, as well as disposal of animal products and by-products.

2. The action plan to implement the recommendations made by the Scientific Commission.

The Group requested additional information and received clarifications from Turkey.

i) Risk assessment in relation to the movements of ruminants from the infected zone to the FMD-free zone of Turkey

The Group noted that the procedures implemented by Turkey are intended to align with Article 8.8.8. rather than 8.8.12. although not fully compliant with either.

The Group was of the opinion that Article 8.8.8. for direct transfer of FMD susceptible animals from an infected zone for slaughter in a free zone is more appropriate to follow in this scenario. The Group agreed that Turkey complies with all requirements in Article 8.8.8. of the *Terrestrial Code* at the farms of origin. However, although the Group considered that there is a low probability of risk of infection at the farms of origin, it did not agree that the risk was negligible.

Furthermore, the Group pointed out that clinical inspections in a vaccinated population is not sufficient to determine absence of FMD virus transmission. The Group agreed that additional guarantees are required to make the risk at this stage negligible. These additional measures to demonstrate the absence of FMD virus transmission can be provided through targeted non-structural protein (NSP) and post vaccination monitoring surveys to demonstrate absence of FMD virus transmission and appropriate immunity levels in those areas where the animals are originating from the infected zone of Turkey.

ii) Action plan to implement the recommendations made by the Scientific Commission:

The Scientific Commission made recommendations regarding the surveillance around the farms of origin in the FMD infected zone and the ante- and post-mortem inspections of the animals, as well as the treatment and processing of meat and animal products at the slaughterhouse.

Turkey described the use of both structural protein (SP) and NSP serosurveillance results pointing to high levels of population immunity and low levels of undisclosed infection in the ruminant population of the FMD infected zone (Anatolia). Furthermore, it was also specified that the results will be evaluated for the whole group of candidate animals, and that all animals belonging to the group will be rejected in case of the detection of a single reactor.

Turkey stated that undertaking RT-PCR testing before import of susceptible animals from the FMD infected zone was not feasible. Nevertheless, Turkey described its plans to encourage NSP ELISA testing in candidate animals from the FMD infected zone before the official registration of farms from which animals would be sent to the FMD free zone for the Kurban festival. Even though this measure would not be compulsory, the Group welcomed this initiative, as it would help to ensure the exclusion of candidate establishments with NSP reactor animals before the quarantine of the candidate animals.

Although Turkey had reiterated that clinical surveillance in and around the farms in the FMD infected zone (Anatolia) selected for export to the FMD free zone is conducted, it did not provide any indication that NSP serosurveillance will be used to provide assurance on absence of undisclosed infection within the ten-kilometre radius surrounding areas. In this regard, the Group recommended that Turkey undertake NSP serosurveillance to demonstrate that FMD virus is not circulating within the ten-kilometre radius of the farms from which animals are exported to the FMD free zone.

Turkey described its risk mitigation measures in compliance with Articles 8.8.8. and 8.8.22., including ante- and post-mortem inspections for FMD, implemented at the markets of the FMD-free zone where vaccination is practised (Thrace), and the removal of viscera, head and feet from carcasses. In this regard, the Group pointed out that provisions in Article 8.8.8. also request extra guarantees in the meat processing. The animals should have been subjected to ante- and post-mortem inspection within 24 hours before and after slaughter with no evidence of FMD, and the meat derived from them treated in accordance with Article 8.8.22. (point 2) or Article 8.8.23. In addition, other products obtained from the animals and any products coming into contact with them should be treated in accordance with Articles 8.8.31. to 8.8.38. in order to destroy any FMD virus potentially present, particularly by removing the major lymphatic nodes and deboning and maturation.

The Group agreed that Turkey does not comply fully with the treatment of the meat as required in the *Terrestrial Code* under these circumstances. However Article 8.8.8. presupposes that the meat can be freely released in the country from the abattoir, which is not the case under the special circumstances of the Kurban festival. The meat is only provided to the customers to be cooked and the leftovers are responsibly disposed of.

Conclusion and next steps

As agreed in previous exchanges between Turkey and the OIE, the Group was informed that a two-step approach would be taken to seek further clarification on the measures reported by Turkey and to assess their proper implementation. This two-step includes a virtual interview between OIE experts and Turkish Veterinary Services before the end of 2021, followed by a deployment of an OIE mission prior to the next Kurban festival in 2022.

The Group formulated questions for Turkey to provide additional information before the virtual interview on the biosecurity measures implemented at the farms of origin in the FMD infected zone during quarantine prior to exporting animals to the FMD free zone. Additional information on the NSP serosurveillance to be

carried out in the ten-kilometre radius of the farms in the FMD infected zone from which the animals are exported to the FMD free zone, including NSP sampling design, survey procedure and timing of the survey in relation to the annual religious ceremony has also been asked.

7. Adoption of the report

The Group reviewed the draft report and agreed to circulate it electronically for comments before the final adoption. Upon circulation, the Group agreed that the report captured the discussions.

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…/Appendices

Appendix I

VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE STATUS AND ENDORSEMENT OF OFFICIAL CONTROL PROGRAMMES OF MEMBERS

18-20, 22, 25 and 27 October 2021

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the *ad hoc* Group on the evaluation of foot and mouth disease (FMD) of Members (the Group) is to evaluate applications for official recognition of FMD free status and for endorsement of the FMD official control programme of Members.

