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Subject:	ANNEX to COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) .../... of XXX designating the EU reference laboratory for diseases caused by capripox viruses (lumpy skin disease and sheep and goat pox), laying down additional responsibilities and tasks for this laboratory and amending Annex VII to Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council
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Delegations will find attached document D047122/02 ANNEX 1.

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ANNEX 1

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to the

COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) .../...

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ANNEX

RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS OF THE EU REFERENCE LABORATORY FOR DISEASES CAUSED BY CAPRIPOX VIRUSES (LUMPY SKIN DISEASE AND SHEEP AND GOAT POX)

In addition to the general functions and duties of EU reference laboratories in the animal health sector laid down in Article 32(2) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 the EU reference laboratory for diseases caused by capripox viruses (lumpy skin disease and sheep and goat pox) shall have the following responsibilities and tasks:

1. *To ensure liaison between the national laboratories of the Member States and to provide optimal methods for the diagnosis of diseases caused by capripox viruses (lumpy skin disease and sheep and goat pox) in livestock, specifically by:*
 - (a) performing genomic characterization, phylogenetic analysis (relationship with other strains of the same virus) and storing strains of capripox viruses to facilitate diagnostic services in the Union and, where relevant and necessary, for example, for epidemiological follow-ups or verification of diagnosis;
 - (b) building up and maintaining an up-to-date collection of strains and isolates of capripox viruses and specific sera and other reagents necessary for the diagnosis of the diseases when or if available;
 - (c) harmonising the diagnosis and ensuring proficiency of testing within the Union by organising and operating periodic inter-laboratory comparative trials and external quality assurance exercises on the diagnosis of those diseases at Union level and by the periodic transmission of the results of such trials to the Commission, the Member States, and the national laboratories designated for the diagnosis of those diseases;
 - (d) retaining expertise on those diseases to enable their rapid differential diagnosis, in particular, with other relevant viral diseases;
 - (e) carrying out research studies with the objective of developing improved methods of disease control in collaboration with the national laboratories designated for the diagnosis of those diseases as agreed with the Commission;
 - (f) advising the Commission on scientific aspects related to capripox viruses and, in particular, on the selection and use of capripox viruses vaccine strains.
2. *To support the functions of the national laboratories of the Member States designated for the diagnosis of diseases caused by capripox viruses (lumpy skin disease and sheep and goat pox), in particular by:*
 - (a) storing, and supplying standard sera and other reference reagents, such as viruses, inactivated antigens or cell lines, to those laboratories in order to standardise the diagnostic tests and the reagents used in each Member State, where identification of the agent and/or the use of serological tests are required;

- (b) assisting actively in the diagnosis of the diseases in connection with the suspicion and confirmation of outbreaks in Member States by receiving isolates of capripox viruses for the purposes of confirmatory diagnosis, virus characterization, and contributing to epidemiological investigations and studies. Communicating the results of these activities without delay to the Commission, the Member States and the national laboratories designated for the diagnosis of those diseases concerned.

3. *To provide information and carry out further training, in particular by:*

- (a) facilitating the provision of training, refresher courses and workshops for the benefit of national laboratories designated for the diagnosis of diseases caused by capripox viruses and experts in laboratory diagnosis with a view to harmonise diagnostic techniques for those diseases throughout the Union;
- (b) participating in international forums concerning, in particular, the standardisation of analytical methods for those diseases and their implementation;
- (c) collaborating with the relevant competent laboratories in non-EU countries where those diseases are prevalent as regards diagnostic methods for diseases caused by capripox viruses;
- (d) reviewing at the annual meeting of national laboratories designated for the diagnosis of diseases caused by capripox viruses the relevant requirements for testing laid down in the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code and in the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals;
- (e) assisting the Commission in reviewing the OIE's recommendations laid down in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code and in the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals;
- (f) keeping abreast of developments in the epidemiology of diseases caused by capripox viruses.