LinkTADs

D8.8 Focal Point Network Guide

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D8.8
(FOCAL POINT NETWORK GUIDE)

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Executive Summary

As part of Task 8.4, the LinkTADs Focal Point Network has been established. It consists of international researchers and experts from the EU and China with experience in animal health related research and relevant expertise in EU-China cooperation, e.g. funding, logistics, networking opportunities, etc. The LinkTADs Focal Point Network will provide support to anyone interested in animal health research and relevant cooperation between the EU and China via the following main channels: special monthly alerts containing brief summary of relevant updates in the field; Focal Point Network area on the LinkTADs platform where users can send their queries to Focal Point members; and general dissemination and communication channels.

This Focal Point Network Guide (LinkTADs D8.8) serves a reference document for the appointed LinkTADs Focal Point members. The document is a comprehensive guide describing the objectives of the established the Focal Point Network within the LinkTADs project and the responsibilities assigned to the Focal Point members. The guide introduces the support system available for the members facilitating their activities, which is available both as part of the LinkTADs project and externally. Finally, the document discusses sustainability options for the Network beyond the LinkTADs project completion.

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01.

Focal Point Network Objectives

Focal Point Network Objectives

Task 8.6 Focal Point Network aims to establish an informal support network to **assist Chinese and European scientists in the field of coordinated animal health and food security research to share information and raise their awareness on cooperation and funding opportunities.**

The Focal Point Network established within the LinkTADs project is a unique network of experts **as it focuses on EU-China cooperation in the specific scientific field of animal health**. The main idea behind the Focal Point Network concept is to establish a sustainable support network of researchers with experience in EU-China cooperation in the field of animal health who can build on their experience and inspire their fellow scientists. There are additional members of the Network with a different background, who contribute with their expertise on networking and funding opportunities.

Towards this aim, on the one hand the LinkTADs consortium has invited scientists who are active in EU-China cooperation in the animal health field to become Focal Point members; and on the other - managers who are active in international cooperation and have information on European and Chinese funding opportunities supporting international research cooperation.

Therefore, Focal Point Network members represent LinkTADs partners as well as external organizations. The list of appointed Focal Point Network members is provided in the Annex. By the end of the project as well as after the completion of the project the Focal Point Network will be extended with additional experienced researchers or other experts. The project website will contain an open Call for Interest targeted at new members who would like to support their fellow researchers and enhance EU-China collaboration in animal health research. New members will be accepted by a voting procedure (the majority of the Focal Point members can accept or reject a new member).

The members of the Focal Point Network should have extensive academic and/or networking experience to contribute to the sustainability of LinkTADs beyond the duration of the project. This will be achieved by **creating a User Group / Support Network** of researchers and other end users who will support the continuation of the activities implemented in the EU and China, and regularly exchange information and knowledge in order to strengthen coordination between the ongoing and planned activities.

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02.

Responsibilities of Focal Point Network Members

Responsibilities of Focal Point Network Members

Utilizing their extensive expertise, the Focal Point Network Members will contribute to increased cooperation between the EU and Chinese researchers in the field of animal health and food safety. Towards this aim, the Focal Point Network Members will have the **following responsibilities**:

1. Each Focal Point member will **identify and develop a User Group** in order to ensure the dissemination of the information to the relevant end users. The end user group should include primarily experienced scientists who are highly committed to supporting research cooperation between EU and China on major infectious diseases of animals and zoonoses or people who are interested in starting cooperation with a partner from another region.

   In addition to the end user group, at the end of the project the Focal Point Network members should identify policy-makers and industrial actors who will be interested in specific aspects of the ongoing or future animal health research in the EU and China.

   The number of user group members per Focal Point member within LinkTADs should not be less than 10 (LinkTADs aims to involve at least 100 people in total by the end of the project).

   During the process of User Group identification, each Focal Point member will **inform the potential members of the user group** via e-mail/phone or personally about LinkTADs Focal Point Network services.

   An example of a standard email that can be sent out is the following:

   The LinkTADs project is an EU funded project aimed at linking animal health research (epidemiology and laboratory of TADs and zoonoses) in the EU and China.

   As part of the project, we have created a "Focal Point Network" of experienced researchers from the EU and China to assist people potentially interested in EU-China collaborations in the field of animal health.

