



Major diseases situation in the Sub-region

During the months of March - April 2014, no HPAI outbreaks were reported from the SAARC countries. However, the sub-region continued to record other highly pathogenic diseases such as Nipah and anthrax (Bangladesh), Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) in Pakistan, and leptospirosis in Sri Lanka during the period.

Bangladesh

Nipah and Anthrax update

One new Nipah case was reported during March - April 2014. However, between December 2013 and April 2014, a total of 35 Nipah cases were identified with 18 deaths. In April 2014, 14 cases of cutaneous anthrax were reported and confirmed in Raiganj upazila of Shirajganj district. (<http://www.iedcr.org>)

Pakistan

Crimean Congo hemorrhagic fever (CCHF) update

During week No.10 - 17 (March - April) of 2014, there were four suspected cases of CCHF. However, none was confirmed by the laboratory. During 2012 and 2013, 61 and 90 suspected cases of CCHF respectively have been reported which indicated the increased frequency of suspected cases with the passing year and warranted immediate and effective intervention for control of CCHF in animal population to ultimately protect at risk occupational groups (butchers, animal traders, herders, tannery workers etc) from this infection. The significantly higher number of confirmed cases belonged to Baluchistan province (23) followed by Sindh (7), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (6) and Punjab (5). More information can be seen on the website of the WHO Pakistan. (http://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/pakistan/documents/pak_documents/DEWS/2014/Weekly-Epidemiological-Bulletin-17-30042014.pdf?ua=1)

Sri Lanka

Leptospirosis update

A total of 338 cases of human leptospirosis with 227 and 111 cases in March and April 2014, respectively have been reported. A total of 22 districts were affected out of 26 districts during the period. The highest numbers of cases reported during March and April were 44 and 27 in Kalutara and Ratnapur, respectively. More information can be seen on the website of the Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka.

(http://www.epid.gov.lk/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=448&lang=en)

Workshops and Meetings organised or participated

3rd Laboratory Directors' meeting and workshop on bio-risk management in SAARC countries, 5 - 6 March 2014, New Delhi, India

The laboratory networking in SAARC sub region was initiated in March 2011 followed by the First Laboratory Directors' Meeting in January 2012 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This was followed by the Second Laboratory Directors' Meeting in March 2013 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The SAARC laboratory directors' with the support of European Union, SAARC and FAO Regional Support Unit organized the Third Laboratory Directors' meeting and workshop on Bio-risk Management in SAARC countries from 5-6 March 2014 in New Delhi, India. Laboratory directors from

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Participants of 3rd laboratory Directors' meeting

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Regional Leading Diagnostic Laboratories (RLDL) participated in the meeting. Staff from FAO RSU, Nepal, FAO India and WHO, India also participated in the meeting. Dr Stuart D Blacksell, FAO Regional Biosafety Coordinator from Bangkok facilitated the bio-risk management workshop.

The main objective of this meeting was to keep the Directors of RLDLs and key national laboratories updated on the ongoing activities related to laboratory capacity building and laboratory networking in South Asia and provide a platform to discuss problems and issues related to the national veterinary diagnostic laboratories and the Laboratory Networks within the member states in the SAARC region.

Based on the deliberations of the meeting and workshop on bio-risk management systems, the following main recommendations were drawn;

- Institutionalise the SAARC Laboratory Directors' Forum with commitment to organise annual meetings with participation from the National and Regional Leading Diagnostic Laboratories.
- The meeting recommends that towards institutionalisation of the Directors' forum a Chair of the forum be established with host country chairing the forum/network until the next annual meeting.
- There is need to constitute a technical advisory group (TAG) to guide and monitor the activities in the region.
- Regional Leading Diagnostic Laboratories (RLDLs)

should take initiative to ensure full ownership of the network and support capacity building and laboratory networking activities on a long term basis.

- Guidelines and programmes may be developed to address the deficiencies in implementing quality assurance (QA), quality management (QM), biosafety and undertake trainings as a priority activity.
- The RLDLs/Regional FAO/OIE Reference Laboratories should make efforts to get laboratory accreditation as per ISO guidelines (ISO 9001/ ISO/IEC 17025).
- The Laboratory Directors' forum recognised the need for in country hands-on trainings provided by RLDLs/OIE Reference Laboratory experts.
- Assess specific needs on biosafety management and constraints, through consultation with laboratory staff, using international standard biosafety regulations.

