



Byblos (Lebanon) – 3-4 November 2016

REMESA Joint OIE-FAO Secretariat

REPORT

13th Joint Permanent Committee (JPC) of REMESA



Summary

The 13th meeting of the REMESA Joint Permanent Committee (JPC) was held in Byblos (Lebanon) on 3 and 4 November 2016 under the co-presidency of Lebanon and Spain, based on the recommendations of the 12th JPC meeting (Toledo - Spain, 10-11 May 2016). The meeting was attended by the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) of REMESA member countries or their representatives (Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco and Tunisia), representatives from international and regional organizations – Dr Moritz Klemm, DG Health and Food Safety, DG SANTE (European Commission), Mrs Faouzia Chakiri, Head of the Department Food Security, Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Dr Fabrizio Rosso, representative of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD) as well as Dr Etienne Bonbon, President of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Commission. Experts from the « *Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement* » (CIRAD) and Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) also attended the meeting. Representatives of Libya, Mauritania and FAO could not attend this meeting.

The agenda of the meeting included sessions on Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), avian diseases, vector-borne diseases such as Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), Bluetongue (BT), and also a session on rabies highlighting actions implemented during the last World Rabies Day. During this 2-days meeting, the implementation at the regional level of the OIE/FAO PPR Global Control and Eradication Strategy was discussed in line with the recent workshops convened by the joint FAO/OIE Global PPR. Secretariat. The state of play of the establishment of a regional vaccine bank for FMD in the REMESA was presented. The new communication tools concerning the OIE Rabies vaccine bank were also presented. On the second day of this meeting, the current OIE standard setting issues of interest for the REMESA network were presented by Dr Etienne Bonbon who invited countries to actively participate in the OIE standards-setting process. This presentation was followed by an interactive discussion stressing the idea that the REMESA would be a suitable platform where issues related to trade and appropriate implementation of OIE standards could be debated in order to avoid unjustified trade barriers between countries. Animal health surveillance at a regional level highlighting the need for the interaction between research and surveillance and upgrading epidemiology services of animal health delivery systems in countries of the South Mediterranean were also presented.

The final agenda for the meeting is attached (**Appendix 1**).

Opening

The meeting was officially opened by both co-Presidents of REMESA for 2016, the CVO and Animal Resources Director of the Ministry of Agriculture of Lebanon, Dr Elias Ibrahim and the CVO and Director General of Health of the Agricultural Production at the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain, Dr Valentin Almansa de Lara as well as by the OIE Deputy Director General, Dr Jean-Philippe Dop.

Dr Elias Ibrahim warmly welcomed the participants for their commitment to participate in this 13th JPC of REMESA in Lebanon on behalf of H.E. Mr Akram Chehayeb, Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon and the Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture in Lebanon. He trusted that this meeting will be a significant step in the course of the strategy of combating the transboundary animal diseases (TADs) in the North Africa and Middle East. He stated that Middle East and North Africa represent the cross-roads of three continents and a corridor for international traffic of passengers, goods and animals. The specificity of the geopolitics of this region and the unique economic varieties which give TADs special pattern of spread was also evoked by calling for an effective and harmonised working strategy focusing on capacity building of Veterinary Services and strengthening animal disease surveillance and control polices. In his opening speech it was also stressed for enhancing the collaboration between the North and South Mediterranean countries through multiple initiatives especially in the field of epidemiology in order to better control animal diseases.

Dr Valentin Almansa de Lara thanked the Lebanon Authority for hosting the meeting and for the warm welcoming received. He stated that the one of the main objectives of the REMESA is to share experiences and certainly this will be done during the 2-day meeting in Lebanon.

Dr Jean Philippe Dop also thanked the Lebanese government for its support and involvement in the organisation of the 13th JPC REMESA meeting. Taking into account the recommendations of the meeting held in Toledo, the REMESA Secretariat - in collaboration with the co-presidency - tried to introduce new topics and retained members' suggestions such as the European Commission for providing an update on the work being made by the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code on Standards so to also encourage countries to actively participate in the OIE decision Standard setting-process. Dr Dop recalled that REMESA is nowadays a consolidated structure that can catalyze more activities in the areas of animal health and veterinary public health and meet the challenges of this area of the Mediterranean basin. He concluded by proposing to invite the World Health Organisation (WHO) in a future meeting for a specific topic within the framework of the "One Health" concept.

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SUBJECT	DECISIONS - RECOMMENDATIONS	INVOLVED ACTORS
FMD	<p>To continue following the project on the implementation of the OIE FMD regional vaccine bank</p> <p>To conduct field studies on “vaccine effectiveness” (November 2016)</p> <p>To conduct harmonised sero-surveillance (April-May 2017)</p>	EuFMD/OIE Tunis/Tunisia/Algeria/Morocco
PPR	The structure of REMESA considered as Regional Advisory Committee to evaluate the progress of the roadmaps in the region	OIE-FAO and countries
Vector-borne diseases	<p>LSD: to share information and publications between countries/regions</p> <p>LSD: a regional conference for the Middle East is being organised in Amman (Jordan) in December 2016 (presentation of the regional strategy to tackle the disease in Middle East); experts from other regions are certainly invited to participate</p>	OIE office in Beirut/Jordan/EC
General issues	<p>REMESA is a good network in which issues related to trade and appropriate implementation of OIE standards could be debated in order to avoid unjustified trade barriers between countries.</p> <p>To include in the next agenda of REMESA meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horizontal items and, in particular, those related to the rules of the OIE Code and how to implements these rules 	OIE-FAO Secretariat
	Scientific event in Malta (TAIEX): REMESA countries will be invited to participate to this event that will be held on 19-20 June 2017.	Malta
	Health Med Conference planned for 2017 was postponed in 2018.	OIE - Italy (Italy will confirm the interest in hosting the conference in due time)
Co-Presidency 2017	Italy-Jordan	OIE-FAO Secretariat