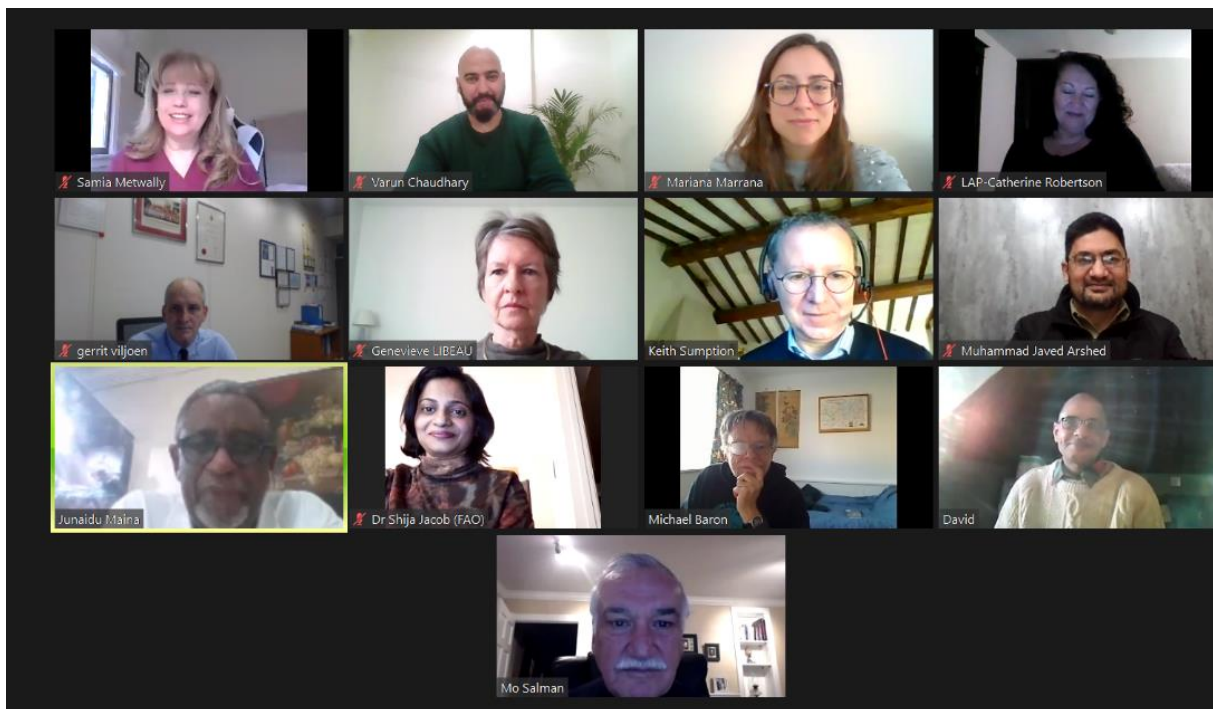


16th meeting of the FAO-OIE Rinderpest Joint Advisory Committee



8th December 2020

1. Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

The 16th meeting of the FAO-OIE Rinderpest Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) was opened by the Dr Keith Sumption, Chief Veterinary Officer of the FAO. This meeting was held using video teleconference. The Chair of the JAC, Dr Junaidu Maina, communicated the apologies of Dr Alejandro Costa who could not take part in the meeting.

The agenda was adopted with minor modifications, as per Appendix I.

The list of participants is included as Appendix II.

The action items from the present meeting are included in this report as Appendix III.

2. Action Items from the 15th meeting of the JAC (December 2019)

Action item 1/2019: Rinderpest Secretariat to communicate the outcome of the application review to India and to follow-up accordingly.

Status: the outcome of the review was communicated to India. A site inspection will be organized once pandemic-related travel restrictions are lifted. In the meantime, India is expected to submit the documentation that is missing from its application, as detailed in the report of the 15th meeting of the JAC (December 2019), and below under point 5. To be followed-up in 2021 through Action item no 1/2020.

Action item 2/2019: Rinderpest Secretariat to continue liaising with NVI to ensure that the Criteria for manufacturers wishing to produce rinderpest vaccine are upheld.

Status: the Rinderpest Secretariat is awaiting the lift of the pandemic-related restrictions to travel before organizing a site-inspection to NVI. To be followed-up in 2021 through Action item no 2/2020.

Action item 3/2019: JAC to write to FAO and OIE DGs to note the concern regarding the 7 countries that committed to destroy or sequester all RVCM in 2011 but that have not yet acted on it. FAO and OIE to develop a one-pager timeline of achievements since 2011 to be sent to the DGs together with the letter.

Status: pending, to be followed-up in 2021 through Action item no 3/2020.

