



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING
MAINTAINING GLOBAL FREEDOM FROM RINDERPEST
20 – 22 JANUARY 2016 ROME, ITALY



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Background

The official Declarations of Global Freedom from Rinderpest were made during meetings at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and at the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in 2011. At these historic celebrations, the Member States of each organisation directed the two organizations to work jointly in managing all aspects of rinderpest in the post-eradication period and they recommended that every country should destroy their stocks of rinderpest virus-containing material (RVCM) or sequester them in a secure facility for safe keeping. The African Union (AU) has already shown its support for this process by recommending that all Member States should destroy any remaining RVCM or relocate it to a secure holding facility at the AU Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (Recommendation of the 8th Conference of Ministers responsible for animal resources in Africa, May 2010; Endorsed by the African Union Heads of State and Government, (AU Decision: EX.CL/Dec. 610 (XVIII), January 2011).

To lead the process of reducing the number of laboratories keeping the virus, FAO is advocating and offering assistance for the destruction of RVCM or its relocation to an FAO-OIE Rinderpest Holding Facility (RHF).

The two categories of RHF are:

- A) Rinderpest Holding Facility for storing rinderpest virus containing material, excluding vaccine stocks;
- B) Rinderpest Vaccine Holding Facility for storing only manufactured vaccines, vaccine stocks and material solely for their production.

Following a regional meeting in Africa held in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt in 2015 (Summary report <http://www.fao.org/3/b-bb986e.pdf>), FAO held this International Meeting from 20 to 22 January 2016 at FAO Headquarters in Rome, in collaboration with OIE. The meeting was attended by member countries' representatives from Bangladesh, Canada, China, European Union, Iran, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Pakistan, Russian Federation (1st day only), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1st day only), Republic of South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey and Uzbekistan, as well as five RHF's (from Japan, UK, USA and Ethiopia), international and regional organisations. See annexes 1 and 2 for the list of participants and meeting agenda.

Meeting objectives

- To share information on the current situation of rinderpest virus globally and review the progress of each country towards their obligations to destroy or safely relocate (sequester) their stocks of rinderpest virus in an RHF.
- To illustrate the risks and possible impact of not destroying or sequestering stocks of rinderpest virus in an RHF.
- To support countries in their commitment to destroy their stocks of virus or sequester them in an RHF.
- To ensure that all remaining stocks of RVCM are held only in RHF's.

- To emphasize the need for continuing awareness and preparedness for an outbreak of rinderpest.

The overall purpose of the meeting was to commit countries to destroy their stocks of virus or arrange for their relocation to RHF.

Day one:

The meeting was welcomed by the director of the Animal Production and Health Division (FAO) Dr Berhe G. Tekola, who emphasized the importance of the current initiative on sequestration of RVCM in secure laboratory facilities, and the key part to be played by developing the appropriate international preparedness plan. An address by Dr Ren Wang, Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department of the FAO, who stressed the risks of transboundary animal diseases to the global investment in livestock production, and the important role FAO and OIE play in reducing these risks, in order to safeguard food security. He highlighted the necessity of collaboration between FAO, OIE, Member States and regional organisations such as the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal resources (AU-IBAR) and the African Union Panafrican Vaccine Centre (AU-PANVAC).

The participants were welcomed further by Tianna Brand on behalf of the OIE who stressed the importance of the destruction and sequestration of RVCM and noted that the efforts undertaken to date by the international organizations, institutions and countries to maintain global freedom have been encouraging.

Presentations and discussion addressed the following:

- FAO and OIE commitment to maintaining global freedom from rinderpest.
- The political and technical commitment to maintaining freedom from rinderpest in Africa following endorsement of the destruction/sequestration of RVCM and the subsequent establishment of RHF and implementation of interventions for syndromic surveillance.
- The processes for approving rinderpest holding facilities and for activities where RVCM is being handled (e.g. vaccine production or essential research).
- The threats posed by accidental and/or deliberate release of rinderpest, with examples from rinderpest history and the experience with smallpox, and a computer-based model demonstrating the potential impact of rinderpest spread following an escape of the virus.

A breakout session of 4 groups of participants discussed the current global situation of rinderpest virus and how countries can be encouraged and facilitated to sequester and/or destroy the remaining rinderpest virus stocks.

The conclusion from these discussions was that there is no justifiable reason to keep RVCM.

- Switzerland declared that they have recently destroyed their RVCM.
- Canada reported that they had stocks of wild type virus and will make the decision shortly whether to sequester or destroy this material.
- The Netherlands and Russia reported to store RVCM in their laboratories.

- Three countries, namely; Iran, Turkey and China declared that they were storing vaccine seed virus to enable future vaccine production.
- South Africa declared that they have RVCM but were going to transfer it to the AU-PANVAC RHF in Ethiopia.
- China is applying to become a RHF while Russia and Turkey remained undecided.

