

Session 39

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Prioritisation needs for scientific assessment of infectious diseases in animals in the European Union
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The present regulatory framework for animal health in the European Union (EU) consists of almost 60 directives and regulations, some which were adopted over 45 years ago. Following the New Animal Health Strategy for the European Union, the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission will adopt a Proposal for an Animal Health Law in 2012 with the aim to develop a single, general regulatory framework for animal health. This new regulatory framework will require the prioritisation of diseases on the basis of sound and transparent criteria. In recent years, different organisations have developed and proposed disease prioritisation systems for animal and human diseases considering a range of disease outcomes. In this study, prioritisation systems now being proposed and implemented by national and international agencies were explored. An exhaustive list of animal diseases established through the OIE tool for categorisation of animal diseases was reviewed systematically to identify needs for further scientific assessment. In addition, a prioritisation exercise was conducted using a modified Delphi approach where a condensed list of diseases was scored based on the impact on animal health and welfare, public health, economy, society and environment to highlight priority diseases of animals at an EU level for which further scientific assessment is required. Identification of prioritisation needs is essential for efficient allocation of limited resources in the development of research activities, surveillance and intervention strategies.