Action item 1/2018: JAC to lead the draft of a short communication on RP preparedness to be published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Status: pending, to be followed-up in 2021 through Action item no 1/2018

3. Update on the activities of the RHF network

Dr Michael Baron, Honorary Institute Fellow and OIE Expert on Rinderpest from The Pirbright Institute, joined the meeting to provide an update on the activities of the RHF network. As determined during the 2nd meeting of the RHF network, held in Tokyo, Japan, in November 2019, the RHF network has had 6-monthly teleconferences. The latest information reported by each of the RHF's during the October 2020 teleconference was as follows:

- Since the Sequence and Destroy project was completed, there has been little to report from The Pirbright Institute, United Kingdom.

- CIRAD, France, has established a vaccine seed bank for global use under the auspices of FAO.
- FADDL, USA, has been validating virus inactivation methods of extracted and lyophilized materials to meet the requirements of the Federal Select Agent Program and PIADC Biosafety, in order to proceed with the Sequence and Destroy project.
- AU-PANVAC will receive the RPV real-time RT-PCR proficiency tests (PT) kit from FADDL shortly.
- NIAH, Japan - The extension of shelf life of LA-AKO RP vaccine from 4 to 5 years was officially approved by the national authority of Japan in October 2020. The production of a new batch of LA-AKO vaccine (200,000 doses) and bulk antigen (400,000 dose eq.) for both domestic and global reserve was underway. NIAH will be continuing its vaccine production through FAO's new project with Japan (December 2020-2025).
- IVDC, China, will seek approval from the FAO-OIE Rinderpest Secretariat for a Sequence and Destroy project.

4. RHF annual report and support to the network's activities

Dr Mariana Marrana, OIE, presented the overview of the annual reports for 2020 received from each RHF through the web-based rinderpest virus tracking system (RVTS). All RHF's had reported in time, with the exception of NIAH, Japan, whose reports were still outstanding. The JAC noted that it would be useful to cross-reference the rinderpest virus containing materials (RVCM) holdings of the different RHF's in order to facilitate destruction of repeated RVCM and/or RVCM that has already been sequenced. Dr Marrana added that the automatic mailbox that sends alerts and notifications from the RVTS has suffered a technical malfunction. Since this problem could not be solved in house at the OIE, as it derives from an update done by Microsoft that turns mailbox configuration no longer compatible with its host environment, the OIE has signed a contract with CEFAS (the developer of the RVTS) for solving the mailbox issue. Other small and less urgent queries will be addressed during the technical intervention, which will be done in the first half of 2021.

The JAC was informed that DTRA, USA, has signed a new grant agreement with the OIE, which will cover rinderpest post-eradication work. In addition to supporting the positions of a rinderpest officer and a communications officer, this grant also would support meetings and missions related to Rinderpest, IT support for the RVTS, a risk assessment on reintroduction of rinderpest 10 years after eradication, and communication activities.

5. Update on Rinderpest Holding Facility applications - India

During the 15th meeting of the JAC, in December 2019, it was deemed that ICAR, India, although presented a strong application, would have to supply additional information before a site inspection was planned. Once the dossier was complete and the global health situation allowed for unrestricted intercontinental travel, FAO and OIE would organize the site inspection. The missing information at the time of the 16th meeting included clarification on the main point of contact for RHF purposes, the report of the last inspection of the facility done by the National Authority, clarification on the biosecurity procedures in the manual, and the situation concerning IATA training for staff and capacity to receive and send out materials will be clarified. Finally, India's national contingency for rinderpest was reviewed by FAO EMC-AH team after revision from OIE and comments provided to India along with the pending action items. FAO followed up with India during the past year requesting the additional information and offering to support India with the national contingency plan. However, ICAR has been busy due to its heavy involvement in COVID-19 response.

ACTION ITEM 1 – FAO to follow up with India on the response to the action items and update of the contingency plan before the site inspection is scheduled.

6. Rinderpest vaccine

Dr Geneviève Libeau, CIRAD, updated the group about the project for the establishment of a rinderpest vaccine seed bank for global use at CIRAD, under the oversight of FAO. The final report of this activity was sent to the FAO-OIE Rinderpest Secretariat in May 2020. CIRAD was successful in cleaning the seed virus stock from the mycoplasma contamination. CIRAD prepared stocks of master and production seeds, however the stocks should expand to cover production of at least 5 million doses, when needed. FAO continues to support the expansion of the seed bank.

Dr Samia Metwally, FAO, updated the group on the status of the RVR. At the moment, there are around 2.5 million doses of RBOK vaccine at AU-PANVAC (mostly expired), and 0.5 million doses of LA-AKO vaccine plus the equivalent of 700.000 doses of LA-AKO vaccine in the form of bulk antigen at NIAH. FAO is discussing with the Italian Government the establishment of an FAO vaccine reserve in Rome, at the military base near the airport. The facility would apply to be designated as an RHF in category B. FAO will be liaising with NIAH and CIRAD to develop a framework for the deployment of vaccines/vaccine seed in case of an emergency.

