



Ref: VITT 1200/SPGP - Greece

Date: 12 January 2007

## Sheep Pox and Goat Pox (SPGP) in Greece

Defra's International Animal Health Division (IAHD) monitors outbreaks of high impact diseases around the world. Sheep pox and goat pox is among those diseases of major concern that would have a significant impact if introduced into the UK.

### Introduction

The Greek veterinary authorities have informed the European Commission (EC) that SPGP has been detected in sheep on Lesbos island in the Lesbos prefecture (see map) in the Madamados region of Greece (European Commission, 2007). Control measures in accordance with EC directives are being applied.

### Situation Assessment

SPGP is a viral disease that only affects sheep and goats. It is transmitted by direct contact between animals and also, indirectly, through contaminated vehicles, implements and products (fodder, bedding or wool). It can also be transmitted mechanically by biting insects (OIE, 2002).



While SPGP has not been reported in Greece since November 2000, SPGP is widespread and endemic in neighbouring Turkey. Animal movements into and across Turkey from the east are suspected of introducing and spreading animal diseases such as foot and mouth disease, peste des petits ruminants, bluetongue, Rift Valley fever and SPGP (among other diseases) into Turkey through the 'Eurasian ruminant street', a narrow corridor with dense

populations of ruminants that extends from south Asia, south of the Caspian Sea and to the Mediterranean region (Slingenbergh and others, 2004).

Greece has instituted the necessary measures to comply with EC directives on animal health which regulate trade between member states. TRACES electronic database has no record of any imports of live sheep from Greece to the UK since 1/1/2006.

### Conclusion

Based on the disease report and situation assessment, the likelihood of the introduction of SPGP by legal trade from Greece to the UK before and after these outbreaks is considered to be negligible. Currently, IAHD does not intend to carry out and publish a full risk assessment on this outbreak but will continue to monitor the situation.

### References

- European Commission (2007). Sheep Pox in Greece – outbreak confirmed. Urgent Fax (10/01/2007 19:00) D1 BVG (07) D/. Received by fax on 10 January, 2007.
- OIE. (2002). Technical Disease Card. Sheep pox and goat pox. [http://www.oie.int/eng/maladies/fiches/a\\_A100.htm](http://www.oie.int/eng/maladies/fiches/a_A100.htm) (accessed 11/01/2007).
- Slingenbergh, J., Gilbert, M., de Balogh, K., & Wint, W. (2004). Ecological sources of zoonotic diseases. Scientific and Technical Review, World Organisation for Animal Health, 2004, 23 (2): 467-484.