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Assuring science-based measures against HPAI – The risk management perspective

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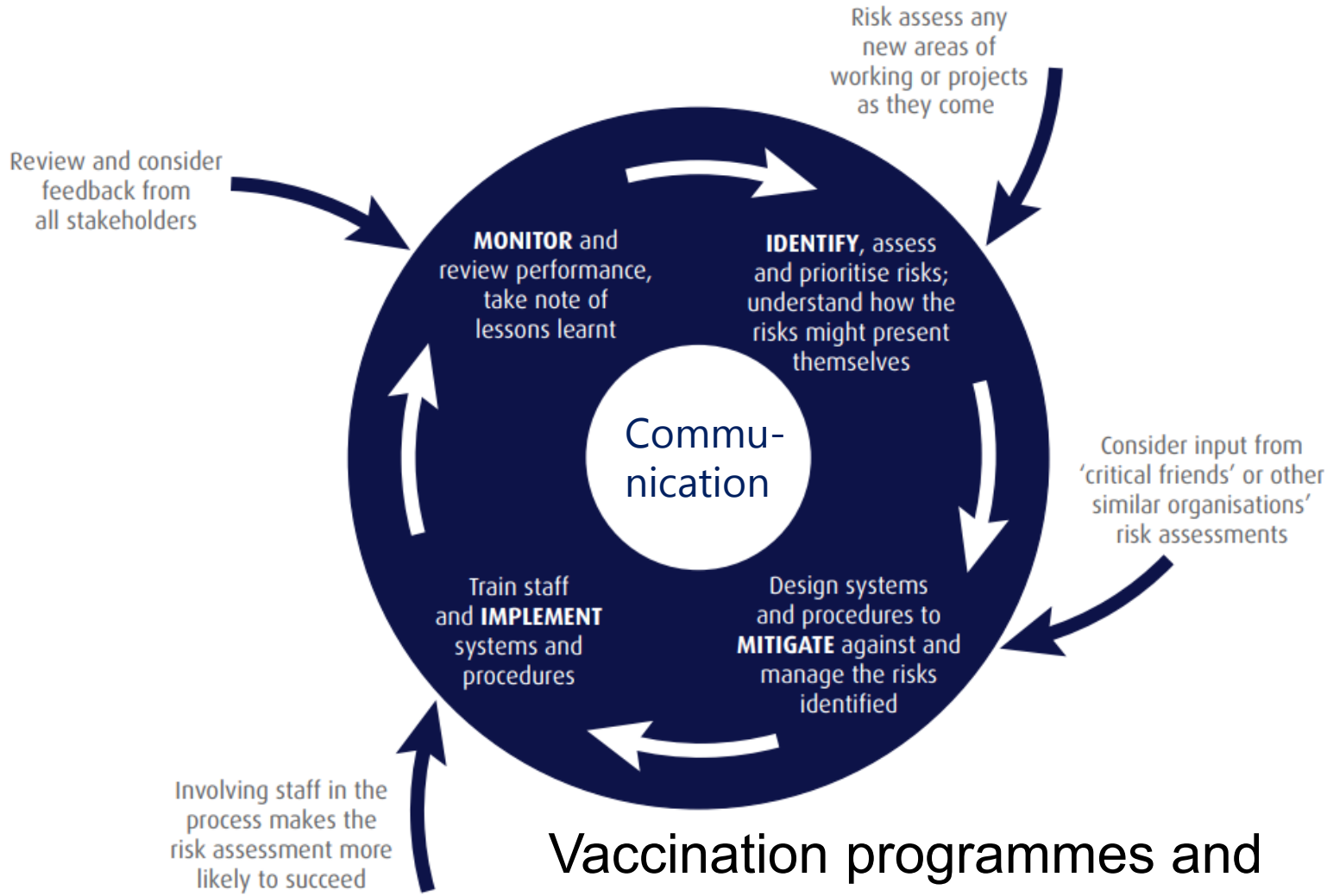
The risk management cycle



Vaccination programmes and suveillance systems

Tool_1.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Tasks of the risk manager