Dr Shija Jacob, FAO provided an update on the application received in 2019 from NVI, Ethiopia, to produce rinderpest vaccine (RBOK strain) to replenish the reserve held at AU-PANVAC, in accordance with the results from a call for tender done by the African Union in January 2019. The FAO-OIE Rinderpest Secretariat is awaiting the lift of pandemic-related travel restrictions in order to plan the site inspection to NVI, which is necessary before undertaking rinderpest vaccine production.

ACTION ITEM 2 – Rinderpest Secretariat to organize site inspection to NVI

7. Communications

Mr Varun Chaudhary, FAO, informed the JAC about the status of the FAO communication activities since 2019, and planned for the future. The highlight being a co-branding agreement for past and future rinderpest communication tools that is to be signed by FAO and OIE. In addition to the continuous efforts in awareness raising using previously developed and new materials, the FAO-OIE Rinderpest Secretariat will launch a communication initiative on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of rinderpest eradication. JAC members were invited to share their suggestions and ideas for the 10th anniversary celebrations of rinderpest eradication planned for June 2021.

Dr Shija Jacob provided an update on the two rinderpest eLearning courses: 1) Rinderpest disease recognition (published in February 2020) and the Global Rinderpest Action Plan (to be finalized soon). JAC members were invited to share their feedback on the courses. FAO thanked Prof Mo Salman for reviewing the eLearning module on the Global Rinderpest Action Plan.

8. RVCM destruction and sequestration

RVCM is still present outside of FAO-OIE designated RHF in seven countries: India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, and Vietnam. FAO is spearheading discussions with Vietnam for destruction of its RVCM. The timeline has been pushed forward due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Options for engaging with the other 6 countries were discussed and included a strong-worded letter from the two organization's DGs, a virtual advocacy meeting and advocacy missions. Dr Shija Jacob, FAO shared with the group that FAO will be organizing a virtual advocacy meeting with the remaining 6 countries to assist them in making a decision to remove their RVCM or to apply to become an RHF. FAO will also provide assistance to these countries in submitting their RHF application as well as developing a national contingency plan for rinderpest.

ACTION ITEM 3 – Rinderpest Secretariat to send bullet points to JAC (Dr David Ulaeto) to prepare a letter from the JAC to the FAO and OIE DGs concerning 6 out of the 7 outstanding countries.

ACTION ITEM 4 - Rinderpest roadmap to be updated and shared with the JAC members for their review in a month time.

9. Conclusion

Henceforth, the rinderpest roadmap will be reviewed and updated at the beginning of each JAC meeting.

FAO and OIE showed their gratitude to the JAC for their advice and guidance, appreciating their continuous contribution towards maintaining global freedom from rinderpest.

The 17th meeting of the JAC will be held in June 2021, in Paris or Rome.

Appendix I

16TH MEETING, RINDERPEST JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

8th December 2020

Tuesday 8 th December 2020		Item	Speaker
14h00-14h25	Welcome remarks		K Sumption (FAO) J Maina (Chair of the JAC)
	Adoption of the agenda		All
	Action items from the 15 th meeting		J Maina
14h25-14h50	Rinderpest Holding Facilities and Network		
	Update on the activities of the RHF network		M Baron
	RHF annual report and support to the network's activities		M Marrana (OIE)
	Status of RHF application - India		S Metwally (FAO)
14h50-15h15	Rinderpest vaccine		
	Rinderpest vaccine seed bank		G Libeau
	Update on RVR and framework for vaccine delivery		S Metwally (FAO)
15h15-15h55	Communications		
	eLearning module 1: Rinderpest Disease Recognition eLearning module 2: Global Rinderpest Action Plan		S Jacob (FAO)
	Updates on awareness raising		V Chaudhary (FAO)
	10 th anniversary of rinderpest eradication		JAC members
15h55-16h15	RVCM destruction and sequestration		
	RVCM destruction in Viet Nam		S Metwally (FAO)
	Virtual meeting with the remaining countries still storing RVCM		S Jacob (FAO)/OIE/JAC
16h15-17h00	Roadmap and conclusion		
	Roadmap update		All
	Next JAC meeting		J Maina

Appendix II

16TH MEETING, RINDERPEST JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

8th December 2020

List of participants

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Appendix III

MEETING OF THE RINDERPEST JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

8^h December 2020

Action Items from the 16th Meeting

No	Item	Responsible	Deadline
1/2020	FAO to follow up with India on the response to the action items and update of the contingency plan before the site inspection is scheduled	FAO	17 th meeting
2/2020	Rinderpest Secretariat to organize site inspection to NVI	FAO and OIE	17 th meeting
3/2020	Rinderpest Secretariat to send bullet points to JAC (Dr David Ulaeto) to prepare a letter from the JAC to the FAO and OIE DGs concerning 6 out of the 7 outstanding countries.	FAO and OIE	February 2021
4/2020	Rinderpest roadmap to be updated and shared with the JAC members for their review in a month time.	FAO and OIE	One month after 16 th meeting report is published
1/2018	JAC to lead the draft of a short communication on RP preparedness to be published in a peer-reviewed journal.	JAC	April 2021