FAO stands ready to assist countries in the removal of their RVCM from their laboratories and provide laboratory supplies and equipment when requested and if meeting the current project specifications.

The discussion emphasised that the number of RHF's should be kept at a minimum for the sake of maintaining the global freedom from rinderpest virus. The discussion further stressed the need for developing contingency plans for use of vaccine in the event of rinderpest re-emergence.

FAO has developed a template for national contingency plans and is, upon request, willing to assist in developing contingency plans for use by individual member states.

The day's outputs were summarised by Dr Tyulegnov, the CVO of the Republic of Kazakhstan, who stressed the lessons to be learned from the history of eradication and smallpox, the risks posed by the existing rinderpest virus in 23 known countries and that, with the gradual isolation/sequestration and destruction of virus stockpiles, the threat of reintroduction of rinderpest infection in animals will be reduced.

Day two:

Presentations and discussion addressed the following:

- Preparedness to reduce the impact of a possible rinderpest disease outbreak, including communication tools to increase awareness and the maintenance of diagnostic capability.
- The development of regional strategic vaccine reserves.
- The core components of the international preparedness plan.

A breakout session of 4 groups of participants discussed preparedness planning, including vaccine reserves and the need for rinderpest awareness and passive disease surveillance.

From these discussions, it was suggested that information from the past together with modelling outputs should be considered for any contingency plan that includes the need for the use of vaccine by individual countries in regions, as it is currently difficult to define the size of a vaccine reserve that is required. It was agreed that there is a need for formal agreements on sharing vaccine reserves both within regions and globally.

Several groups raised the point that rinderpest awareness should be increased and sustained for both veterinarians and livestock keepers, making use of existing educational channels. It was pointed out that policy makers sometimes consider rinderpest to no longer be a significant threat and are therefore reluctant to allocate funding, emphasizing the need for raising awareness also in this group. While the disease has been eradicated, it should not be forgotten. The idea of an international Rinderpest Day was suggested.

The day's outputs were summarised by Dr Taozhen Jiang, Director of the China Institute of Veterinary Drug Control, who highlighted the points raised in the presentations, especially the need for international preparedness plans.

Day three:

This day started with a roundtable discussion on the intentions of the attending countries as to what they will do with their remaining virus stocks. In addition to the statements made on day one, South Africa announced their intention to adhere to the relevant AU recommendation and transfer their rinderpest virus stock to AU-PANVAC, Iran will encourage their Minister to eliminate their stocks, with the potential to transfer vaccine seeds to AU-PANVAC or China (when designated). The Netherlands left the meeting with the sincere intention to get rid of their stocks. Other countries remained undecided. Uzbekistan noted that they don't store rinderpest virus and will encourage neighbouring countries to get rid of their RVCM. The UK RHF (The Pirbright Institute) stated that they are committed in principle to reduce their virus holdings over the next 2 years through the sequence and destroy program, eliminating their stocks of wild type virus; however they will keep the vaccine virus as a positive control for diagnostic tests until a suitable replacement is developed.

The participants separated into 4 breakout groups which all discussed the transfer of RVCM, including vaccine, between countries and RHF's, and specific recommendations to reduce the risks of rinderpest reoccurrence. These discussions highlighted the need for continuing awareness and for preparedness plans for a potential reoccurrence of the disease.

Outputs were presented from a questionnaire, circulated to participants of the 13 countries. Only a half of the countries present had a preparedness plan covering a possible rinderpest re-emergence. Useful suggestions were received as to the best methods for raising awareness among farmers and other frontline stakeholders.

The final conclusions and the way forward were presented by Dr Metwally, the FAO rinderpest Co-secretariat, who acknowledged the active participation of the delegates and encouraged countries to adhere to their pledges and commitment to remove rinderpest virus from their laboratories. She also added that FAO will follow-up with the countries that were not able to attend the meeting as well as with those that remained undecided.

Closing remarks were given by Dr. Juan Lubroth, Chief Veterinary Officer of FAO, emphasizing that the transparency and information sharing during the meeting were clear indications that we are sharing the goal to keep rinderpest eradicated, and that we are learning from the rinderpest post-eradication experience to set precedents when eradicating PPR globally and FMD in South America.

Conclusions:

The participating countries and organizations agreed the following conclusions for maintaining global freedom from rinderpest:

- All stocks of RVCM should be destroyed. Priority, however, should be given to all materials potentially containing virulent virus, not excluding vaccine virus stocks.