The risk manager

- identifies and asks risk questions
- mandates risk assessments, formulates the risk question
- selects appropriate measures and procedures to mitigate the risk within existing legal framework
- takes into account “important factors other than science”
- assures implementation of the most appropriate response
- leads communication and exchange with relevant stakeholders and the public (via the media)

The VUCA challenge of risk management

- **Volatility**: Rapidly changing factors outside the manager's control
  - Robust forecasting
- **Uncertainty**: The future development is unpredictable
  - Communicate openly, stay flexible
  - Use scenarios
- **Complexity:** Multiple factors interact in non-linear ways
  - Identify key drivers, stakeholders
  - Build capacity for complex analysis
- **Ambiguity**: There are several ways for interpretating the now
  - Improve and increase communication

Free trade – State of play

- For member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), a set of rules exist.
- The Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS, 1995) Agreement defines the conditions under which trade may be restricted.
  - Only to protect human, animal or plant health.
  - Only based on science
    - Should follow WOAH Standards, OR
    - Based on scientific principles, i.e. risk assessment
  - No arbitrary or unjustified restrictions
- In an emergency situation: Restrictions can be temporarily implemented
- In case of disagreement: WTO dispute settlement (WTO | Dispute settlement gateway)

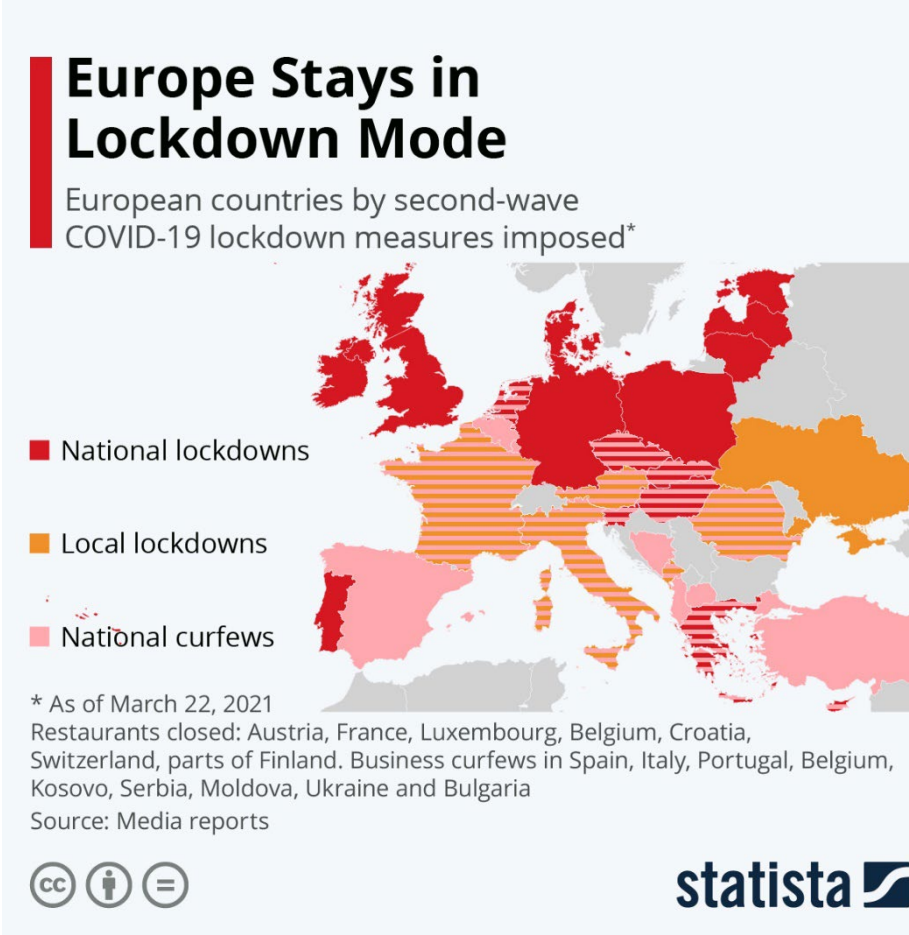
«Other factors»

