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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2024/3238

of 19 December 2024

concerning certain emergency measures relating to infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in Bulgaria and repealing Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109

(notified under document C(2024) 9305)

(Only the Bulgarian text is authentic)

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law') ([1]), and in particular Article 259(1) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Infection with peste des petits ruminants virus is an infectious disease affecting caprine and ovine animals and can have a severe impact on the concerned animal population and the profitability of farming causing disturbance to movements of consignments of those animals and products thereof within the Union and exports to third countries.

(2) In the event of an outbreak of infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in caprine or ovine animals, there is a serious risk of the spread of that disease to other establishments of caprine or ovine animals.

(3) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 ([2]) supplements the rules for the control of the listed diseases referred to in Article 9(1), points (a), (b) and (c), of Regulation (EU) 2016/429, and defined as category A, B and C diseases in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 ([3]). In particular, Articles 21 and 22 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 provide for the establishment of a restricted zone in the event of an outbreak of a category A disease, including infection with peste des petits ruminants virus, and for certain measures to be applied therein. In addition, Article 21(1) of that Delegated Regulation provides that the restricted zone is to comprise a protection zone, a surveillance zone, and, if necessary, further restricted zones around or adjacent to the protection and surveillance zones.

(4) Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109 ([4]) was adopted on the basis of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and lays down certain interim emergency measures relating to infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in Bulgaria in response to the outbreak confirmed 25 November 2024 in Velingrad municipality, in the region of Pazardzhik. More particularly, Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109 provides that the protection, surveillance and further restricted zones to be established by that Member State, in accordance with Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687, following the outbreak of that disease are to comprise at least the areas listed in the Annex to that Implementing Decision

([1]) OJ L 84, 31.3.2016, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/oj.

([2]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 of 17 December 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and the Council, as regards rules for the prevention and control of certain listed diseases (OJ L 174, 3.6.2020, p. 64, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2020/687/oj).

([3]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 of 3 December 2018 on the application of certain disease prevention and control rules to categories of listed diseases and establishing a list of species and groups of species posing a considerable risk for the spread of those listed diseases (OJ L 308, 4.12.2018, p. 21, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2018/1882/oj).

([4]) Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109 of 6 December 2024 concerning certain interim emergency measures relating to infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in Bulgaria (OJ L, 2024/3109, 9.12.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2024/3109/oj).

(5) Since the date of adoption of Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109 official confirmation from Bulgaria that the control measures laid down in Regulation (EU) 2020/687 have been implemented is still pending.

(6) Therefore, to effectively mitigate the risk of disease spread both within Bulgaria and to other Member States, it is crucial to adjust the duration of the control measures and the size of the restricted zones listed as protection, surveillance and further restricted zones for Bulgaria, in the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109. These adjustments address the significant risk posed by the continued circulation and potential expansion of the disease beyond the currently affected areas. Failure to make these adjustments risks undermining disease control efforts and the health of animals across the Union. Accordingly, it is necessary to amend the list of restricted zones and the duration of the measures to be applied therein and to set them out in the Annex to this Decision. In addition, Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109 should be repealed and replaced by this Decision.

(7) The size and the duration of the protection, surveillance and further restricted zones, as well as the measures to be applied within those zones is based on the criteria set out in Article 64(1) of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and the rules laid down in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687. In addition, the epidemiological situation regarding infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in the affected areas and the overall epidemiological situation of infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in the Member State concerned, as well as the level of risk for further spread of that disease, is taken into account. Furthermore, the duration of the measures should align with the international standards set forth in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

(8) However, despite confirmation of the peste des petits ruminants outbreak more than two weeks ago, Bulgaria has not provided the necessary information required under Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2002 ([5]) to confirm the implementation of the control measures laid down in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687. In the absence of this confirmation, it must be concluded that these measures have not been effectively implemented, creating a high risk of further disease spread.

