



## **The Second Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand, 18-19 July 2007)**

The 2nd Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific was organized in Bangkok, Thailand, inviting about 80 participants from the host country, OIE HQ in Paris, OIE Regional Representation in Tokyo (Permanent Secretariat for the Regional Steering Committee of GF-TADs), OIE HPAI Regional Coordination Office in Bangkok, OIE SEAFMD in Bangkok, FAO HQ in Rome, FAO Regional Office in Bangkok, ASEAN Sectoral Working Group for Livestock, ASEAN Secretariat, SAARC Secretariat, SPC, FAO Regional Commission (APHCA), OIE Regional Commission, National Institute of Animal Health, Thailand, Regional Reference Laboratory for FMD in Pakchong, Thailand, Asian Development Bank, Australia, Japan, USA, JICA, USAID, IFAH, ASEAN/ADB Project, and representatives from the Private Sector Groups (Associations). OIE consultants in Tokyo also participated in the Meeting to support, as members of the Permanent Secretariat.

The Speakers for the opening session were Dr Chaweewan Leowijuk, Chief Veterinary Officer and Deputy Director General of the Department of Livestock Development (DLD), Thailand (host country), Mr H. Konuma, Deputy Regional Representative of FAO Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific (for Dr He Changchui, Assistant Director General of FAO and Regional Representative of FAO for Asia and the Pacific), Dr B. Vallat, Director General, OIE and Prof. Dr Thira Sutabutra, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand. They all welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of transboundary animal diseases (TADs) control.

This Meeting followed the 1st Regional Steering Committee Meeting held in Tokyo, Japan, March 2005 and was attended also by the Secretariat of Pacific Community (SPC).

The importance of the GF-TADs mechanism was well recognised by all participants including the sub-regions namely; South East Asia represented by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and South Asia represented by the Secretariat for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Pacific Islands represented by a representative from the Secretariat of Pacific Community (SPC), herein referred to as Regional Specialised Organisations (RSOs).

Such the three organisations agreed that prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases (TADs) including zoonoses need to be further strengthened.

The Regional Support Unit (RSU) was recognized important to bring together a critical mass of multidisciplinary teams of experts who can serve the needs of member countries.

There is a need to identify leading laboratories with relevant expertise in specific TADs which could subsequently become OIE Reference Laboratories and/or FAO Reference Centres if needed.

The following are major recommendations made by the Regional Steering Committee of the GF-TADs.

- The SPC be recognised as an RSO within the framework of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific.
- Only one RSU and one Epidemiological Network/Centre dealing with all priority diseases be established for each sub-region.

- Each Epidemiological Network/Regional Leading Centre may, as far as possible, be attached to the RSU which will be responsible for the coordination of its activities.
- RSUs organise their meetings in close collaboration with OIE, FAO, Regional organisations and neighbouring countries.
- RSUs develop their short, medium and long term strategies for the prevention and control of TADs in accordance with OIE and FAO guidelines and with their support as required.
- RSOs are encouraged to consider the possibility of involving the participation of neighbouring countries in their activities. In this respect, ASEAN enlist the participation of at least Japan, Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China and thus be known for the purpose of TAD prevention and control, as ASEAN+3. Similarly, SPC enlist the participation of Australia and New Zealand and be known as SPC+2.
- RSUs identify and update their own list of priority TADs. With respect to SPC, the following are currently considered priority diseases: highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), classical swine fever (CSF) and foot and mouth disease (FMD).
- The RSU for the SPC region be hosted in the SPC's animal health and production office located in Suva, Fiji.
- SPC animal health policies in animal and veterinary public health reflect OIE standards.
- As noted in the recommendation by ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock on the interim location of the RSU in the ASEAN Secretariat, and as considerable experience in regional cooperation and technical expertise in animal health activities have been acquired by Thailand, which has also invested significantly in these fields, the RSU for ASEAN be located in Bangkok, Thailand.
- The leading laboratories for the ASEAN region for FMD, CSF and HPAI be located respectively in Pak Chong, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia. All efforts will be made to provide support to these laboratories in order to allow them to meet high international technical standards if needed.
- The leading laboratories for the SAARC region for FMD, HPAI and peste des petits ruminants (PPR) be located respectively in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh while it is confirmed that the RSU will be located in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- The SPC+2 prepare proposals for leading laboratories within the sub-region for consideration by the third Steering Committee meeting.
- Donors be requested to provide resources to assist in the sustainable implementation of the Steering Committee mechanisms.
- The support to the regional and international GF-TADs mechanisms be made sustainable through financial support coming partly from the resources provided under national programmes.

The 2nd Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs was successfully completed in strong collaboration with the host country; Thailand, and reviewed activities of TADs control and identified the progress undertaken by the respective Sub-Regions of ASEAN, SAARC and SPC, and highlighted future functions of the Committee as well as of Sub-Regions.

RSUs need to work in conjunction with FAO and OIE to present their TAD related short and medium term work priorities to relevant international meetings of donors.