



20th Meeting of the Regional Steering Committee of the GF-TADs for the Americas
17 April 2026 – Virtual format
12:00 – 14:00 (Panama time)

Background

In recent years, countries in the Americas Region have faced particularly complex animal health challenges, marked by the emergence and evolution of several high priority transboundary diseases, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), African swine fever (ASF), Classical swine fever (CSF), and New World Screwworm (NWS). In response to these threats, with the support of WOA, FAO, and other regional organizations such as IICA, OIRSA, CAN, and PAHO, multiple prevention, preparedness, and control strategies have been developed and implemented. These efforts are grounded in current international standards as well as the technical recommendations issued during the various GFTADs meetings. Despite these initiatives, the regional and global epidemiological dynamics keep these diseases as latent risks, capable of entering previously free territories or expanding into new areas. This requires constant vigilance and increasingly robust and coordinated response capacities. The Regional GFTADs, led by WOA and FAO and involving numerous regional organizations, has operated systematically for more than 20 years as the main mechanism for information exchange and international coordination for the prevention and control of transboundary diseases in the region.

Since 2020, the GF-TADs for the Americas has strengthened its technical structure through the creation of several Standing Groups of Experts (SGE), designed to support regional coordination against priority transboundary diseases. Over the past year, various activities were carried out to support Member Countries in reinforcing surveillance, biosecurity, vaccination, and alignment with WOA standards, while the SGEs held technical meetings to issue recommendations for countries. For this year, the program aims to consolidate these advances, review the outcomes of the SGEs, and strengthen their functions. It also proposes analyzing priorities for potential SGEs on endemic diseases, with emphasis on management measures such as biosecurity, vaccination, and safe trade.

As the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) serves as the governance body of the mechanism, there is a growing need to strengthen its operating instruments to ensure more results oriented work. The objective is for the Committee to focus its meetings on setting strategic guidance for the SGEs and fostering proactive coordination among participating organizations, avoiding recurring discussions. This review will help refine functions, improve monitoring mechanisms, and optimize decision-making, ultimately strengthening the Committee's role in the strategic direction of GFTADs in the region.



Objectives

The objectives of the meeting are:

- Strengthen regional planning for 2026 by reviewing achievements, challenges, and lessons learned in the implementation of health actions related to priority transboundary diseases in 2025.
- Analyze progress and gaps in the surveillance, prevention, and control strategies implemented by countries during 2025.
- Prioritize regional lines of action for 2026, considering capacities, emerging risks, and cooperation opportunities.
- Agree on the next steps, follow-up mechanisms, and possible avenues for technical support.

Approach and Expected Results

The meeting is conceived as a technical strategic space to review the progress achieved in 2025 in the prevention, preparedness, and control of HPAI, ASF, CSF, and NWS in the Americas Region, identify lessons learned, and reach consensus on operational priorities for 2026. The approach combines retrospective analysis, country to country exchange, and the definition of regional lines of action aligned with international standards and GFTADs recommendations.

Expected Results

- A shared assessment of progress and challenges in the management of HPAI, ASF, CSF, and NWS during 2025.
- Identification of specific country needs for 2026 (training, tools, missions, regulatory harmonization, etc.).
- A preliminary proposal of regional priorities for 2026, including areas for capacity strengthening, coordination, and technical assistance.
- An agreement on the next steps and the mechanism to consolidate a regional work plan.

Agenda

Time	Subject	Coordinator / Speaker
12:00 – 12:10	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Dr. Andrés González - Livestock Development Officer, FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC) Dr. Francisco D’Alessio - WOAHA Regional Representative for the Americas Dr. Conrad Estrada - Chair of the RSC-GF-TADs
12:10 – 12:25	Summary of GF-TADs Activities During 2025	Dr. Conrad Estrada – GF-TADs RSC of the Americas Chair
12:25 – 12:45	Report on the Analysis of Actions Related to the Priority Transboundary Diseases of the GF-TADs for the Americas	GF-TADs Regional Secretariat
12:45 – 13:00	Report on Updates of the Global ASF Initiative 2026–2030	GF-TADs Regional Secretariat
13:00 – 13:20	Proposal for the initiation of the Review and Update of the Terms of Reference of the RSC, SGE-TSD and SGE-HPAI (methodology/designation of responsible)	GF-TADs Regional Secretariat
13:20 – 13:35	Review and Approval of the 2026 Activity Calendar	Dr. Conrad Estrada – GF-TADs RSC of the Americas Chair/ GF-TADs Regional Secretariat
13:35 – 13:50	Discussion and Recommendations	All
13:50 – 14:00	Closing	Dr. Andrés González - Livestock Development Officer, FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC) Dr. Francisco D’Alessio - WOAHA Regional Representative for the Americas Dr. Conrad Estrada - Chair of the RSC-GF-TADs