- More effort should be given to the production of non-infectious diagnostic tools.
- Countries are encouraged to seriously consider destroying or transferring their vaccine stocks or, as a last resort, to apply to become a RHF, category B.
- Approved SOPs should be developed for the inactivation and safe storage of serum samples collected in the period when rinderpest was still present.
- Countries should develop contingency plans for immediate response, in case rinderpest reoccurred.
- Countries should, based on their contingency plan, make plans for rinderpest vaccine strategic reserves. International organisations such as OIE and FAO can contribute when requested.
- Terms and Conditions for the maintenance and use of strategic vaccine reserves should be developed.
- Countries should maintain awareness among veterinarians and livestock keepers of rinderpest as a disease, in order to maintain the effectiveness of syndromic surveillance in identifying potential suspect cases of rinderpest.

Acknowledgements:

The organisers are grateful to the OIE Rinderpest Co-secretariat, the African Union Commission Institutions (AU-IBAR and AU-PANVAC), and the USA for the support given to them during the preparation for and conduct of the meeting.

Annex 1: List of participants

Annex 2: Agenda

International Meeting
Maintaining Global Freedom from Rinderpest
20-22 January 2016, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

Annex 1: List of Participants

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AGENDA

Maintaining Global Freedom from Rinderpest

International meeting

FAO Headquarters, Rome

Philippines Room (C277/281) • 20-22 January 2016



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

20 January

Wednesday

08:30-09:00

Registration

09:00-09:30

Opening and welcoming remarks

*Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General,
Coordinator for Natural Resources (FAO)*

Berhe G. Tekola, Director, Animal Production and Health Division (FAO)

Tianna Brands (OIE)

Objectives and adoption of agenda

Samia Metwally (FAO)

09:30-10:45

SESSION 1: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND OUTPUTS

Chair: Jaspinder Komal, Canada (20 min ppt + 5 min Q&A)

FAO's commitment to maintaining global
freedom from rinderpest

Samia Metwally (FAO)

Adopted OIE resolutions to reduce the risk
of rinderpest

Tianna Brand (OIE)

Maintaining rinderpest freedom in Africa

AU-IBAR

10:45-11:00

Break

11:00-12:00

FAO-OIE Rinderpest Joint Advisory Committee:
its mandate, processes and outputs

*Gerrit Viljoen (Rinderpest Joint
Advisory Committee - JAC)*

Process for approving FAO-OIE rinderpest
holding facility and research proposals

Samia Metwally (FAO)

General discussion

All participants

12:00-14:00

Lunch

14:00-15:20

SESSION 2: THE THREAT POSED BY RINDERPEST VIRUS

Chair: Malik Zahoor Ahmad, Pakistan (15 min ppt + 5 min Q&A)

Rinderpest impact and the risks posed by
keeping the virus

Paul Rossiter (FAO)

Rinderpest disease spread computer model

Ben McMahon (LANL)

Lessons learnt from smallpox eradication and
post-eradication strategy

David Ulaeto (JAC)

15:20-15:35

Break

15:35-16:20

SESSION 3: WHAT IS THE CURRENT GLOBAL SITUATION OF RINDERPEST VIRUS AND WHY?

Chair: Moritz Klemm, EU

Meeting questionnaire

FAO

Breakout groups:

- i. Where in the world is rinderpest virus?
- ii. Are there ANY justifiable reasons for keeping rinderpest virus?
- iii. How can we encourage countries to destroy and/or sequester rinderpest virus?
- iv. How can the international organizations facilitate the process?

16:20-16:50

Presentations from breakout groups

16:50-17:00

Closing remarks for day 1

Gulmira Issayeva, Kazakhstan

17:00

Cocktail



09:00-10:30

SESSION 4: PREPAREDNESS TO REDUCE IMPACT*Chair: Darab Abdollahi Biron, Iran (15 min ppt + 5 min Q&A)*

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Components of the global plan of actions (GPA) | <i>Paul Rossiter (FAO)</i> |
| Molecular tools: needs post eradication | <i>Michael Baron (Pirbright)</i> |
| Raising public awareness | <i>Silvia SanMarco (FAO)</i> |
| Global surveillance and rumour tracking for rinderpest | <i>Julio Pinto (FAO)</i> |
| General discussion | <i>All participants</i> |

10:30-10:50

Break

10:50-12:00

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Regional vaccine strategic reserves for rinderpest in the post-eradication era | <i>Samia Metwally (FAO)</i> |
| Vaccine strategic reserve for East Asia; what we have and what we need | <i>Takehiro Kokuho, Japan</i> |
| Other available vaccine strategic reserves | <i>All participants</i> |
| General discussion | <i>All participants</i> |

12:00-14:00

Lunch

14:00-15:30

SESSION 5: COUNTRY FEEDBACK ON PREPAREDNESS PLANNING*Chair: David Ulaeto, JAC*

Four breakout groups.

