



1 December 2010

## MIRROR GROUPS

*Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 23 November 2010 in Brussels, Belgium*

### Attendance

---

#### **Austrian Mirror Group**

Hermann Schobesberger

#### **Danish Mirror Group**

Jaap Boes

Anne Birgitte Lundholt

Kristian Moeller

Steen Mortensen

Henrik Stampe Lund

#### **French Mirror Group**

Fabienne Cournarie

#### **German Mirror Group**

Dieter Schillinger

#### **Italian Mirror Group**

Alessandra Scagliarini

#### **Portuguese Mirror Group**

Jose Carapeto

Luis Tavares

#### **Spanish Mirror Group**

Alfonso de las Heras

Pablo Hervás

#### **Swizz Mirror Group**

Irene Schiller

#### **UK Mirror Group**

Jack F Kay

Phil Sketchley

#### **APOLOGIES**

##### **Dutch Mirror Group**

Ministry Landbow/Huibert Maurice

##### **IFAH-Europe**

Morgane Delavergne (apologies)

Declan O'Brien

Florentina Pardo (reporting)

### Discussions and Conclusions

---

#### **1. Welcome and introduction**

Declan welcomed the participants and mentioned the apologies from Morgane Delavergne and from the Dutch Mirror Group which was now in a dormant stage. He invited the participants to introduce themselves.

#### **2. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda was approved unchanged.

#### **3. Review and approval of the minutes of the last meeting (22 September 2009)**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved unchanged.

#### **4. Update on the ETPGAH and DISCONTTOOLS**

Declan updated the Mirror Groups on the recent developments of the ETPGAH and DISCONTTOOLS.

He mentioned that the ETPGAH was reviewing its Terms of Reference (ToRs) to bring its organisational structure up to date and was seeking the Mirror Groups input on the wording describing their role. This will be considered under point 7 of the agenda.

In terms of the Action plan, Declan mentioned that EMIDA was to launch an SRA with the draft expected in January. This will be reviewed by the ETPGAH to see how it can add value. The SRA should be finalised by May 2011. The ETPGAH pursues the implementation of its Action Plan and after completion of its work as per the contract, will seek a further development of DISCONTOOLS via a second FP7 initiative to pursue the development of the D&P, gap analysis & prioritisation. Additional diseases will be added including those for fish & bees.

Declan detailed the initiatives developed and linked with the ETPGAH, namely:

- the Animal Task Force with the objective to link breeding, husbandry, nutrition & health. Alex Morrow who is also in charge of EMIDA represents the ETPGAH in the group;
- BECOTEPS for which KBBE platforms are developing thoughts on future research needs;
- STAR-IDAZ which will look at coordination of research on the major infectious diseases of animals and zoonoses with a global perspective. OIE and IFAH will participate in the initiative;
- EADGENE which focuses on statistical information as a means of gauging animal performance.

Declan mentioned that the ETPGAH had created a distinctive identity with a new logo and website.

## **5. Presentation of the National Mirror Groups (Austria & Switzerland, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, UK):**

### **Austria**

Hermann recalled the aim of the first MG meeting in 2007 (to get a better integration and participation in the EU activities and strengthen Austrian research). He described the current structure (CVO, agencies, university) and indicated that the MG activities were closely linked to the EMIDA process. The MG has developed an action plan including liaison with the ETPGAH, agreement on priorities, discussion on expansion and pushing the research programme. Herman indicated that recently Austria and Switzerland had agreed on the principle of a joint group with mutual strategy, goals and activities. Hermann mentioned that a congress will be organised on 3-7 July 2011 in Vienna.

### **Denmark**

Anne Birgitte mentioned that the Danish MG which was created 2 ½ ago would stop its activities in January 2011 once the funding received from the Ministry of Science would be spent. She mentioned that from the start there had been a good representation and collaboration of all stakeholders in the MG. She recalled that the MG's aim was to connect their ideas about research funding to a European programme. The MG had proposed three ideas which had been supported by some other MGs but had not been accepted for funding in the scope of European programmes. The MG was still trying other routes to have their proposals considered by a European programme and she mentioned the seminar that the MG will hold in Copenhagen on 6-7 December including representation from EMIDA to decide how to go forward after January 2011 when funding will be stopped. Anne Birgitte questioned the connection between the MGs and the European programmes.

### **France**

Fabienne briefly reviewed the history of the French MG created at the initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture, its objective, membership covering all animal health professionals, its mission and structure. The MG is composed of 4 working groups dealing respectively with 1) orphan drugs availability, 2)

emerging diseases, 3) link with European programmes and 4) public/private partnership. A fifth group deals with Antimicrobials .

Group 1) has been able to find immediate solutions to local issues either by maintaining enough stocks in case of an outbreak or by preparing a CTD in preparation for registration. The group has also identified three topics to be considered at the European level, namely Paratuberculosis vaccines, Histomonosis and products for bee disease.

Group 2) has identified Bluetongue as a priority and agreed immediate research needs. It is also looking at long-term research on pathogenesis and immunology.

