

RAPPORT DE MISSION / MISSION REPORT

Nom du rédacteur / Name:

Gregorio Torres, Kazimieras Lukauskas

Date et lieu du déplacement / Dates of the trip:

Pravets, Bulgaria. 18-19 December 2017

Titre de la mission / Title of the mission:

Training on wildlife diseases surveillance. The role of hunters

Objet de la mission / Aim of the meeting

The aim of the meeting was to enhance the network among hunters and Veterinary Services in order to actively integrate hunters in the surveillance and management of wildlife diseases.

Participants du Siège / Participants from the OIE Headquarters

Gregorio Torres

Participants des RR/RSR ou experts OIE / Participants from the RR/SRR or OIE experts

Kazimieras Lukauskas

Résumé / Summary

The meeting was organised by the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) and the OIE, in collaboration with the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU (FACE) and with the financial support of the European Union and Bulgarian government. The meeting was a follow up of the recommendations of the first joint OIE-CIC meeting that took place in Paris in July 2014. Dr Torsten Mörner, member of the OIE Wildlife working Group, was the main responsible for the technical aspects of the meeting.



Dr Mörner offering a toast during the gala dinner

The meeting started with presentations on the view of the international organisations (OIE, CIC, FACE and EU) on the role of hunters in wildlife disease surveillance. They were followed by the country presentations on their experiences on surveillance in wildlife. Some show-cases on the role of wildlife in the surveillance system of African swine fever (ASF), avian influenza and rabies were also presented by affected countries.

Dr Kazimieras Lukauskas presented the Lithuanian's experience in the control of ASF. Dr Gregorio Torres delivered three presentations: the OIE role on wildlife health, the OIE activities on disease surveillance with specific references to ASF and the official notification of OIE listed and non-listed diseases.

The agenda also included panel discussions on surveillance costs, communication and the role of national and international hunter networks and associations.

Distribution: Director General, Deputy Directors General, Financial Director, Heads of Department, World Fund Unit, Communication Unit, Legal Affairs and Partnerships Unit, Publications Unit, Regional and Sub-regional Representatives, Documentation Cell

Commentaires / Comments

The meeting was a good opportunity to promote the dialog between hunter associations and the Veterinary Services. A total of 45 participants from 18 different countries attended the meeting. Approximately half of the participants represented hunters associations and the other half the Veterinary Services, which included seven OIE wildlife focal points. The profile of the participants was perceived as a great success of the meeting in oppose of the 2014 meeting (Paris) when the majority of the participants represented the Veterinary Services.

During the discussion it was noted that hunters usually spend a lot of time in close contact with wildlife. They also have deep knowledge on wildlife ecology and of the landscape of their regions. Hence, they should play a key role in wildlife disease surveillance. Unfortunately, hunters' involvement and contribution to disease surveillance do not seem to be always sufficiently recognised by the Veterinary Services.

It was also agreed that the communication between hunters and Veterinary Services should be improved. Hunter associations should make an effort to establish regular contact with the OIE wildlife focal points of their countries and vice versa. Hunter associations should be regularly consulted by the Veterinary Services when wildlife is included in disease control activities. It was noted that the proper integration and recognition of hunters in disease surveillance and disease management activities would also contribute to increase the social acceptance of hunting.

Based on country experiences, it was observed that poor biosecurity during hunting poses a big risk for the spread of the diseases. Lack of awareness and training or limited availability of correct equipment may result in a deficient biosecurity. The participants suggested creating a training programme for hunters on disease surveillance and biosecurity.

Unfortunately, the large number of presentations, mainly focused on the European Union context, did not allow sufficient time for discussion. Nevertheless, the meeting was a good opportunity to create a network including hunters and veterinarians.

Personnalité(s) rencontrée(s) et sujet des entretiens / Key person(s) met and subjects of discussion

List of participants available on request

Suites à donner / Follow-up

- Dr Torsten Mörner will draft a report capturing the main conclusions and recommendations of the meeting
- Update the technical secretariat of the Wildlife Working Group (Francois Diaz) and inform SCAD on the main outcome of the meeting
- Invite Dr Torsten Mörner to write an article for the next issue of the OIE Bulletin.

Documents joints / Enclosed documents:

The agenda of the meeting and the presentation made by the reporting officers are available upon request