(9) Due to the severity and urgency of the epidemiological situation it is necessary to adopt additional emergency measures in order to mitigate the risk of further spread of the disease within the territory of Bulgaria and to other Member States, as well as to avoid unjustified trade barriers. It is essential to ensure that animal movements from protection, surveillance and further restricted zones to destinations outside the external perimeter of the further restricted zone are prohibited. Furthermore, any potential derogations from this prohibition, as laid down in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687, must be excluded for a designated period. Moreover, the movement of sheep and goats into protection, surveillance, and restricted zones from areas not listed in the Annex, for any reason other than direct slaughter, must be prohibited.

(10) Taking into account the current epidemiological situation in the Union as regards peste des petits ruminants, this Decision should apply until 31 March 2025.

(11) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed,

([5]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2002 of 7 December 2020 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to Union notification and Union reporting of listed diseases, to formats and procedures for submission and reporting of Union surveillance programmes and of eradication programmes and for application for recognition of disease-free status, and to the computerised information system (OJ L 412, 8.12.2020, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2020/2002/oj).

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Bulgaria shall ensure that:

(a) a restricted zone, which comprises protection and surveillance zones as well as a further restricted zone, is established immediately by the competent authority of that Member State in accordance with Article 21 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687, and under the conditions laid down in that Article;

(b) the protection, surveillance and further restricted zones referred to in point (a) comprise at least the areas listed in the Annex to this Decision;

(c) the measures required to be applied in the protection, surveillance and further restricted zones, are applied at least until the dates listed in the Annex to this Decision.

Article 2

Bulgaria shall ensure that:

(a) movements of sheep and goats from the protection, surveillance and further restricted zones to a destination located outside the external perimeter of the further restricted zone as set out in Point B of the Annex are prohibited until the dates listed in the Annex;

(b) movements of sheep and goats from those parts of the territory of Bulgaria that are not listed in the Annex, to a destination located into the restricted zone are only be permitted, if they are authorised by the competent authority and the animals are moved directly to a slaughterhouse, for the purpose of immediate slaughter;

(c) the means of transport and movement of sheep and goats referred to points (a) and (b) comply with the requirements laid down in Article 24 and 28(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687.

Article 3

Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/3109 is repealed.

Article 4

This Decision shall apply until 31 March 2025.

Article 5

This Decision is addressed to the Republic of Bulgaria.

Done at Brussels, 19 December 2024.

For the Commission
Olivér VÁRHELYI
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

A. **Protection and surveillance zones established around the confirmed outbreak**

Regional unit and ADIS reference number of the outbreak	Areas established as protection and surveillance zones, part of the restricted zone in Bulgaria referred to in Article 1	Date until applicable
Pazardzhik region BG-PPR-2024-00001	Protection zone: Those parts of Pazardzhik region, contained within a circle of a radius of 5 kilometres, centred on UTM 30, ETRS89 coordinates Lat. 42.0156, Long. 23.9989 (2024/1)	27.1.2025
	Surveillance zone: Those parts of Pazardzhik region, contained within a circle of a radius of 20 kilometres, centred on UTM 30, ETRS89 coordinates Lat. 42.0156, Long. 23.9989 (2024/1) excluding the areas contained in the protection zone	8.2.2025
	Surveillance zone: Those parts of Pazardzhik region, contained within a circle of a radius of 20 kilometres, centred on UTM 30, ETRS89 coordinates Lat. 42.0156, Long. 23.9989 (2024/1)	28.1.2025-8.2.2025

B. **Further restricted zones**

Regional unit	Areas included in the further restricted zone established in Bulgaria as referred to in Article 1	Date until applicable
Region of Pazardzhik	— Entire territory of Pazardzhik region, excluding the areas included in any protection or surveillance zone.	13.3.2025
	— Entire territory of Pazardzhik region	9.2.2025-13.3.2025
Region of Blagoevgrad	— Municipalities Razlog, Satovcha, Garmen, Bansko, Belitsa, Yakoruda	13.3.2025
Region of Smolyan	— Dospat Municipality	13.3.2025
Region of Sofia oblast	— Municipalities Kostenets and Dolna Banya	13.3.2025