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SEACFMD Laboratory Network Meeting LANZHOU, CHINA 24-25 OCTOBER 2023

1. NOTES the challenges for national animal health surveillance systems AGREE to improve quality sample submission to national and reference laboratories for diagnosis, virus sub-typing to understand FMDV circulation and FMD control strategies better.
2. NOTES the challenges to national diagnostic capabilities and exploring opportunities for bilateral collaboration between FMD Reference laboratories and national laboratories to enhance their diagnostic capacity.
3. NOTES significant challenges arising from the shortage of adequately trained laboratory staff due to staff turnovers and develop a comprehensive training program tailored to meet the specific needs of national veterinary laboratories in close collaboration with the WOAHA and network of reference laboratories. Future training will ensure commitments from laboratories to train enough staff through already trained staff.
4. NOTES the importance of communication and networking among the stakeholders and agree to review existing communication materials and training modules with assistance from the relevant experts, such as sociologists, to enhance participation of the farmers/animal owners and the community animal health workers in FMD prevention and control.
5. NOTES the opportunity to send samples to the Pakchong FMD diagnostic laboratory via land border points; the Pakchong FMD diagnostic laboratory agrees to provide specific SOPs and relevant logistical arrangements to facilitate the receipt of these samples with WOAHA support.
6. NOTES the importance of virus characterisation at the WOAHA Reference laboratories. WRLFMD and LVRI agreed to support the SEACFMD Member countries.
7. NOTES the updates and activities of the Regional Expert Group for FMD in SEA and AGREES to continue to work on the finalisation of the Regional FMD molecular diagnostic algorithm and characterisation (for serotyping, lineage differentiation, sequencing etc.).

8. NOTES the epidemiological changes in the Region; the FMD-free countries are requested to carry out simulation exercises and develop contingency plans for laboratory preparedness and seek advice (if needed) from partner countries who have that expertise.
9. Considering the importance of FMD research to enhance FMD prevention and control in the region, the meeting agreed to conduct targeted research on FMD epidemiology (increase virus characterisation), surveillance (regional surveillance on emerging incursions of O/ME-SA/SA-2018 and SAT2/XIV) and increased vaccine matching studies (with international vaccine strains).
10. THANKS the Government of the People's Republic of China for supporting this event
11. THANKS Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute, Lanzhou-China for hosting the SEACFMD Laboratory Network Meeting.