



COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Council conclusions on the TSE Road Map 2 A Strategy paper on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies for 2010 - 2015

*3050th AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES Council meeting
Brussels, 29 November 2010*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"Council Conclusions on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council

RECALLING

- Council Resolution of December 2000 on the use of the precautionary principle¹
- Communication from the Commission "TSE Road map" of July 2005²
- Council progress report on the "TSE Road map" of December 2005³ ;

WHEREAS

- i. The EU has adopted a comprehensive series of stringent measures against risks stemming from the family of diseases called the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) which call for specific attention due to their capacity of cross-species transmission and the ability of certain strains to cause fatal disease in humans;
- ii. Centered around Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 laying down rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies⁴, these measures have resulted in a significant reduction of TSE incidence. At the same time, the impact of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) on human health appears to be more limited than initially feared;

¹ Doc. 14328/00.

² 11408/05 - COM(2005) 322 final.

³ 15537/05 + ADD 1.

⁴ Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 laying down the rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. OJ L 147, 31.5.2001, p. 1.

P R E S S

- iii. On 15 July 2005, taking stock of the epidemiological development and increased scientific knowledge, the Commission had submitted to the European Parliament and the Council a reflection paper called "TSE Road map";
- iv. This first "Road map" was thoroughly examined in a progress report to Council;
- v. On 16 July 2010, the Commission submitted to the European Parliament and the Council the "TSE Road map 2". Like the first Road map five years ago, this document aims to outline future possible amendments allowing a review of the measures to align them with the situation where the EU is finally on the last pathway to eradicate BSE within the European cattle population;
- vi. Under the Belgian Presidency, the Council Working Party of Veterinary Experts (Public Health) discussed the Commission Communication and identified priority areas for further work⁵.

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Regarding the general approach

1. WELCOMES strongly the Commission's initiative to present a new "TSE Road map" five years after the previous one as a basis for discussion of future alignment of the existing measures.
2. NOTES that the majority of actions envisaged in the first "TSE Road map" of 2005 have been achieved.
3. CONSIDERS that the implementation of the current TSE legislation has been effective towards preventing, controlling and eradicating these diseases.
4. CONFIRMS that the goal for the coming years is to continue the review of the measures, aiming at their proportionality and cost-effectiveness, while assuring a high level of food safety. This review should be primarily driven by scientific advice and technical issues related to the control and enforcement of the new measures, and the inter-relationship between the various TSE surveillance and control measures should be fully taken into account.
5. CALLS for any amendments to the TSE rules to be taken following a stepwise approach based on an appropriate assessment of the possible risks for human and animal health and taking into account existing scientific evidence and innovation.
6. REITERATES in this context the key objectives of consumer protection and control and eradication of TSEs, which call for vigilance in order to continue to monitor the situation also in case of a potential re-emergence of BSE or emergence of new TSE agents in ruminant populations.
7. RECALLS that the scientific advice provided by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) should continue to play a crucial role to consider future policy options.

⁵ Doc. 13888/10.

8. CONSIDERS it to be of paramount importance to continue research in those areas where information is lacking or gaps exist which do not allow firm decisions to be taken.
9. EMPHASIZES the importance of a strong and credible international framework, in particular within the context of the World Animal Health Organisation (OIE), to ensure that trade can take place under safe and fair conditions. The EU must take the lead in international standard setting bodies to promote EU standards and policies, and align its legislation with international standards as far as possible, while maintaining a high level of sanitary protection.

Regarding specific policy options

10. SUPPORTS the Commission's goal to continue to adapt the BSE monitoring system for bovine animals with a view to its better targeting, and CONSIDERS that progress should be made on this when the necessary supportive scientific opinion is received.
11. AGREES that such adaptations should be risk based and aimed at making the EU surveillance system more focused, efficient and cost-effective for all Member States. At the same time, these adaptations will have to be compatible with OIE standards and fully ensure the EU's continuing capacity to monitor the epidemiological development, including the detection of a possible re-emergence of BSE and emergence of new TSEs.
12. RECOGNISES the fundamental importance of the ban on using processed animal protein (PAP) in feed for farmed animals in preventing the circulation of BSE via the feed chain and thus playing the key role in the reduction of the incidence of this disease in the bovine population.
13. IS AWARE of the important ethical and environmental considerations in relation to the use of PAPs as ingredients for feed for farmed animals.
14. CONSIDERS it a prerequisite of any possible re-introduction of the use of non-ruminant PAPs to feed for other non-ruminant species that effective and validated tests are available to distinguish between PAPs originating from different species and that there has been a careful analysis of the risks of relaxation, regarding animal and public health.
15. TAKES NOTE of other priorities stated by Member States at the Working Party of Veterinary Experts (Public Health), including:
 - Further revision of the list/age limit for Specified Risk Materials (SRMs)
 - Scrapie eradication, in particular to redefine the objectives of the scrapie measures
 - Cohort culling in bovine animals
 - Measures regarding atypical scrapie and atypical BSE.

With regard to these considerations,

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16. EXPRESSES its support for the list of main strategic goals and policy options outlined in the Commission Communication and INVITES the Commission to take also the priorities identified at the Council Working Party into account when submitting future proposals.

17. EMPHASIZES that the justification for any changes must be carefully and effectively communicated to consumers, affected industries and third country trading partners to ensure that confidence in EU measures is maintained.
 18. AGREES that, in setting the EU's future strategy, it is essential not to lose sight of other threats to animal and public health.
 19. CALLS UPON the Commission also to examine in this context all evidence which might help setting future priorities among diseases in particular to their impact in terms of public and animal health."
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