

Standing Group of Experts on Contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia for Africa

Introduction

Contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia (CBPP) or lung sickness in cattle, caused by *Mycoplasma mycoides subsp. mycoides* (Mmm) is truly an African disease, long eradicated from the developed world, which represents a considerable burden for cattle owners in many parts of Africa (EMPRES-AH, FAO, 2013), from Senegal and the Gambia in the west through Somalia in the east, and as far south as Namibia and Tanzania.



In recent years, the disease has seen its area of spread increase in Africa (e.g. Senegal in West Africa, Gabon in Central Africa) and the number of outbreaks increase in areas where it was already present. It is currently being reported as present by around 18 countries (WAHIS, Jan – Jun 2019) with the latest outbreaks having been reported from Namibia (2021, 2020, 2019), Niger (2020) and the Gambia (2018).

WOAH-WAHIS composite map (2005 – 2019) of the distribution of CBPP in Africa (red = present; yellow = suspected). Map generated on 5 April 2022.

As one of the listed diseases, subject to the procedure for official recognition of animal health status by the *World Organisation for Animal Health* (WOAH, founded as OIE), only four countries in Africa are currently officially free from CBPP, i.e. Botswana, Eswatini, South Africa (country-wide) and Namibia (zone located south of the *Veterinary Cordon Fence*, VCF). Namibia and Zambia are also the only countries having a WOA endorsed official control programme for CBPP.

Several factors compound the control of CBPP: the fact that the disease is seen as a production disease, chronic and with rather limited mortality, that meat and meat products (excluding lungs) are regarded by WOA as safe commodities according to the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (TAHC), irrespective of the disease status of the country or zone, that the disease is widely treated with antibiotics, mitigating the symptoms, but at the same time propagating the infection through carriers and -most importantly- the limited efficacy of the available vaccines, mainly based on the attenuated strains T1/44 and T1sr.

Though live attenuated vaccines (T1/44 and T1sr) are available, their protection is limited to maximum of 12 months, hence requiring considerable logistical efforts to attain protection at

population level. An additional constraint to attain demonstrated absence of infection or disease is the need for animal identification and traceability systems to be in place.

As a result, CBPP can only realistically be controlled through a series of measures, one which is movement control, making it a truly transboundary animal disease. In a paper released in 1987, in the *Rev. sci. tech. Off. int. Epiz.*, Provost et al. affirmed that the eradication of CBPP was possible on the condition that all cattle are vaccinated for several years in a row and that all clinically affected animals need to be emergency slaughtered. The latest guidance on CBPP dates back to 2003 (the FAO – OIE - AU/IBAR - IAEA Consultative Group on Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia, Third meeting “Towards Sustainable CBPP Control Programmes For Africa”, Rome, 12–14 November 2003 - <http://www.fao.org/3/a-y5510e.pdf>), demonstrating that CBPP control has become a neglected public good.

More information: [Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia - Africa \(woah.org\)](http://www.woah.org) and [Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia - World Organisation for Animal Health](http://www.woah.org)

The *Standing Group of Experts* on CBPP (SGE-CBPP) for Africa is set up within the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations / WOAHP GF-TADs to promote regular exchange of information and best practices among concerned national veterinary authorities, international and national experts, and the private sector. The disease was identified as one of the 5 priority diseases under the GF-TADs Regional Strategy 2021 – 2025, adopted in October 2021.

The SGE-CBPP for Africa will start with a core group of 4 founding Members Countries drawn from Central (Chad), Eastern (Somalia), Southern (Zambia) and Western Africa (Nigeria), with the aim to progressively extend to more countries.

