

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Fourth Meeting of the Southern Cone Project for Hydatidosis Surveillance and Control in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay

(San Carlos de Bariloche, Province of Río Negro, Argentina, 28–29 June 2007)

With Dr. Eduardo Guarnera and Dr. María Isabel Farace of Argentina as co-Chairs and Dr. Julio Sayes and Dr. Pilar Irabedra of Uruguay as Technical Secretariat, and with the presence of national delegations from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay plus the involvement of one guest from Peru, the Project Commission, and with its Technical Secretariat made up of PAHO/WHO and FAO in recognition of the importance of cystic echinococcosis (hydatidosis) to livestock and to public health, prepared and approved the following conclusions and recommendations, emanated from this Fourth Meeting:

1. To carry out a technical consultation directed at standardizing methodologies and indicators for epidemiological surveillance and control that can serve as basis for harmonizing information both among the national programs and at the internal level in each country.
2. To promote over the next two years, i.e. 2007–2008, the implementation of international evaluations (once the standardized methodologies and indicators for epidemiological surveillance and control are edited and published), through visits by technical commissions made up of experts selected by the countries and the Technical Secretariat who can make field visits and analyze information prepared for such purposes, with the Technical Secretariat (PAHO and FAO) remaining in charge of implementing the entities proposed at this Meeting.
3. The choice was made to have the first two international evaluations take place in:
 - a. Uruguay
 - b. Argentina (Province of Río Negro)
4. In order to relieve the Control Programs of issues involving diagnostic methodology and the countries of diagnostic laboratory capacity, to designate one national laboratory per country dealing with diagnostic matters related to echinococcosis and one for reference, which will be uniform throughout this Subregion and will operate as a network and focal point for information exchange on the subject within the Southern Cone Project.

5. The Project and the Member Countries point out the important achievement represented by the development of the *Argentina-Chile Project for Technical Collaboration between Countries for the Elimination of Cystic Echinococcosis on the Island of Tierra del Fuego*.
6. To design, with support from laboratory management and health institutes in Argentina, a systematic study on *E. granulosus* strains in the Southern Cone of the Americas, through a project to be prepared by ANLIS in cooperation with all the countries participating in the Project, counting on PAHO and FAO to mobilize resources.
7. Technical personnel from the Project will meet within a short time at the Carlos Malbrán Institute in Argentina to develop standardized norms on the use of coproantigenics for diagnosing canine echinococcosis, given its importance for the countries and the Project.
8. To write and publish a practical sampling guide aimed at local operational levels that will help them correctly formulate probabilistic samples to be used in situational diagnoses, evaluations, and decision-making on intermediary or definitive hosts or human populations.
9. To express congratulations and thanks from the Project and Member Countries to Argentina and its Ministry of Health for the arrangements and efforts made to implement a National Program for Cystic Echinococcosis Prevention and Control, recognizing the support and technical cooperation provided by the Technical Secretariat for this purpose, within the scope of its functions.
10. To stimulate the countries that do not have them to implement National Programs for Cystic Echinococcosis Prevention and Control or structures of national scope corresponding to their existing epidemiological situation, making use of experience obtained from the regional programs active today.
11. It is recommended that the Project's Member Countries use these recommendations and conclusions at the level of the corresponding national entities and agencies to stimulate and strengthen national prevention, control, and treatment activities for cystic echinococcosis, be they existing or future.
12. It is recommended that the countries conduct studies on the burden of disease and economic impact of hydatidosis, as well as publishing and disseminating them as instruments for providing information to decision-makers and agencies at the decision-making level.
13. To recommend sonography for individual and epidemiological diagnosis.
14. To ask PAHO to edit and publish the document *Burden of Hydatidosis and Cost of the Disease in the Argentine Republic* by the "Dr. Carlos Malbrán" Institute at ANLIS, given the strategic and informative importance of the same.
15. To extend recognition to Brazil for its efforts in having implemented a network for echinococcosis diagnosis, thus complying with the commitments made by that country at the Third Meeting of this Project (in Porto Alegre, 2006).

16. To recognize the State of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) for its work in the area of surveillance and control, which has advanced decentralization efforts, the development of field operations, and international cooperation in border areas.
17. To reaffirm as a Project the need for prevention and control activities to be intersectoral and interdisciplinary, as well as integrated into the PHC strategy, with emphasis on priority areas and populations identified as being at risk on the basis of epidemiological, social, and economic indicators.
18. To congratulate the National Zoonosis Commission of Uruguay for its strategic lines of action and its reformulation of a comprehensive approach to zoonoses, as an example of effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability as a pioneering control program of national scope.
19. To salute the incorporation of Peru into the Fourth Meeting of the Southern Cone Project for Hydatidosis Surveillance and Control in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay and to vote on its incorporation into the Project as a full member.
20. Both the Project and its Member Countries support what was stated by Peru and offer their experiences and capacities, so that they, with the aid of the Technical Secretariat, can cooperate technically with the Ministry of Health.
21. To take note of the methodology of the Parasitology Department of the Carlos Malbrán Institute of Argentina on the detection of antigens from *E. granulosus* eggs and to await further results that will make it possible to assess and evaluate its usefulness and efficacy in terms of control.
22. To recommend the development of a Technical Cooperation Project (TCC) between Peru and Chile for the control of cystic echinococcosis and other zoonoses in the Antiplano area.
23. The Project agrees to hold its Fifth Meeting in Puerto Montt, Chile.

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