- Risk managers may have to consider
  - Economic impact of measures / not taking measures
  - Legal aspects
  - Cultural and political dimensions: Acceptance of measures
  - Ecological factors: Differences in impact
- Extent of «collatoral dammage»

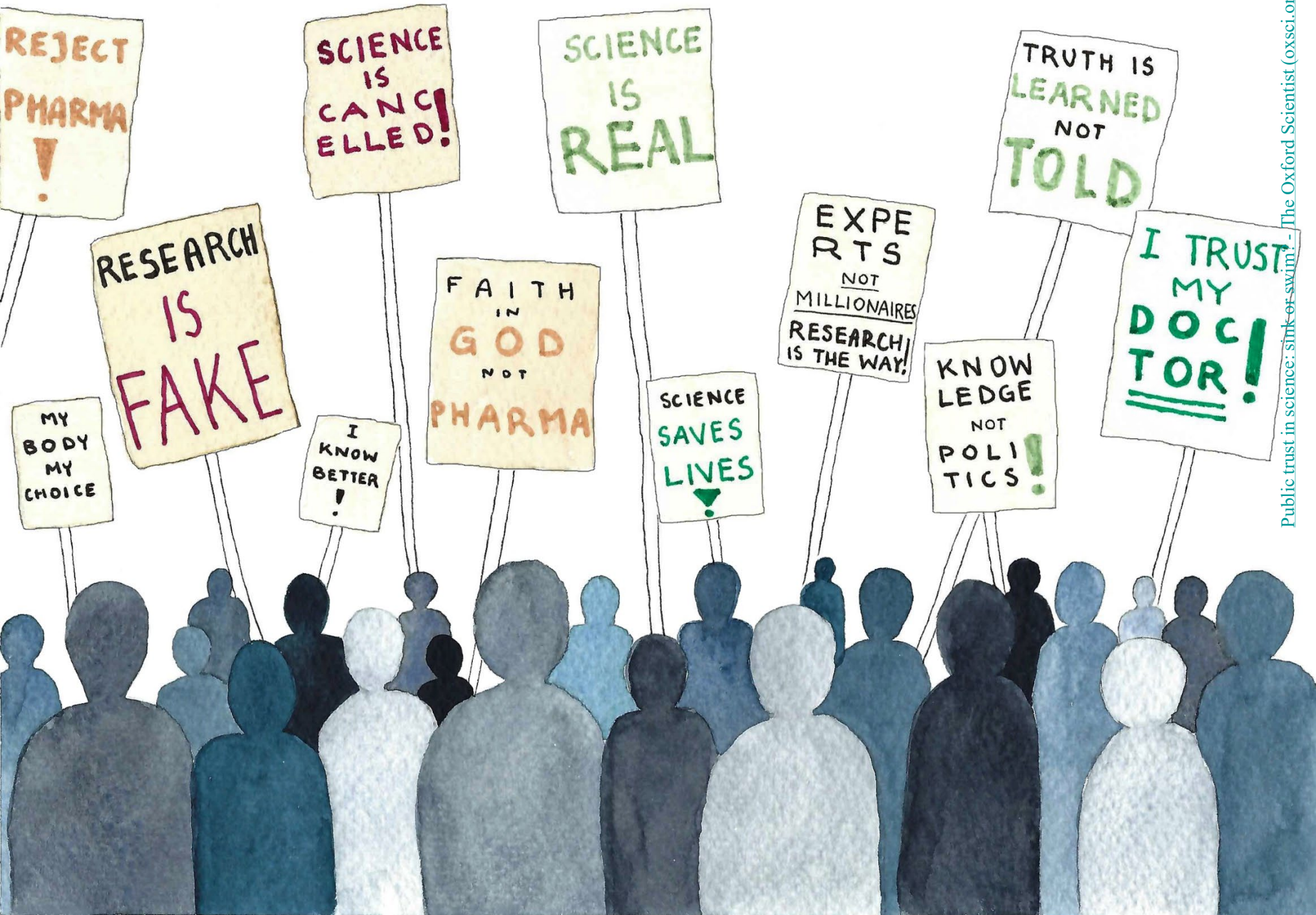
The reality of risk management

- SARS-COV-2: Differences in risk management, but
  - Same hazard
  - Same region
  - Similar economies

- Typologies of effective management (Greener, 2021)
  - Technical efficiency (e.g. testing extent and rapid implementation)
  - Social welfare system
  - Not being «liberal»



Status COVID-19 measures March 2021



What is «good» risk management?