Each group to discuss its topic in terms of global, regional and national requirements and who should be responsible for delivering them:

1. Diagnostic tools
2. Vaccine reserves
3. Rumour tracking and disease surveillance
4. Rinderpest awareness

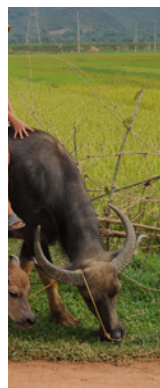
15:30-16:00

Break

16:00-17:00

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Presentation from breakout groups | |
| General discussion | <i>All participants</i> |
| Closing remarks day 2 | <i>Taozhen Jiang, China</i> |

17:00

Close of day 2

09:30-11:00

SESSION 6: GOING FORWARD – COMMITMENT*Chair: Gultekin Gumustepe, Turkey (20 min ppt + 5 min Q&A)*The results of the meeting questionnaire *FAO*

All four breakout groups to discuss the following topics:

1. Process and logistics anticipated from countries to transfer their virulent virus to Rinderpest Holding Facilities (RHF)
2. Process and logistic anticipated from countries to transfer their vaccine stock to the strategic vaccine reserve
3. Top two recommendations to reduce the risk of rinderpest reoccurrence

11:00-11:50

Break

10:50-11:20

Presentations from breakout groups

General discussion

All participants

11:20-12:00

Pledging for destruction or relocation of national virus stocks

Participating countries

Preparation of summary report

FAO

12:00-12:15

Summary of meeting and way forward

Samia Metwally (FAO)

12:15-12:30

Closing remarks

Regional Organizations, OIE, FAO

12:30

Close of meeting**LIST OF INVITEES****Members**

- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Canada
- China
- European Union
- Germany
- India
- Iran
- Israel
- Kazakhstan
- Netherlands
- Pakistan
- Republic of Korea
- Russian Federation
- Saudi Arabia
- South Africa
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- Uzbekistan

Collaborating partners

- World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)
- African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)
- Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), United States of America
- FAO/OIE Joint Advisory Committee on Rinderpest (JAC)
- Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), United States of America

Rinderpest Holding Facilities

- African Union- Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Center (AU-PANVAC)
- National Institute of Animal Health, Japan
- The Pirbright Institute, United Kingdom
- USDA-APHIS, Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, United States of America



Background

The official Declarations of Global Freedom from Rinderpest were made during meetings at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and at the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in 2011. At these historical celebrations, the Member States of each organisation directed the two organizations to work jointly in managing all aspects of rinderpest in the post-eradication and they recommended that every country should destroy their stocks of rinderpest virus-containing material (RVCM) or send them to a Rinderpest Holding Facility (RHF) for safe keeping.

To lead the process of reducing the number of laboratories keeping the virus, FAO is advocating for and offering assistance to destroy or relocate it to five laboratories with high levels of biocontainment recently approved as FAO-OIE Rinderpest Holding Facilities (RHF).

On 5-6 August 2015, FAO held a regional meeting for Africa "Maintaining Global Freedom from Rinderpest" in Sharm al Sheikh, Egypt. Nine African countries attended the meeting together with the OIE, the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) and invited experts. The main achievement of that meeting was the decision taken by countries storing rinderpest virus to either destroy it or safely transfer it, with assistance from FAO, to FAO-OIE RHF. (Article - Summary report)

Following the Sharm al Sheikh meeting, FAO is holding an International Meeting from 20 to 22 January 2016 at FAO Headquarters in Rome with the support of the OIE, inviting countries which are still storing RVCM in their laboratories along with selected neighbouring countries.

The overall purpose of the meeting is to commit countries to destroy their stocks of virus or arrange for its relocation at a FAO-OIE RHF.

Member Countries representatives of Asia, Europe, North America, Australia, four FAO-OIE RHF, international and regional organizations are attending the meeting (see Annex 1 for list of invitees).

OBJECTIVES

- To share information on the current situation of rinderpest virus globally and review the progress of each country towards their obligations to destroy or safely relocate (sequester) their stocks of rinderpest virus in an FAO-OIE approved RHF.
- To illustrate the risks and possible impact of not destroying or sequestering stocks of rinderpest virus in an FAO-OIE RHF.
- To support countries in their commitment to destroy or sequester their stocks of virus in an FAO-OIE RHF.
- To ensure that all remaining stocks of RVCM are held only in FAO-OIE RHF.
- To emphasize the need for continuing awareness and preparedness for an outbreak of rinderpest.

OUTCOMES AND OUTLOOK

1. Countries are aware of the potential risk and impact of virus re-emergence to livelihood, trade and food security.
2. Countries commit to destroy or sequester their rinderpest virus stocks.
3. All remaining stocks of RVCM will be kept in FAO-OIE RHF.
4. The roles of national, regional and global preparedness plans for rinderpest are mutually agreed.
5. FAO and its partners are better prepared to assist countries to reduce the risk of rinderpest.

ORGANIZATION

The meeting will be held in FAO Headquarters in Rome, from 20 to 22 January 2016 and is organised in collaboration with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

Language: English with Chinese, Russian and French interpretation.

