



GRIPAVI FINAL RESTITUTION MEETING –ZIMBABWE

Bronte Hotel, Harare, 17th October 2011

The final restitution of the GRIPAVI project was held at the Bronte Hotel in Harare, Zimbabwe on the 17th of October 2011. The meeting was officially opened by his Excellency, Mr. François Ponge, French Ambassador in Zimbabwe.

Participants

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The meeting was divided in three thematic sections (see programme in Annex 1):

- Diseases at the wildlife/domestic interface: when ecology meets epidemiology, when conservation meets development;
- AIV and NCD in avian populations in Zimbabwe
- Wild bird communities and risk of AIV/NCD.

Summary of the discussions:

During the meeting, the participants brought up interesting remarks, questions and a focused group discussion was conducted at the end of the presentations. A part from detailed discussions concerning the various results of the project, a few important points were brought up:

- Newcastle disease was pointed out as the most important disease in Zimbabwe. Avian influenza can be important for the ostrich sector but otherwise, it is clear and supported by the project studies that AIV are not a major concern in domestic poultry. However, it was noted that: 1) there is always a threat of emerging pathogenic virus as low pathogenic strains circulate in the waterfowl and domestic poultry can be exposed to these viruses; 2) the recent emphasis about AIV helped politicians to be aware about poultry and their diseases. In Zimbabwe, it was indicated that thanks to the awareness about AIV, politicians agreed to agree on the implementation of national NCD vaccination campaign. The argument was that if poultry was vaccinated against NCD, it would be easier to detect AIV outbreaks.
- If AIV is not an important poultry problem in Zimbabwe today, it can at any time become an emerging disease. Therefore, now that the ecology of AIV in wild and domestic bird populations is better understood, it is time to think about the best possible surveillance system given the socio-economical context of Zimbabwe. In this framework, the Park And Wildlife Management Authority (PWMA) has a role to play in the surveillance of wild birds: massive die-out of wild birds should be detected by parks staff and reported to the right person in the best possible time. PWMA staff are specialised to conserve wildlife but as part of their duties they also have to be trained to recognise disease outbreaks which they can report to relevant authorities. Similarly, in the domestic sector, surveillance on poultry cannot use the diptank system surveillance as in cattle and small ruminants. Therefore, a different type of



network should be implemented, maybe by using cell phone network as an efficient way of getting the information from the field as soon as possible.

- It has been suggested that Birdlife Zimbabwe should engage PWMA in order to recognise the conservation status of areas such as the Chivero Lake, an Important Bird Area. Source of pollution through water contamination and intensive fishing are of concern in this ecosystem. Some key stone species such as the African Fish Eagle birds which come to seek refuge there are thriving very well with three fledglings in one nest. But others such as the African darter seem to have disappeared during the course of the project, probably due to an intensive use of fishing lines and nets in which darter get entangled and drown.
- The SPINAP project conducted a series of training workshops for the national team and regional staff on wildlife surveillance and capture, the risk of avian influenza and other diseases (participation of Cirad expert as trainers). In respect of Avian Influenza, they set-up the PCR detection of avian influenza and also performed serology though PCR is stated as more efficient. The development of this capacity at the Central Veterinary Laboratory is beneficial to the surveillance for AIV but also for other diseases.
- Some discussions addressed other diseases such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Zimbabwe and in the region and the interesting proposed framework to export free of disease meat from infected zone (commodity-based trade).
- The main problem identified by the participants at the end of the meeting was the sustainability of AIV surveillance and the relevance of AIV projects in respect to animal health surveillance in general. It was emphasised that the GRIPAVI project was a research project that provided new knowledge about the ecology of AIV and NCD in wild and domestic birds. With this new information available, surveillance should be more efficient at targeting bird populations and places at higher risk of AIV emergence. It was also mentioned that all the money invested in AIV projects was beneficial not only for AIV surveillance and control but also to surveillance and control of other diseases. Staff from veterinary services and parks are more and more sensitised to the importance of the wild/domestic/human interface and more and more staff are trained to think differently and with an open-minded manner. The concept of “One Health” bridging the health of humans, domestic animals, wildlife and ecosystems will surely be at the core of tomorrow’s health surveillance systems. There is still lots of work to be done in order to put in relation people who



have not been trained to work together. The recent re-activation of the Zimbabwe Zoonosis Network represents an interesting perspective in that regard.

Way forward

The way forward is to make the GRIPAVI results and knowledge available to the local people and technical partners. Two local GRIPAVI restitutions will be organised in November in the two villages involved since the beginning of the project. The ornithological database will be given to BirdLife Zimbabwe under a formal agreement of data use. It has been proposed to organise meetings to discuss potential avian disease surveillance at the national level in order to detect as soon as possible potential outbreaks. The bridge species study provides also some potential management options in case of an outbreak that should be taken into consideration. It is also the responsibility of governmental services to best use the staff that has been trained during this project.



