

RECOMMENDATIONS

Regional Workshop on Avian Disease Prevention and Control in Asia and the Pacific 2024

Seoul, Republic of Korea

27 – 29 August 2024

Considering that

- Poultry is a key source of high-quality protein and bioavailable micronutrients in the Asia-Pacific region, and diseases affect both commercial and subsistence farming, impacting livelihoods and food security.
- The global rise in transmission of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) among domestic, wild birds, and some mammals poses threats to animal and public health, food security, and biodiversity. This increase in avian influenza is likely because of changes in virus evolution and disease dynamics, which is significantly driven by the structure and connectivity of poultry production and distribution systems.
- Members are exploring additional prevention and control measures beyond stamping out policies, which could influence national and regional disease surveillance strategies.
- Avian influenza is identified as a priority disease by Global and Regional GF-TADs Strategies.
- OFFLU, a FAO-WOAH network, provides technical advice and training on animal influenza and collaborates with WHO on addressing challenges at the human-animal-environment interface.
- A regional avian disease expert network among laboratories in Asia and the Pacific facilitates sharing of disease outbreak information, diagnostic advancements, and strategies for disease control and preparedness.
- Public-private partnerships can enhance prevention, preparedness, and control of poultry diseases.
- WOA Resolution No. 28 on HPAI was adopted by Members at WOA GS 2023.
- Global Strategy on HPAI Prevention and Control (2024-2033) was launched at the WOA GS in 2024.

The workshop recommends:

Members

- To use the Global Avian Influenza Strategy to update and implement the regional and national action plan for prevention and control of avian diseases and synergize it up with national strategies.
- To ensure transparency by promptly reporting avian influenza events to WOA and sharing detailed virus information within networks.
- To strengthen regional control of avian diseases by promoting information sharing on all bacterial and viral avian diseases and ensuring the timely reporting of diseases that could be differential diagnoses for HPAI.
- To conduct risk-based, systematic monitoring and surveillance of domestic and wild birds as well as mammals to support early warning and risk management at the human-animal-environment interface.
- To work to understand avian diseases in the context of national and regional poultry production and trading systems and how changes in food production and climate might alter disease dynamics.

- To support the OFFLU Avian Influenza Matching programme and WHO Vaccine Composition Meeting through provision of genetic data and genetic materials from new isolates and sharing isolates for further phenotypic characterization for pre-pandemic preparedness.
- To develop a more concrete and multisectoral plan for exchanging relevant information and coordinating with public health, wildlife, and other relevant authorities.
- In consultation with the poultry sector, to consider the implementation of vaccination as a complementary disease prevention tool that is based on robust and targeted surveillance and takes into account local factors such as circulating virus strains, risk assessment and vaccination implementation conditions with an exit strategy.
- To take responsibility for the continued participation in appropriate accredited proficiency testing programmes for the purpose of external quality assurance of their diagnostic assays.
- To share the success stories of disease-free status, national and international collaborations, laboratory capacity, animal movement and border control measures, risk assessment, zoning and compartmentalization, and farm management practices in the Regional Workshop for Avian Disease Prevention and Control in Asia and the Pacific.

Regional Expert Group for Avian Diseases:

- To evaluate and pilot potential novel diagnostics for the rapid detection of avian disease pathogens.
- With the support of its Reference Laboratories and OFFLU, to provide up-to-date information to Members, the poultry sector and vaccine manufacturers on the genetic and antigenic characterisation of circulating virus strains, including comparison with existing vaccines, to infer levels of protection.
- To support members for strengthening diagnostic capacity and early warning systems, including promoting active surveillance.
- To support fostering collaboration, communication, and coordination between laboratories and multisectoral partners, including public health, animal health, and environmental sectors.
- To continue to meet physically at least once a year and hold a virtual meeting between and maintain regular digital communications between physical meetings.
- To strengthen collaborations, communication, and coordination among laboratories in each sub-region to support prevention and control of avian diseases and provide updates on activities occurred in the sub-region at the annual regional meeting.

WOAH:

- To follow the changes in LPAI and HPAI virus ecology, epidemiology, validated sampling (e.g., novel technologies and environmental sampling) and diagnostic methods, to ensure the WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code and Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals are up to date with the latest science and feedback from implementation.
- To continue working with the Quadripartite partners to assess and address barriers to intersectoral collaboration and promote the One Health Approach to mitigate the risks of avian influenza.
- To coordinate with funding institutions, the private sector, resource partners and development agencies in support of strengthening the human resource capacity and sustainable infrastructure of Veterinary Services, including diagnostic capacity and early warning systems.