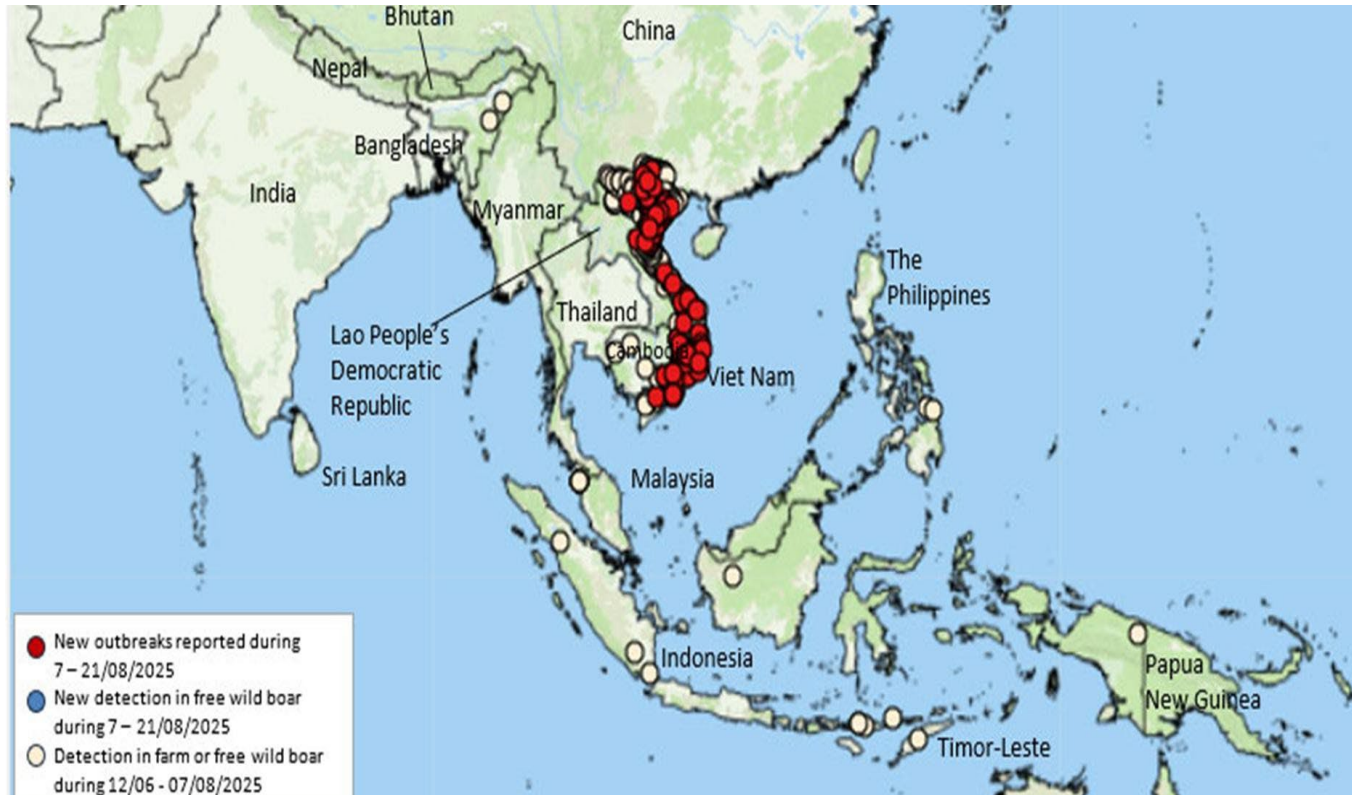


VIETNAM

How can having a plan for emergency killing of pigs ensure good animal welfare in response to disease outbreak.