Group 3) reviews the European programmes funding opportunities (EMIDA, ERA-net, DISCONTTOOLS, FP7) and has identified several topics in the area of animal health, food borne and non-food borne zoonoses and antimicrobial resistance.

Group 4) has identified antimicrobials as a potential topic for PPP and is working at developing rules for such PPP. The group links with ARIIS which gathers all industries involved in health and whose objective is to create a network of expertise on specific topics. The initiative would be funded by the authorities. The creation of an Infectious disease institute including zoonoses had been proposed.

The fifth group on Antimicrobials has identified 5 priorities: research on epidemiology and physiopathology of bacterial disease in animals, alternatives to antibiotics, transfer of pathogens from animals to human, economics analysis and strategies for antibiotics use in animals. A national committee on the prudent use of antimicrobials will be launched in January 2011. It will be linked to the authorities and will include all interested parties.

Declan mentioned that there was some synergy in the topics proposed for the FP 7 programme and he suggested that it may have more impact to have several MGs proposing a similar idea to FP7. Fabienne confirmed that the French MG was proposing topics both directly to FP7 when commenting on a discussion paper and through EMIDA. She confirmed that some of the issues that had been proposed were included in the FP7 programme.

Declan suggested that the MGs should exchange ideas on topics that could be proposed to the European programmes. This would enable to find some synergy and increase the chances of success. Anne Birgitte added that this should be supported by central pressure from the EU platform.

## **Germany**

Dieter indicated that the MG had not met in the last year. He recalled that it was created in 2007 and was led by the Ministry of Agriculture. The group had created 3 WGs to work on viral, bacterial and parasitic diseases and had identified its priorities using the DISCONTTOOLS model for which it had provided recommendations for improvement.

Dieter explained that the MG was now in a dormant stage and had difficulties in finding its way forward to implement its ideas. One of the reasons was the lack of financial support for the initiative. Also, the MG realised that proposals developed at the national level would have difficulties in competing with EMIDA which is linked to the national Ministry of Research. The MG had the feeling that there was too much focus and duplication with the ETPGAH.

Dieter mentioned that he would report back on the success of other MGs which contrary to the German MG had worked on more national approaches which seem to work better. The MG will probably have a closing meeting to report on the work done and decide what to do with the knowledge gathered.

## **Italy**

Alessandra recalled that the MG created three years ago was composed of a large variety of stakeholders. The MG had developed a SRA in line with the ETPGAH and a vision document. It had defined its priorities linked to the Italian production (minor species, viruses linked to the region, etc.). She recalled that the MGs

had agreed to try and identify common topics to put forward at the EU level and she suggested pursuing the idea and inviting a representative from DG Research at a next MGs meeting to present these proposals.

Alessandra mentioned that the MG budget had been cut. The MG had developed a new website, more independent of the University of Bologna. She mentioned the reorganisation of the industry association (AISA). Alessandra reported on the symposium organised in September 2010 to discuss KBBP topics and present DISCONTTOOLS. This had been a good opportunity to disseminate information. At its last meeting, the MG defined the following priorities: strategic research on MUMS, GLP facilities (possibly with EU network supporting ESFRI), preparing for EXPO 2015 'Feed the Planet' that will take place in Milan and will address food safety and medicines.

## **Portugal**

Jose mentioned that the Portuguese MG created in May 2010 was led by industry and composed of representatives from academia, vet laboratories, industry and was hoping to get representatives from the ministries. The MG which held three meetings has defined its objectives (to emphasise animal health issues at international level and to apply ETPGAH guidance to the MG's activities). The MG has agreed its action plan: the creation of a national observatory on animal health and discussion on proposals for R&D co-financing. Luis mentioned that it was important to keep the group sufficiently independent to discuss on topics. The MG will now discuss the strategies to be put in place on the issues to be addressed.

## **Spain**

Pablo briefly recalled the structure and composition of the Spanish MG. He reported on the MG's achievements and current activities and on the planned activities for 2011. These include the publication of the SRA and its promotion amongst authorities funding, the development of the Action Plan, the organization of several events, the continued cooperation with other Spanish technology platforms, the initiation of activities on responsible use of veterinary medicines and pharmacovigilance and the develop an IT tool containing all the information concerning R+D in the field of AH.

Pablo presented the future opportunities for the Spanish MG in the form of possible collaboration in the Mediterranean area (via national platforms, REMESA, Euroarab Veterinary Association, EMIDA), creation of project consortia (National & European), promotion by all MGs of responsible use of veterinary medicines

## **Switzerland**

Irene explained the Swiss research process based on the Animal Health Strategy 2010+ and funded by the FVO (Federal Veterinary Office). The idea with the creation of a MG was to extend that platform and process. The objectives of the MG gathering all interested parties (private and public) are to agree on a consolidated FVO-Research agenda, to coordinate research to control and improve animal health, to ensure that the European prioritizations are included in the Swiss research strategy, and to ensure that special Swiss focus areas are included in the European prioritizations. The expected benefits of the initiative will be a coordinated approach of research and funding, the speed of availability on the market, the opportunity to share information and knowledge between stakeholders. Irene detailed the structure of the MG which is similar to that of the ETPGAH and presented the potential members identified. She detailed the activities that the MG will have in 2011 to come up with an approved action plan in December 2011. She referred to the joint Austrian/Swiss MG already mentioned by Hermann.

