

Veterinarians and hunters work together in wildlife disease surveillance

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The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), the European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation (FACE)

and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) have recognised the important role hunters play in the surveillance of wildlife diseases. However, the communication between these organisations as well as the hunters' role in the surveillance of wildlife diseases need to be enhanced and promoted.

As a step to achieve this, the three organisations conducted a training course on the surveillance of wildlife diseases and the role of hunters, with special focus on African swine fever (ASF). The training course, sponsored by the European Union and the Bulgarian state, was held on 18–19 December 2017 at the CIC Wildlife Health Centre in Pravets, Bulgaria. The meeting gathered around 50 participants from 18 different countries, with 19 representatives of hunting associations and 24 veterinarians, including 7 OIE Wildlife Focal Points. The programme included 32 different scientific presentations and group discussions.

The meeting resulted in a report comprising recommendations on communication between hunting organisations, communication between hunters and veterinarian authorities, the role of hunters in disease surveillance of wildlife diseases, the role of feeding and baiting in ASF outbreaks, various hunting issues relevant for ASF control in wild boar, trapping, biosafety, and economic impact of ASF outbreaks.

[Download the report and the lectures held at the meeting](#)

The course and the documentation are intended for an improved and more efficient procedure in managing wild boar populations when an ASF outbreak occurs. The course could be considered a role model for optimising communication between the parties involved.