

Faculty hosts Research for Africa Network (ERFAN) workshop to improve research and collaboration between African countries

10 October 2017



Prof Darrell Abernethy, Dean (left) together with HE Pietro Giovanni Donnici, Italian Ambassador in South Africa, Dr Pierguido Sarti, Italian Embassy in SA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and Dr Massimo Scacchia, Head of the Animal Health Laboratory, IZSAM, during the workshop

The event which took place on 4 and 5 October was organised by the Faculty of Veterinary Science (Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases) and the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale of Abruzzo and Molise "G.Caporale", or IZSAM from Italy. The workshop titled "Strengthening ERFAN through the support of OIE reference Laboratories and Collaborative Centres in the SADC Region" saw the participation of representatives of National Veterinary Laboratories and Faculties of Veterinary Science from 8 SADC Region countries.

The workshop was jointly opened by His Excellency, Pietro Giovanni Donnici, the Italian Ambassador in South Africa and the Dean of the OP Faculty of Veterinary Science, Prof Darrell Abernethy. The event was aimed at networking between ERFAN and veterinary laboratories and veterinary schools in Africa to improve research and sustain capacity and transfer technology between African countries, and strengthening SADC region and UMA (Arab Maghreb Union) partner's collaboration.

An important task of the ERFAN network is to support and strengthen OIE Reference Laboratories (RL) or Collaborating Centres (CC) in the SADC and UMA regions so that they can fulfil their mandates. In 2009 the OIE (World Health Organisation) formally approved and endorsed an application by the Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases in the Faculty to serve as an OIE Collaborating Centre for Training in Integrated Livestock and Wildlife Health and Management.

The event provided the opportunity for invited partners from the SADC region, the Onderstepoort Faculty and IZSAM as well as the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international organisations to develop an action plan for the next 4 years to operationalize ERFAN to fulfil its objectives.

During the workshop the participants also identified areas of collaboration, on the basis of the scientific skills gathered within the ERFAN network, and research priorities defined in the SADC Region strategic plans.



The representatives of National Veterinary Laboratories and Faculties of Veterinary Science from 8 SADC Region countries at the workshop

Author CvB

Last edited by Christoffel van Blerk