## **UK**

Phil recalled the structure of the UK MG and gave a progress report. He mentioned the changes in membership which they would like to extend to research academia. He indicated that the group had only met twice in 2010. The MG had finalised its prioritisation Gaps in research and submitted its scores to the ETPGAH. It was eager to compare the scoring with other MGs. It was mentioned that Germany, Spain, Denmark and the UK had done the scoring using the DISCONTTOOLS model. Spain and Denmark had not finished the work yet. Phil indicated that to enable a valid comparison the models/criteria used should be the same.

Phil detailed the process and methodologies used to assess the priorities having agreed to a maximum of four diseases for the three categories: exotic, endemic and zoonotic. The results should now be communicated nationally and the MG will extend its membership to ensure that all stakeholders are involved. It is looking at what the next stage should be in the light of the work done by other MGs.

#### **DARC – DEFRA antimicrobial resistance group**

Jack explained that DARC (Defra Antimicrobial Resistance Coordination) gathers experts working on antimicrobial resistance from all labs and universities. The group discusses the research needed in that area and has been gathering information on how/why AB resistance starts and spreads. The second phase is to determine how to minimise and reduce the impact to ensure a longer effect of antimicrobials. A booklet with the results of the findings will be published in 2011. Jack mentioned that the UK was publishing the AMR trends in specific diseases and he suggested that this information could be shared with countries doing the same exercise.

#### **Bee diseases**

Jack mentioned that the UK had a strong interest in the work done on bees and had committed to do research on the topic. He indicated that in the scope of the Codex work, he had been requested to develop a paper on setting MRLs. He was also chairing a working group for the CCRVDF (Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods) on how medications for bees are authorized in the world; the results would hopefully be used at the EU level. He suggested that this could be an area where experience could be shared. He mentioned the workshop to be organized in June 2011 in Canada (<http://www.saskval.ca/>) to address the validation of the test methods developed.

### **6. Activities of the EMIDA with special reference to the development of a Strategic Research Agenda**

Declan presented the main considerations in the development of the EMIDA SRA which will have a 10-15 year outlook and will look at identifying the research needs of Europe. He referred to the Delphi Study which is the basis to gain consensus on priorities. The initiative involves policy maker, industry, FAO, OIE, EFSA and will focus on the impact of the movement of animals & globalisation of trade, novel vaccines & increased control measures to reduce diseases. It will look at the possible impact of the intensification & increased food production on disease and the potential threats (arboviruses, viruses, zoonoses, antibiotic resistance, emerging & re-emerging agents & exotic diseases).

Declan mentioned that a draft SRA would be circulated for consultation in January 2011 and a final text should be ready by May 2011. The new ERA-Net will then have to develop an Action Plan to deliver the SRA and the ETPGAH will need to provide input and develop its own ideas on how to add value and avoid duplication.

### **7. Discussion and questions**

Declan explained the interaction between EMIDA, the ETPGAH and other initiatives. He recalled that the ETPGAH had been created to identify priorities and provide guidance to FP7 on the issues it should engage in. Outcomes included the creation of the ERA-Net under FP7 which exists as EMIDA and the creation of DISCONTTOOLS and its prioritisation methodology. EMIDA is now delivering agreed cross border projects. He recalled that EMIDA gathers national funders of research whereas the ETPGAH has a broader stakeholders' network.

It was mentioned that at national level there was a lack of understanding on the different roles played by the ETPGAH and EMIDA respectively. However in some other countries it was felt that there was some complementarities between the initiatives.

## **8. Sources of funding**

It was suggested that the French ARIIS project which will be funded by the French authorities could be a source of interest for other EU countries.

It was confirmed that only Denmark and Spain had received funding from their authorities to create their MG.

## **9. Discussion of an Annex to the ETPGAH Terms of Reference referring to Mirror Groups**

Declan mentioned that the Executive Board of the ETPGAH had requested that the MGs be consulted on the changes that it has made on its ToRs referring to the MGs aimed at ensuring that all have the same understanding of their role.

The group reviewed the proposed amendments and agreed additional changes to the text defining a clear link between the ETPGAH and the MGs.

## **10. Any other business**

### **Survey on MGs**

Dieter suggested that through a questionnaire the MGs could share their experience and identify the critical elements that made the MGs develop successfully and those which prevented a positive outcome. Dieter undertook to come up with a proposed questionnaire.

**Action:** Dieter to develop a questionnaire for the MGs to identify their areas of success and failure

## **11. Closure**

There being no further business, the meeting then concluded