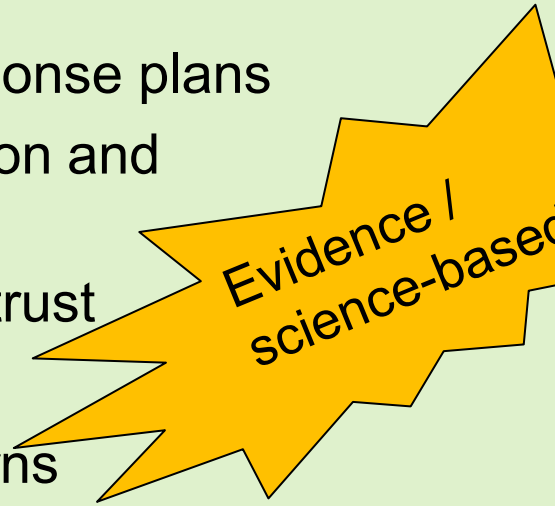
- Effective reduction / elimination of risk
  - Evidence-based interventions
  - Reduced case numbers
- Rapid impact on risk level
  - Temporal development of incident
- Consequences of measures are considered
  - Risk – benefit
- Interventions are easy to explain and understand
  - Communication
- Sustainability of interventions
  - Maintenance of measures over some time
- Compliance by farmers / sectors
- Acceptance by consumers

Acceptance and compliance

- Acceptance of and compliance with interventions tend to be higher for
  - Visible risks (e.g. mortality)
  - Measures not considered partial or unjustified
  - Measures respecting vulnerable sub-populations
  - Decisions reached via a transparent decision process, based on alternative options

Pathways to effective HPAI control

- **Build on what you already have**
  - International standards (e.g. WOAH standards, EFSA opinions)
  - National surveillance and emergency response plans
  - Established relationships for communication and collaboration
  - Aspire to include «honest brokers», build trust
- **Adapt to realities as needed**
  - Know the industry's structures and concerns
  - Build on capacity and competencies of the affected sector
  - Bundle capacity and competencies of the veterinary service across regions / administrative levels
    - Plan for up-scaling during an event
  - Stay flexible



Role of science

Continuing / Peace

- Basic research via academic funding channels
- Contracted, problem-focused research
- Scientific advise (panels)
- Assure science-competency within government agencies

→ Science-based control strategies

Emergency / Crisis

- External, scientific consultations
- Pre-established and tested mechanism
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities

Risk management view on HPAI vaccination strategies

- Strategy suitable to achieve internationally agreed performance criteria (constant)
  - Efficacy and safety of the vaccine
  - Reliable diagnostics
  - DIVA requirements
  - Integration with other measures (biosecurity)
- Strategy adapted to local needs (variable)
  - Based on risk and consequences
  - Cost
  - Practicability (cold chain, boostering, route of application)
  - Acceptance by farmers and consumers
  - Acceptance by major trade partners

Concept of equivalence

- Many roads lead to Rome…

- Once the appropriate level of protection is agreed (i.e. set as a standard), it should not matter how it is achieved
  - Use scientific methods (i.e. risk assessment)
  - Protection of the health of people, animals, plants
  - Higher level of protection must not be discriminatory
  - Special provisions for disease free areas

WTO | legal texts - Marrakesh Agreement

Recommendations

- Assure science-based control strategies
  - Use international standards
  - Interact with scientists, establish mechanisms, relationships
- Separation between risk management and risk assessment
- Focus on outcome of risk management measures (equivalence)
- Engage in international coordination mechanisms
  - Bilaterally across borders
  - Multilaterally WOAH, WHO, Quadripartite

Thanks

“Democracy cannot dominate every domain — that would destroy expertise — and expertise cannot dominate every domain — that would destroy democracy” (Collins et al 2020)