Current African swine fever situation

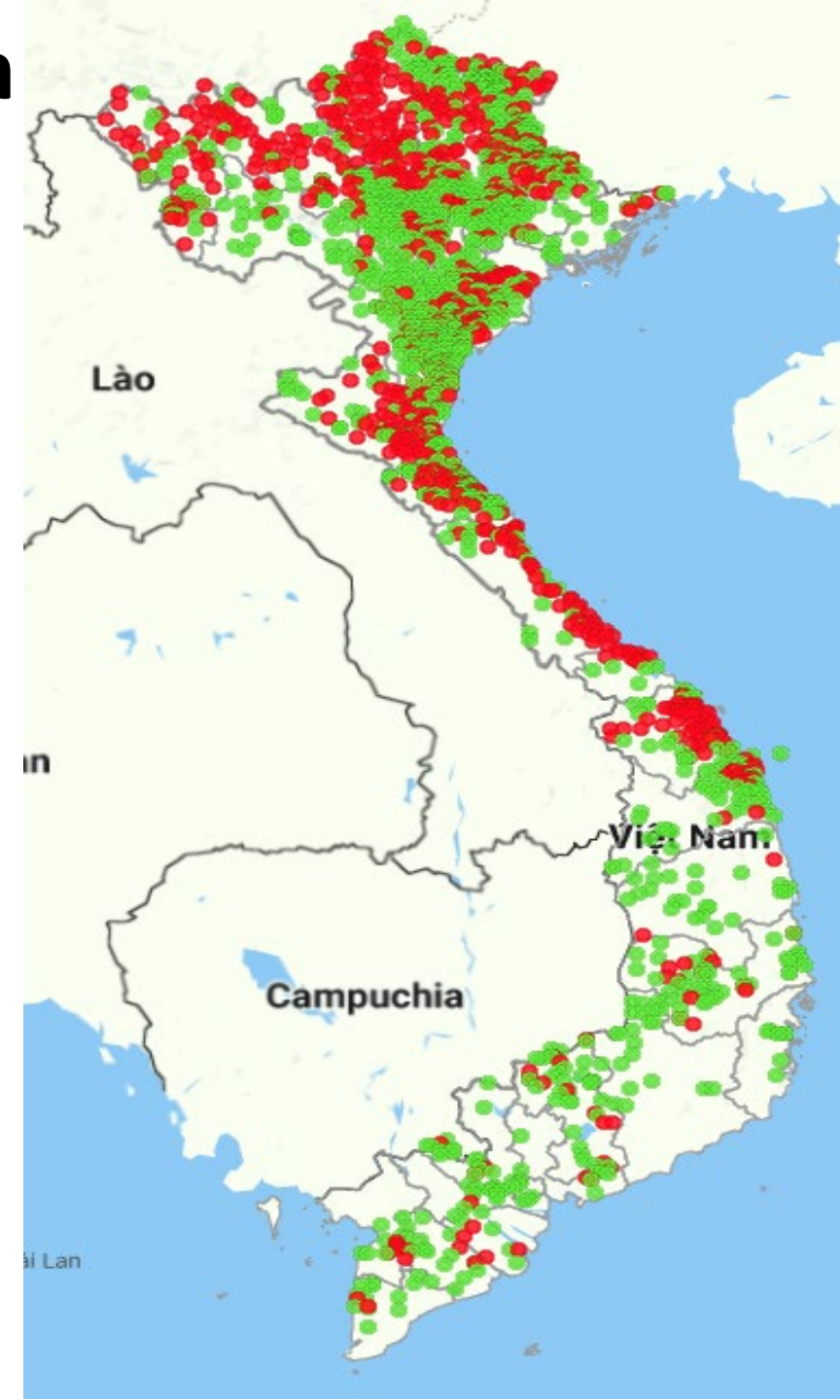


ASF in Vietnam is endemic with recurring outbreaks

Smallholder structure makes unplanned culling high-risk

Field response capacity varies across provinces

👉 **This shows why planning matters in Vietnam specifically.**



Why This Topic Matters

- **Transboundary animal diseases (e.g., ASF, FMD, CSF) require rapid response.**
- **Emergency killing is sometimes unavoidable to:**
 - **Stop disease spread**
 - **Protect livelihoods and food systems**
 - **Safeguard public confidence**
- **Without planning → chaotic depopulation = severe animal suffering.**
- **With planning → controlled, humane, science-based action.**



The Welfare Risk During Outbreaks

Unplanned emergency killing may lead to:

- Delays → prolonged suffering of infected animals
- Inappropriate methods used under pressure
- Poor handling and overcrowding
- Inadequate staff training
- Psychological stress on responders
- Loss of public trust

Disease control must not compromise humane treatment.

What is an Emergency Killing Plan?

A structured framework that ensures:

- Rapid decision-making
- Selection of approved humane killing methods
- Availability of trained personnel
- Proper equipment and logistics
- Animal handling that minimizes fear, pain, and distress

Emergency killing is not an ad-hoc action — it is a pre-authorized veterinary intervention implemented under contingency legislation

It integrates disease control AND animal welfare objectives.

International Standards Supporting Preparedness?