Workshop on risk assessment limited to livestock value chain within Bangladesh, India and Nepal, 11 - 12 March 2014, Kathmandu, Nepal

The FAO Regional Support Unit contracted three research organizations to conduct in-country and cross-border livestock value chain studies in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. A workshop to apprise the study outcomes to senior technical and policy makers was held from 11 - 12 March 2014 in Kathmandu, Nepal. Every country has its own livestock disease control system with checkpoints for legally traded livestock. Information gaps about livestock trade volumes, flows and disease control practices have made effective control and prevention of transboundary disease spread very difficult. The documentation of livestock value chain study results can be used to close some of the information gaps for enhancing regional co-operation and infrastructure on transboundary identification, monitoring and control of animal diseases.

A better understanding regarding the shared knowledge about livestock value chains in the region has identified high risk livestock trade routes and prioritized risk reduction interventions. Cross-border livestock value chains in Indo-Gangetic plains countries; Bangladesh, India and Nepal has documented knowledge on the

movement of livestock with possible transmission of TADs. The study results showed;

- Informal ingress of about 99,000 heads of livestock (cattle, buffalo, goats) per month into Bangladesh
- In India, more than 40,000 heads of livestock (primarily cattle) are being moved per month along cross-border routes linked with Nepal and Bangladesh
- About 43,000 animals (buffaloes and goats) entered per month into Nepal while 15, 000 animals (cattle, goats and pigs) exited per month from the country



Participants in SAARC CVO's Forum meeting

Annual ECTAD Meeting Siem Reap, Cambodia, 23 - 25 April 2014

The Annual ECTAD meeting primarily focussed on elucidating FAO's role in upcoming Emerging Pandemic Threat-2 (EPT2) programme, which will run from 2015-2020. The three-day event was held in Siem Reap, and was attended by representatives from ECTAD and other divisions of FAO representing HQ, RAP, and eleven countries. Presentations and discussions covered a wide variety of topics relevant to the five Areas of Strategic Focus identified as roles for FAO in EPT2 project documents. Dr Mohinder Oberoi, Sub regional Manager, ECTAD and RSU Coordinator and Mr Simon Boas, Programme Officer attended the meeting.



Participants of livestock value chains workshop

In view of the documented scale of livestock movement between these three countries, a regional approach to control TADs appears warranted.

4th SAARC Chief Veterinary Officers' Forum meeting, 2 - 3 April 2014, Kathmandu Nepal

The project supported the Fourth Meeting of the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) Forum held at the SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, Nepal from 2-3 April 2014.

Delegates from all Member States except Afghanistan attended the Meeting. Representatives from FAO, OIE and SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), Bangladesh also attended the meeting.