Annex 1: PROGRAMME OF THE GRIPAVI FINAL RESTITUTION MEETING- ZIMBABWE SITE

Bronte Hotel*, 17th of October 2011, Harare, Zimbabwe
8h30-16h00

Chairman of the opening ceremony: Dr. Makaya (DVS)

Opening welcome: his Excellency, Mr. François Ponge, Ambassador of France in Zimbabwe

First Session: Diseases at the wildlife/domestic interface: when ecology meets epidemiology, when conservation meets development (Chairman: Prof. P. Mundy, NUST)

- *Constraints to Conservation and Development Success at the Wildlife-Livestock-Human Interface in Southern African Transfrontier Conservation Areas* (Prof. D. Cumming, AHEAD, WCS) 20'

http://www.wcs-ahead.org/workinggrps_limpopo.html

- *RP-PCP: a research platform for studying human/nature interactions at the periphery of protected areas* (Dr. M. de Garine-Wichatitsky, Cirad) 10'

- *Presentation of the GRIPAVI project* (D. Germain-Robin, French Embassy) 10'

- *Understanding the ecological drivers of avian influenza virus infection in wildfowl: a continental scale study across Africa* (Dr. A. Caron, Cirad) 15'

- *Environmental patterns for Avian Influenza risk in Madagascar* (Lake Alaotra) (Dr. L. Guerrini, Cirad) 15'

- Discussion 15'

Tea break (10h-10h30)

Second session: AIV & NCD in avian populations in Zimbabwe (Chairman: M. de Garine-Wichatitsky, Cirad)

- *Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease in wild birds in Zimbabwe* (Dr. A. Caron, Cirad) 15'

- *Investigation of avian influenza and Newcastle disease in domestic poultry species in the Manyame Catchment* (Dr. A. Caron, Cirad) 10'

- *SPINAP programme and Avian influenza in Zimbabwe* (Dr. P. Makaya, DVS) 15'

- Discussion 15'

Lunch break (12h30-14h00)

Third session: Wild bird communities and risk of AIV/NCD (Chairman: Dr. N. Mukarati, UZ)

- *The Chivero/Manyame lake site and bird communities* (N. Chiweshe, Cirad) 15'

- *Ecological drivers of bird community in Zimbabwe* (J. Mundava/P. Mundy, NUST) 15'

- *Identification of bridge species at the wildlife/domestic interface: risk of disease spread* (Dr. A. Caron, Cirad) 15'

- Discussion 15'

- Concluding remarks 5'

Tea break (15h30-16h00)



Annex 2: A FEW PICTURES...



His excellency, Mr. François Ponge, French Ambassador in Zimbabwe, and Dr. Pious V. Makaya, Director of the Central Veterinary Laboratory in Harare during the official opening of the meeting.



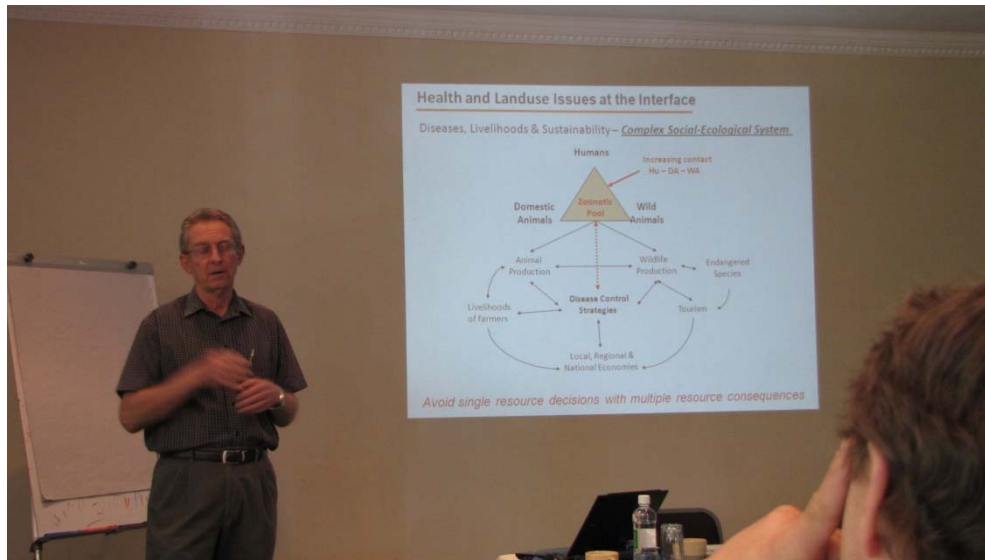
Mr. David Germain-Robin from the French Embassy presenting the GRIPAVI project.



Participants from NUST, the veterinary services and the veterinary faculty of University of Zimbabwe.



Participants from FAO, farmers from the study site and representants from the media.



Prof. David Cumming presenting the AHEAD initiative.



Dr. N. Mukarati during one of the discussion session.