Background

In accordance with the OIE procedure for official recognition of animal health status, OIE Members can be officially recognised by the OIE as having a FMD status or an official FMD control programme endorsed by the OIE through the adoption of a resolution by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE (the Assembly) in May every year. A Member wishing to apply for the official recognition of its FMD free status or an official FMD control programme endorsed by the OIE should complete and submit the relevant questionnaire laid out in Chapter 1.11. of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (*Terrestrial Code*) and comply with all requirements specified in the *Terrestrial Code*. The OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (Scientific Commission) is responsible for undertaking, on behalf of the Assembly, the assessment of OIE Members' applications for their compliance with OIE standards. The assessment carried out by the Scientific Commission is based on the recommendations formulated by a relevant *ad hoc* Group. *Ad hoc* groups are convened under the authority of and report to the OIE Director General.

Specific issues to be addressed

The Group will evaluate Members' applications in detail on their compliance with the requirements specified in the *Terrestrial Code* for infection with foot and mouth disease virus. Based on the evaluations, the Group will provide its conclusions and recommendations to the Scientific Commission.

Prerequisites

The Group members should:

- Sign the OIE Undertaking on Confidentiality of information (if not done already);
- Complete the Declaration of Interest Form;
- Understand that the membership of the Group may be retained between its meetings to ensure continuity of the work.

Actions to deliver

Before the meeting

Upon reception of an application from a Member, the Status Department (SD) conducts a preliminary screening to check the conformity of the dossier (structure of the dossier in accordance with the SOP and with the questionnaire under Chapter 1.11. of the *Terrestrial Code*, main sections of the questionnaire, regular notification to the OIE, payment of the fee, OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) report, etc.). If an information gap is identified, the SD requests additional information from the Member.

As the PVS reports are bound by the OIE rules on confidentiality of information, the SD and experts will consider for the evaluation the available PVS report(s) if not obsolete (PVS reports from more than five years ago) or confidential.

The SD will send the working documents to the Group, including the dossiers received from applicant Members, at least one month before the Group meeting (i.e., **17 September 2021**).

The experts can request support from the SD at any time.

The SD suggests the nomination of a Chair and Rapporteur for the Group's consideration.

The SD can suggest a preparatory meeting with the Chair, the Rapporteur or all experts to address specific points in advance, if needed

The experts are expected to:

- Be familiar with Chapters 1.11. and 8.8. of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Evaluate and study in detail all dossiers provided by the OIE;
- Take into account any other information available in the public domain that is considered pertinent for the evaluation of the dossiers;
- Summarise the dossiers according to the *Terrestrial Code* requirements by completing the summary tables provided by the SD (the summary tables will be provided at a later stage along with the working documents for the meeting). Experts are expected to capture and summarise in each corresponding section of the summary table the main gaps as well as strengths identified during the assessment of the dossiers, using extracted texts or reference to pages/annexes from the application;
- Draft questions to the applicant Members whenever the analysis of the dossiers identifies incomplete or unclear information;
- Submit to the SD the completed summary tables for each application together with possible questions for the applicant Members at least 10 days before the teleconference and preferably by **8 October 2021;**

The SD will compile the summary tables and the questions to be forwarded to the applicant Members before the teleconference. All subsequent information and material provided by a Member will be forwarded to the Group.

During the meeting

- Agree on the appointment of the Chair and Rapporteur of the meeting (the Chair will lead the discussion and the Rapporteur will ensure that the report reflects the discussion and captures the detailed assessment of the dossiers);
- Mention any potential conflict of interest and, if relevant, withdraw him/herself from the discussion;
- Contribute to the discussions;
- Provide a detailed report in order to recommend, to the Scientific Commission, the Member(s) and zone(s) to be recognised (or not) as free from FMD and the official control programme of Member(s) to be endorsed by the OIE and to indicate any information gaps or specific areas that should be addressed in the future by the applicant Members.

If during the teleconference the Group decides that additional information should be requested from an applicant Member before an informed conclusion can be drawn, the SD can request it and forward the additional information to the Group at a later date. The Chair is responsible for coordinating the finalisation of the assessment and for ensuring that the views of all members of the Group are taken into consideration.

Should the Group not be able to complete its Terms of Reference during this meeting, experts' contributions will be solicited after the meeting, including by teleconference if needed.

After the meeting

The SD will circulate the draft report after the teleconference is over. Experts are expected to contribute to the finalisation of the report within approximately one week.

The SD will circulate the final version of the report to the Group once endorsed by the Scientific Commission and is published online.

Deliverables

A detailed report to recommend to the Scientific Commission whether an applicant Member(s) should be (or not) recognised with an official FMD free status or an official FMD control programme endorsed by the OIE. The report should indicate any information gaps or specific areas that should be addressed in the future by the Members.

Reporting / timeline

The OIE will circulate the draft report no more than seven days after the teleconference (no later than **4 November 2021**) and the Group will finalise its report within ten days (indicative deadline: **15 November 2021**).

Appendix II

VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE STATUS AND ENDORSEMENT OF OFFICIAL CONTROL PROGRAMMES OF MEMBERS

18-20, 22, 25 and 27 October 2021

Agenda

1. Opening
2. Adoption of the agenda and appointment of chairperson and rapporteur
3. Evaluation of a request for the official recognition of an FMD free zone where vaccination is not practised
4. Evaluation of requests for the official recognition of FMD free zones where vaccination is practised
   a. Russia – Zone III
   b. Other application
5. Evaluation of requests for the endorsement of official control programme for FMD
   a. Botswana
   b. Other application
6. Evaluation of the maintenance of the official recognition of FMD free status
   a. Turkey
7. Adoption of report

Appendix III

OIE AD HOC GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE STATUS AND ENDORSEMENT OF OFFICIAL CONTROL PROGRAMMES OF MEMBERS

18-20, 22, 25 and 27 October 2021

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