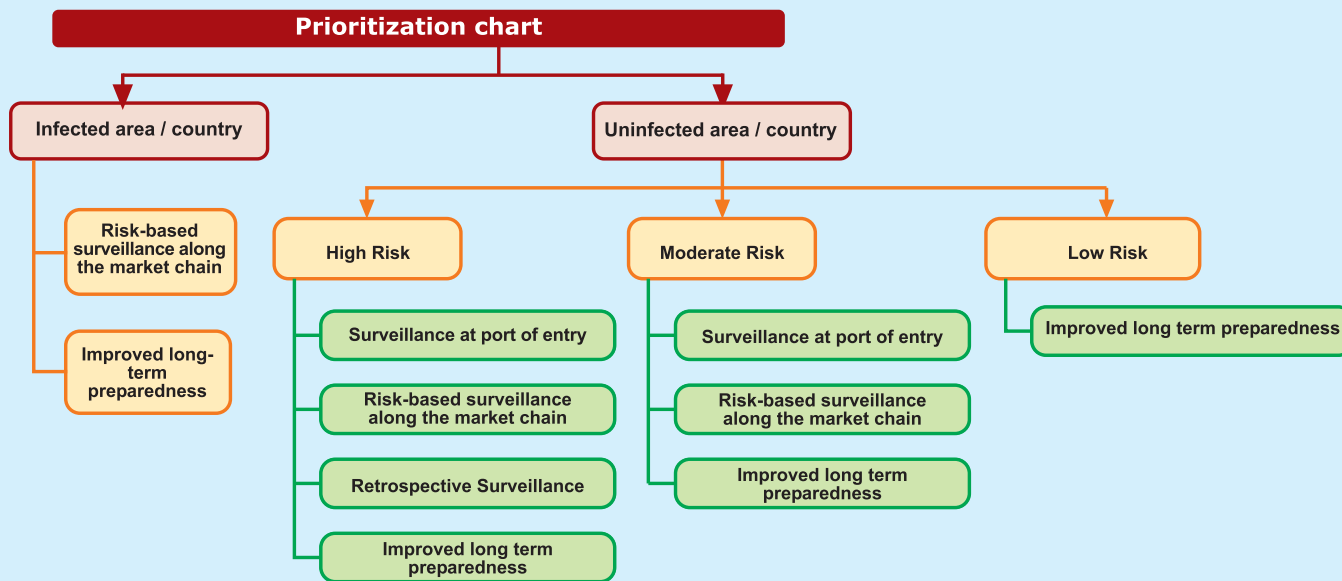
Upcoming events

- 1 Regional Training Workshop on 'Strengthening Capacity to Respond to Animal Disease Emergencies', 26 - 28 May 2014 Kathmandu, Nepal
- 2 Regional Workshop on Emergency Surveillance and Response to Influenza A(H7N9) in South Asia, Kathmandu, Nepal, 10-11 July 2014
- 3 Fifth meeting of the HPED Steering Committee and 8th FAO/OIE Regional Steering Committee Meeting on GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand, 15-17 July 2014

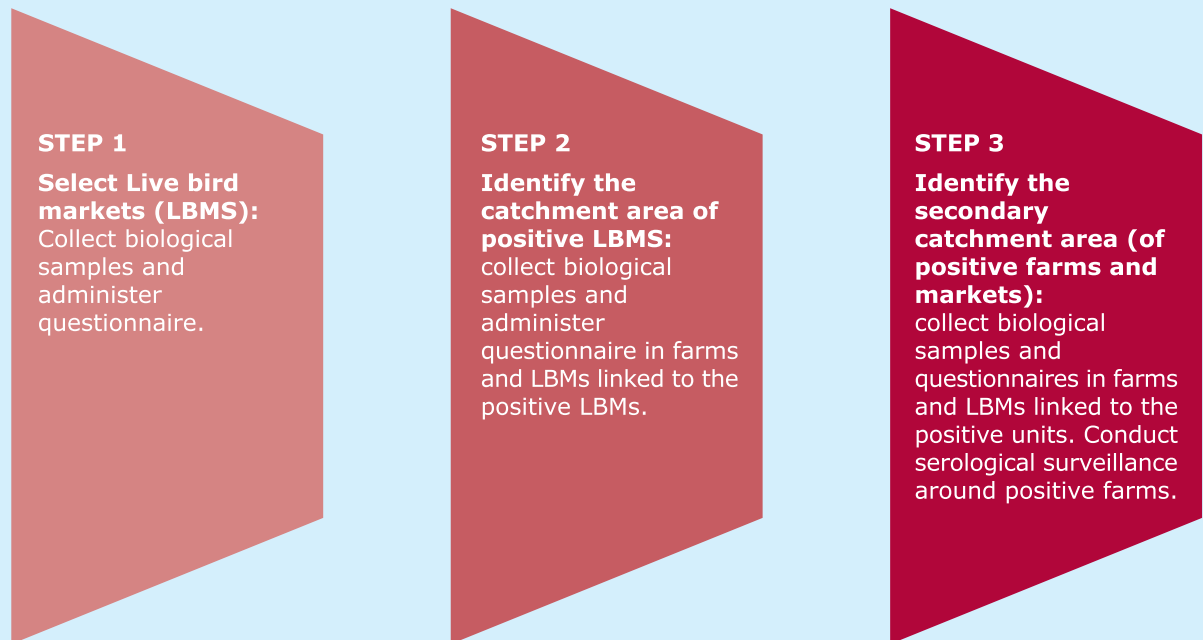


Eliminating Animal Health Risks

FAO/EMPRES guidelines for emergency risk-based surveillance for avian influenza A(H7N9)



Design process for risk-based surveillance along the market chain, based on a snowball sampling strategy



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