Emergency depopulation planning is grounded in:

- **WOAH Terrestrial Animal Health Code – Chapter 7.6 (Killing for Disease Control)**
- **WOAH One Welfare concept → responder fatigue affects performance.**
- **FAO Good Emergency Management Practice (GEMP)**
- National veterinary contingency plans
- One Welfare approach linking:
 - Animal welfare
 - Human wellbeing
 - Environmental safety

Equipment

- **Handling Equipment**

 - Sorting boards

 - Raceways / temporary pens

- **Killing Equipment**

 - Electrical stunning systems

 - Captive bolt devices

 - CO₂ systems (where applicable)

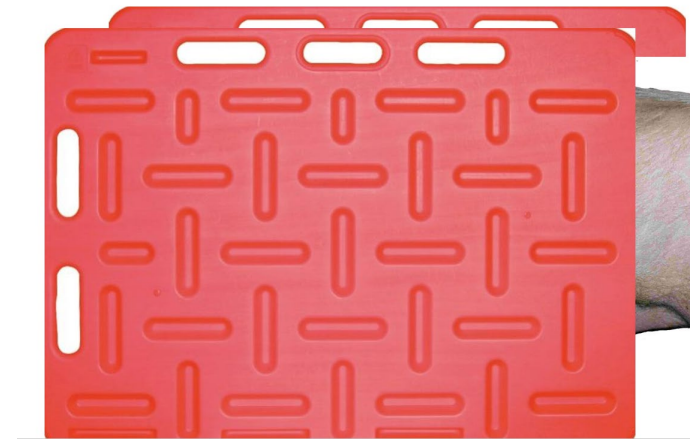
- **Biosecurity**

 - PPE

 - Disinfection units

- **Verification Tools**

 - Stethoscope / reflex checks



Why Planning Improves Animal Welfare?

Planning enables:

- Pre-approved humane methods ready to deploy
- Reduced waiting time before action
- Availability of proper equipment (e.g., captive bolt, electrical systems, gas systems where appropriate)
- Defined animal flow → less fear and agitation
- Clear SOPs → fewer mistakes under stress

Preparedness = Prevention of avoidable suffering.

Operational Components of a Good Plan?

A strong emergency killing plan includes:

- 1. Technical Preparedness:** Species-specific humane killing protocols; Equipment lists and maintenance schedules; Backup methods
- 2. Human Capacity:** Trained response teams; Simulation exercises (ToT-based training); Psychological preparedness
- 3. Logistics:** Zoning and movement control; Carcass disposal strategy; Biosecurity integration
- 4. Governance:** Clear chain of command; Legal authorization; Documentation and traceability

Welfare is more than the Method?

Emergency killing operations are psychologically demanding.

Plans must include:

- Staff rotation
- Mental-health support
- Clear communication of purpose
- Ethical framework for responders

Handling determines welfare as much as technology.

Protecting Human Welfare Too?

Even with a correct method, welfare fails without:

- Calm animal movement
- Avoiding mixing unfamiliar groups
- Minimizing noise and visual stressors
- Adequate restraint techniques
- Continuous confirmation of unconsciousness

One Welfare: protecting animals also protects people.

Studies from ASF responses show responder burnout leads to procedural shortcuts.

Consequences of Not Planning?

- Increased animal suffering
- Slower outbreak control
- Operational confusion
- Public backlash and reputational damage
- Higher economic losses
- Delayed depopulation → compensation costs increase
- Market closures last longer
- Restocking delayed

Failure to prepare is both a welfare and disease-control failure.

Benefits of Preparedness?

Well-designed emergency killing plans deliver:

- Faster outbreak containment
- Humane, science-based action
- Safer personnel
- Public confidence in veterinary services
- Alignment with international obligations
- Humane killing is not slower — it is operationally more efficient.

Planning for the worst enables the best possible outcome under difficult circumstances.

Emergency Killing Process During ASF Response

- 1 Outbreak confirmation (**Initiate response within 24 hours of outbreak**)
- 2 Activation of contingency plan (**Pre-position equipment for deployment within 12 hours**)
- 3 Deployment of trained killing team (**Maintain annual simulation exercises and 6-monthly refresher training**)
- 4 Welfare-compliant depopulation
- 5 Carcass disposal + disinfection
- 6 Verification + documentation
- 7 Staff rotation & psychosocial support



Key Take-Home Messages?

- . Emergency killing is sometimes unavoidable — suffering is not.
- . Animal welfare must be embedded in contingency planning.
- . Training, equipment, and SOPs must be prepared before outbreaks.
- . Welfare-centered response strengthens disease control effectiveness.
- . Preparedness reflects professionalism, ethics, and responsibility.

References / Resources?

- WOAHA Terrestrial Animal Health Code – Ch. 7.6
- FAO Good Emergency Management Practice (GEMP)
- FAO & WOAHA guidelines on humane depopulation
- ToT Training Materials on Emergency Response
- National Contingency Plans for ASF/FMD
- Relevant peer-reviewed literature on humane killing methods

