



**First OIE regional workshop on the role of Veterinary
Services on
animal welfare in natural disasters for Balkan countries
26-28 November 2018, Teramo, Italy**

**Country Report: GREECE
Emergency preparedness of the Veterinary Services
for natural disasters**

Competent authorities

- Department of Natural Disasters Planning Prevention And Response of the GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR CIVIL PROTECTION (G.S.C.P.-MINISTRY OF INTERIOR): The competent authority responsible for disaster prevention and management at national level.
- The Civil Protection Operations Centre: coordinates and manages the provision of resources to address emergencies, in order to strengthen the bodies operating in the field of short-term consequence management.
- The G.S.C.P. is connected to the European Response Coordination Centre-E.R.C.C. (DG ECHO-European Commission, operating in the framework of the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism-U.C.P.M.) through the electronic application CECIS.

Competent authorities

- The C.P.O.C.: -operates throughout the year on a 24-hour basis,
-is staffed by officers and non-commissioned officers of the Armed Forces, the Hellenic Police, the Hellenic Coast Guard and the Hellenic Fire Service and in case of an emergency is supported by specialized scientific staff, if necessary (veterinarians, doctors etc).
- In cases of natural disasters: **Official Veterinary Services** – assisting role concerning animal health and welfare.
- CRISIS MANAGEMENT DIVISION of MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD: central level of administration: responsible for the protection of agricultural production and biosafety of human population from zoonoses and epidemic diseases .
- CIVIL EMERGENCY PLANNING DIVISION of MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD : cooperation with the C.P.O.C.
- Greek Organisation for Agriculture Compensation(ELGA): financial compensation of livestock losses during national disasters .

Cooperation with private actors, non-governmental organisations and other services

In cases of emergency (i.e. natural disasters), under the supervision of G.S.C.P Veterinary Services may cooperate with:

- Greek Action of Volunteer Veterinarians (EDKE)
- Private Veterinarians who act voluntary
- Other services (Armed Forces, Hellenic Police, Hellenic Fire Service, Military Veterinarians).

Cooperation with private actors and non-governmental organisations

In cases of “peace-time”, Veterinary Services may cooperate with:

- Farmers’ organisations
- Hunters’ organisations
- Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) like Greek Action of Volunteer Veterinarians (EDKE) and WWF Greece.
- Private Vets

Experience of natural disasters

- Main types of natural disaster events in GREECE: earthquakes, floods and forest or city fires.
- Notable examples during the last 20 years are :
 - 1)the 1999 earthquake in Athens-143 human casualties,
 - 2)the 2007 wildfires in multiple regions of Peloponnise-63 human casualties,
 - 3)the 2017 flood in Mandra Attikis-15 human casualties and
 - 4)the 2018 firestorm in Mati resort area near Athens-99 human casualties.
- Tasks of the Local Veterinary Services during natural disasters: providing instructions to farmers about the ways they should protect their animals and move them to safe areas .
- Role of private sector: Voluntary actions concerning animal health and welfare.(i.e. medical care, hospitalization)
- Sometimes people denied to leave their properties and in these cases the help of Hellenic Police was used.

Training and simulation exercises

- There are compulsory training programmes at regional level: concerning simulation exercises that prepare Veterinary Services for their roles when dealing with natural disasters.
- The responsible organization to plan and manage training in this field is G.S.C.P.
- Veterinary Services: take part in simulation exercises (concerning natural disasters) organized together with the Civil Defense authorities.

Exercises, training and lessons learned

- At this point, no "After-Action Review" of the decisions and actions taken during the natural disaster has been carried out by the Veterinary Services, because these actions are very specific and under the guidance and supervising of GSCP.
- Information provided by this workshop will be used accordingly and instructions concerning animal health and welfare in natural disasters will be disseminated to the veterinary services and other stakeholders of the whole country.



Thank you for your attention!