

The 12th Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific
7-8 February 2023, Tokyo, Japan

Summary and Recommendations

Summary

- The past eighteen years of GF-TADs Asia and the Pacific collaboration has enabled collective regional action to support the control of transboundary animal diseases (TADs) resulting in several important institutional and operational gains.
- The GF-TADs Strategy 2021-2025 sets overarching principles for how the Regional GF-TADs would operate but acknowledges that setting disease priorities and action plans would be better defined by the Regional GF-TADs since it is more aware of the region-specific priorities.
- The three Strategic Objectives of the GF-TADs Strategy 2021-25 and the three Work streams of the GF-TADs Partnerships and Financing Panel (PFP) Workplan supports the development of GF-TADs Regional Strategy.
- The GF-TADs Regional Strategy has been drafted taking into consideration the GF-TADs Global Strategy, disease emergence and spread, and the rapidly evolving socio-economic dynamic situation in Asia and the Pacific.
- While disease priorities are agreed at regional level every 2 years, there may be additional emerging disease threats and transboundary issues of concern at regional or subregional level that the regional GF-TADs coordination mechanism should address/support.
- Regional Steering Committee (RSC) previously prioritized foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), peste des petits ruminants (PPR), avian influenza, swine diseases and rabies. However, rabies is mostly dealt within a One Health context through the Quadripartite mechanism. In the past three years, Lumpy skin disease (LSD) has spread extensively across the Asia-Pacific region.
- The Global initiatives of GF-TADs is currently taking action on the following global priority TADs: FMD, PPR and African swine fever (ASF), as well as participating in the Rinderpest Post-Eradication Programme (RP).
- Under the Terms of Reference (ToR) of RSC, the subregional representatives are from East Asia Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) Forum, ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Livestock (ASWGL), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) CVO Forum and the Pacific. The Pacific Heads of Veterinary and Animal Production Services (PHOVAPS) has been reactivated as the technical advisory body on animal health and production in the Pacific subregion.

The Meeting therefore recommends:

The Regional Steering Committee for Asia and the Pacific

1. Finalizes the GF-TADs Regional Strategy 2023 – 2027 and develops two-year subregional work plans with clear achievable goals for the two-year period (by 1 May 2023). Work plans are living documents and should be updated as necessary.
2. Should use subregional mechanism such as East Asia CVO Forum, ASWGL, SAARC CVO Forum, and PHOVAPs and as voting members to facilitate implementation of TADs prevention and control, in line with GF-TADs Regional Strategy, and update ToR of the RSC accordingly.
3. Endorses five priority diseases (FMD, PPR, avian influenza, ASF and other swine diseases (CSF, PRRS, PED), and LSD) as the regional priorities for the Asia-Pacific region.
4. Should consider GF-TADs coordination mechanism to address other emerging TADs (e.g. African horse sickness) and cross-cutting/horizontal issues (e.g. animal movement, veterinary capacities, biosecurity, vaccines and vaccination) relevant to disease prevention and control.
5. Integrates TADs prevention and control, and resource mobilization into broader national initiatives such as livestock sector strategy, food systems transformation approaches, sustainable climate smart production, and One Health.
6. Strengthen the role of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), i.e., ASEAN, SAARC and the Pacific Community (SPC) in line with the different degrees of maturity of the leadership capacity to include TADs control within their livestock programmes.

The GF-TADs Regional Secretariat for Asia and the Pacific

7. Supports engagement, communication, and advocacy with animal health stakeholders and the public to promote the need for improved prevention and control of TADs and the benefits that this will deliver.
8. Works with RECs to develop proposals and promote/communicate importance of GF-TADs at the political level and to assist resource allocation.
9. Develops and implements a monitoring and evaluation framework in consultation with the GF-TADs Global secretariat as recommended in the 3rd external evaluation. This should guide the establishment of systems to measure and monitor the progress and implementation of the Regional Strategy.
10. Supports the development of subregional work plans for prevention, preparedness, and control of TADs commensurate to the changing risks, and ensure there is regular communication to all relevant stakeholders on risks at a defined frequency and modality as well as emerging situations.
11. Explore alternative structures and responsibilities of the Regional Secretariat to sustain and evolve to a higher level of operational capacity in Asia and the Pacific, including options for improved staffing and partnerships.

The GF-TADs Global Secretariat

12. Strengthens networking and exchange between Regional Steering Committees and disease working groups to support information exchange and joint learning between the secretariats.
13. Establishes linkage between the partnership and financing panel (PFP) and the GF-TADs Regional secretariat for Asia and the Pacific to support the development of specific regional stakeholder engagement plans aiming at providing support to advocate and increase regional capacity for priority TADs prevention and control.

FAO and WOAHA

14. Should continue to coordinate on GF-TADs as the main animal health organisations working in Asia and the Pacific and engage with other important animal health stakeholders.
15. Regularly assesses risk for entry, establishment and spread of the diseases in Asia and the Pacific. This includes conducting multisectoral and disease specific risk assessments to inform risk management and risk communication.

The Meeting

- Agreed to conduct subregional GF-TADs meetings for East Asia, South-east Asia, South Asia and the Pacific in 2023-2024 either as a stand-alone meeting or held back-to-back with other meetings of the subregion.
- Agreed to conduct the next RSC meeting in 2025 in Thailand.
- Thanked the Government of Japan, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and JICA for hosting the meeting and to FAO and WOAHA for co-organizing.