

## Workshop: Trade and TADs in the Horn of Africa



### Safe trade with an acceptable level of risk (STALR)



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## My understanding of the purpose of this workshop



Improve risk management to stabilize regional export markets for animal commodities that:

1. Support pastoralism in lowland areas of HoA
2. Focus on markets in the Arabian Peninsula & Middle East
3. Promote functional & realistic approaches

My brief: Introduce the concept of 'Safe trade with acceptable risk levels' as a way of managing TADs & securing access to the target markets

## Risk & trade in livestock commodities



- The issue for importing countries involved in international trade is the risk of importation of dangerous human or animal pathogens
- Demand for zero risk is now recognized by WTO as unreasonable so the issue is:
  - “maximum acceptable risk” associated with importation or
  - in WTO language, the “appropriate level of protection” [ALOP]

## Food safety



- International standards contained in the *Codex Alimentarius* (WHO/FAO joint responsibility)
- *Codex Alimentarius* standards are product-specific (don't deal with live animals)
- In addition, many 'private standards' applicable to food safety including
  - ISO 22000 – food supply management system
  - EurepGAP etc.
  - those applied by supermarkets etc
  - Arabian Peninsula & ME?

## Animal diseases & the Sanitary & Phyto-sanitary (SPS) Agreement



- The OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) is recognised through the SPS Agreement as the ISSB for international measures relating to animal diseases and trade
- OIE “rules” contained in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Code)
- Code standards are disease-specific (i.e. not commodity specific) & risk defined primarily on the basis of the geographic distribution of infections capable of causing TADs

## The major problem for Africa



- Requirement for 'geographic freedom' from TADs as basis for ALOP
  - The idea is that if a country or region is free from a particular disease it is most unlikely to export that disease in traded products
  - Idea ingrained in the eyes of animal health officialdom & the general public, i.e. that the origin of a product primarily defines the risk it poses to the importing country
  - But most TADs prevalent in Africa including HoA cannot be eradicated

There's a hole in the bucket Dear Lisa!

## Geographic freedom – neither rational nor reasonable



- Far from fool-proof!
  - In 2001 UK exported FMD to other countries before it knew it was infected
- Numerous examples of animal infections whose distribution is largely unknown even in developed regions of the world (e.g. BSE, HPAI, blue tongue, West Nile virus, Chikungunya etc)
  - Problem probably related to globalization & environmental change
  - Also, present system is disincentive to reporting!
- The animal health world is climbing an increasingly slippery pole

## Geographic freedom – unreasonable (cont.)



- Universally accepted principle of international trade is that the product itself defines the risk
- Why should products derived from animals not be subject to the universal principle?
- Crucially, many products derived from animals are inherently incapable of transmitting infectious agents & for others measures exist to ensure that any infectious agent (inadvertently) present would not be transmittable
  - (not plea for inclusion of diseased animals in the human food chain!)

## Basic approach of the Code



Two ways in which access to markets for animal commodities can be assured:

- Prove freedom of the country, zone or compartment of origin as being free from important TADs
  - problematic for most regions of Africa!
- Prove that the commodity in question poses no more than 'appropriate risk' for the importer
  - requires complex & complicated 'risk analysis'

## Risk management for animal commodities



- Dependent on identifying the hazards posed by specific commodities and managing those risks
- Risk mitigation can take many forms and, ideally, incorporates a matrix of risk reduction mechanisms
- For products derived from animals, especially processed products, risk management is relatively easy
- In case of live animals – particularly where strict movement control cannot be applied (e.g. pastoralism & wildlife) – risk management more complex

## Implementation?



- For some products its simple, e.g.
  - milk & milk products do not transmit BSE
  - pure beef presents acceptably low risk of transmitting BSE, CBPP, FMD, RVF, rinderpest etc
- Processing of products (e.g. cooking) can decisively reduce the possibility of their containing TAD-causing agents
  - Some product processing is complex, involving several processes that inactivate infectious agents (interaction of effects)
  - Increasingly international trade is in processed products (⇒ ready-made meals)

## The example of de-boned beef



- Recently published article (Transboundary & Emerging Diseases) advances the argument that this commodity (with removal of LNN) presents low risk of transmitting FMD, BSE, RVF, rinderpest, CBPP, LSD, BT & CCHF
  - 84% of int. traded beef: value >\$ 20 billion/yr
- Advances a model export system
  - too complicated (not functional enough for us!)
  - but illustrates potential approach
  - can easily be modified (this workshop?)
- Institute of Animal Health (UK) producing a report on the FMD aspect for OIE (funded by DFID)

## The product approach has advantages for developing countries



Processing of livestock commodities offers possibility of ensuring biologically safe products for export based on beneficiation & associated employment creation near the site of production

## Systems for risk management?



HACCP (hazard analysis, critical control points) is the corner-stone of food safety but provides a mechanism that could be applied to managing TADs generally & animal products specifically

However, there are two critical issues that need to be attended to:

1. Product standards – responsibility of OIE but pace is too slow!
2. Regular auditing & credible certification – DCs especially need to address this issue seriously

## Is STALR an appropriate adage for what we are talking about?



- In my opinion 'yes' but requires editorial modification!
  - 'Safe trade with an acceptable level of risk' is tautology (at best a 'gilded lilly') because 'safe trade' is impossible without 'acceptable risk levels'
- More apt would be: 'safe trade through application of acceptable risk management'
  - Clumsy (not catchy) but more accurate
  - Also could consider 'appropriate' instead of 'acceptable' (WTO terminology)

## What needs to change to enable better market access for HoA?



- Acceptance by importers (and also ISSBs) that the risks posed by commodities can be managed in various ways & that 'geographic freedom' for TADs-causing infections is not the only way
  - even live animals can be managed so that specific infections pose no more than acceptable or appropriate risk (ALOP), e.g. freedom from FMD achieved through vaccination (for discussion)
- Trade standards specific for commonly traded products (including processed products) derived from animals need to be provided by OIE
  - African/developing countries need to push these issues; no-one else will!