Objectives - *Strengthening Africa regional cooperation and dialogue on CBPP control through:*

- Regular information exchange on CBPP situation preparedness and control measures applied,
- Technical support for regular review of national and regional CBPP control strategies by experts, based on experiences and best-practices, with a view to provide scientific and technical advice,
- Technical formulation of disease control policies and scientific guidance to aid in the coordination of CBPP prevention and control efforts, integrated into other bovine disease control efforts, where applicable,
- Enhance / foster / promote regional collaboration on;
 - laboratory diagnosis by exchange of best practices and support capacity building,
 - applied research or adaptation of existing tools, including CBPP epidemiology, biosecurity, socioeconomics and vaccine upgrading,
 - technical support and guidance on awareness raising campaigns by exchange of best practices and tools to improve *risk communication, and community and stakeholders’ engagement* (RCCE) and drive behaviour change,
 - technical support and guidance on cross-border surveillance and concerted risk management measures along the beef and dairy value chains, among countries in the Africa region;
- Regular communication/information exchange/sharing on the outcomes of the group discussions to other Member Countries and all stakeholders,

- Coordination on technical support and guidance on identification of priorities for the development and adaptation of existing tools, training needs, and CBPP control projects relevant for the region,

Composition

The composition should be diversified in origin, with experts drawn from veterinary services, the dairy and beef industry, academia, research institutions, NGOs acting on CBPP or bovine production development, private sector along the value chain.

- The founding Member Countries (**Chad, Nigeria, Somalia** and **Zambia**) will establish the SGE CBPP for Africa. Experts from other countries in the region will be included in SGE CBPP when relevant according to the extension of the engagement of more countries to active CBPP control strategies.
- AU-IBAR, Regional Economic Communities (COMESA Secretariat, ECCAS-RAHC, ECOWAS-RAHC, IGAD-ICPALD, and SADC-LTC), FAO and WOAHA regional representations, ILRI, the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture and other regional organizations active in the field of animal disease control strategies.
- Regionally and internationally recognized CBPP experts with experience working in Africa will be included in the group on an ad hoc basis.
- Experts from WOAHA and FAO reference laboratories and collaborating centers, as well as selected national/regional laboratories: the *Pan-African Veterinary Vaccine Centre* of the African Union (AU-PANVAC) Debre-Zeit - Ethiopia, the *National Veterinary Research Institute* (NVRI), Vom - Nigeria, the *Botswana National Veterinary Laboratory* (BNVL) Gaborone - Botswana and the *Laboratoire Central Vétérinaire* (LCV) Bamako – Mali.
- Additional international recognized experts drawn from universities/academia, partners and donors on CBPP or other technical topics to be invited by the group to support the SGE-CBPP on an ad hoc basis.

Governance

The SGE-CBPP will be established under the umbrella of the GF-TADs for Africa. It will report to the GF-TADs *Regional Steering Committee* (RSC) for Africa and will liaise with other GF-TADs regional platforms working on CBPP, where relevant.

Chair: The meetings will be rotational hosted by founding Member Countries of the SGE- CBPP with host to chair the meeting upon agreement of SGE- CBPP.

The *World Organisation for Animal Health* (WOAH) Regional Representation for Africa, based in Bamako, Mali (RR AF) will act as Technical Secretariat in coordination with the *Food and Agriculture Organization* of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Office for Africa (RAF).

Funding mechanism

- Meeting costs of representatives from African Member Countries and costs for the logistical organization of meetings will be covered by the three organizations (FAO, WOAHA and AU-IBAR). Other members are expected to cover their own expenses or seek funding from partner organizations.

- The costs of the operation of the Technical Secretariat will be covered by WOAH.

Meeting mechanism

- The meetings will take place in the SGE-CBPP Member Countries, on a rotating basis and will be called by the GF-TADs Regional Secretariat;
- The SGE-CBPP will meet in person at least once a year, electronic consultations and online meetings may be organised between meetings;
- Language: English and French with simultaneous interpretations;
- Host country to assist technical Secretariat in identification of appropriate meeting venue / hotel and provide logistical support, including transfer from the hotel and, if possible, either welcome dinner or social evening;
- Summary minutes of the meeting to be prepared by the SGE-CBPP Technical Secretariat, circulated to participants by email and published on the website of the WOAH Regional Representation for Africa.

Meeting attendees

- **Founding Member Countries:**
 - WOAH Delegate (CVO or appointed representative of CVO),
 - National CBPP technical experts in the topic being covered.
 - Total number from each founding member country should not exceed two persons (with exception of host when hosting physical meetings)
- **Subject-matter experts** selected from recognized international and regional CBPP and/or cattle disease experts.
- **Representatives of AU-IBAR, FAO and WOAH**
- **Representatives of partner organizations:** upon agreement of the members of the group.
- **Meeting observers:** upon agreement of the hosting member.