   If you would like receive monthly emails summarising main events and funding opportunities relevant for the development of EU-China collaboration in the field of animal health, please drop me an email (each focal point inserts his or her email address) and you will be added to the mailing list.

   You will also have the opportunity to send questions directly to LinkTADs partners and experts via the LinkTADs platform. More information on this network can be found here.

2. Each Focal Point member shall **disseminate information** on the outcomes of LinkTADs using various communication tools (institutional websites, relevant social networks for academic discussions, etc.) **and communicate regularly** with the User Group using the **support system** developed by LinkTADs (see p.15) as well as monthly alerts (see p.12).
3. The Focal Point Network shall **provide consolidated input to the LinkTADs consortium** regarding their activities as well as contribute to developing the Best Practice Report (D8.10) which will summarize five best practices of EU-China cooperation within the framework of LinkTADs.
4. Each Focal Point member shall **assist** (via the LinkTADs website and dedicated e-mail account) **international scientists and be responsible for:**
    - Identifying and spreading information about the relevant EU and China calls for proposals (grants and other funding opportunities) and other cooperation opportunities.
    - Providing information on existing partner search tools and techniques within relevant networks and projects (see p.20-22);
    - Providing information on European Commission's e-services and platforms such as CORDIS, animal health clusters, exchange programmes, etc. as well as relevant funding programmes run by Chinese authorities;
    - Giving general advice on legal, administrative and budgetary issues with the help of existing guidelines
    - Directing scientists to the most relevant external support available.
5. Each Focal Point member **will extend existing LinkTADs e-resources database by uploading or sending documents** to the LinkTADs website administrator (admin@linktads.com) on the latest updates in the animal health research and relevant EU-China cooperation.
6. Each Focal Point will **ensure the sustainability** of established EU-China cooperation in the animal health field beyond LinkTADs' lifetime by providing practical advice to researchers using the available LinkTADs online tools or via networking.

User Group

The User Group to be created by the Focal Point Network should be based on existing contact databases of each Focal Point member and should include primarily researchers actively working on or interested in animal health and relevant cooperation between the EU and Chinese research

institutes. Within the project lifetime the User Group shall reach at least 100 members identified by the LinkTADs Focal Point Network.

The Focal Point members will identify such groups, collect individual contact details and share relevant information with them through "monthly alerts" (see below) by adding users' emails to the Focal Point Network mailing list. In addition, Focal Point members will be available to answer questions addressed to them both by the members of their user group (privately) and by external users on the LinkTADs website (see p.16).

In addition to the end user group, at the end of the project the Focal Point Network members should identify policy-makers and industrial actors who will be interested in specific aspects of the ongoing or future animal health research in the EU and China. These members will receive different services, e.g. 6-monthly updates on animal health research cooperation between the EU and China. Such 6-monthly updates will be compiled by Europa Media on the basis of monthly alerts. Europa Media will also be responsible for sending out emails to policy makers and industrial actors, if they express interest in receiving such updates. Detailed mechanisms for such cooperation and information dissemination will be set out in D8.9.

Monthly Alert

The **LinkTADs Focal Point Network Monthly Alert** shall contain news on ongoing initiatives, events, news in the research on TADs and zoonoses in the EU and China as well as relevant international cooperation and funding opportunities in the field of animal health and food safety.

The first Monthly Alert will be sent out to the LinkTADs consortium and identified User Group no later than February 2016 from the mailing list fpn@linktads.com to be created by Europa Media. All Focal Point members should send the names and emails of users to be included into the mailing list no later than by the end of January 2016. Once the mailing list is compiled, Europa Media will share it with LinkTADs Focal Point Network members and LinkTADs partners.

The first alert will aim to disseminate information on the LinkTADs Focal Point Network services and will be based on collected information during the implementation of LinkTADs. The monthly alert will be in the form of an e-mail containing links to relevant updates. Each Focal Point member will identify such information and Europa Media will be responsible for compiling and sending out the alert.

It will be up to the Focal Point Members to extend the available information on the LinkTADs platform for sending further monthly alerts beyond LinkTADs implementation. By the end of the project the Focal Point Members will appoint the Chair of the Network who will be responsible for

coordinating the network's activities, while Europa Media will be available for technical assistance, sending out the compiled monthly alerts and platform maintenance for at least two years after LinkTADs completion. The Focal Point members will decide on the assignment period for the Chair of the Network and will develop a coordinating mechanism for the Network activities which will be summarized in the D8.9.

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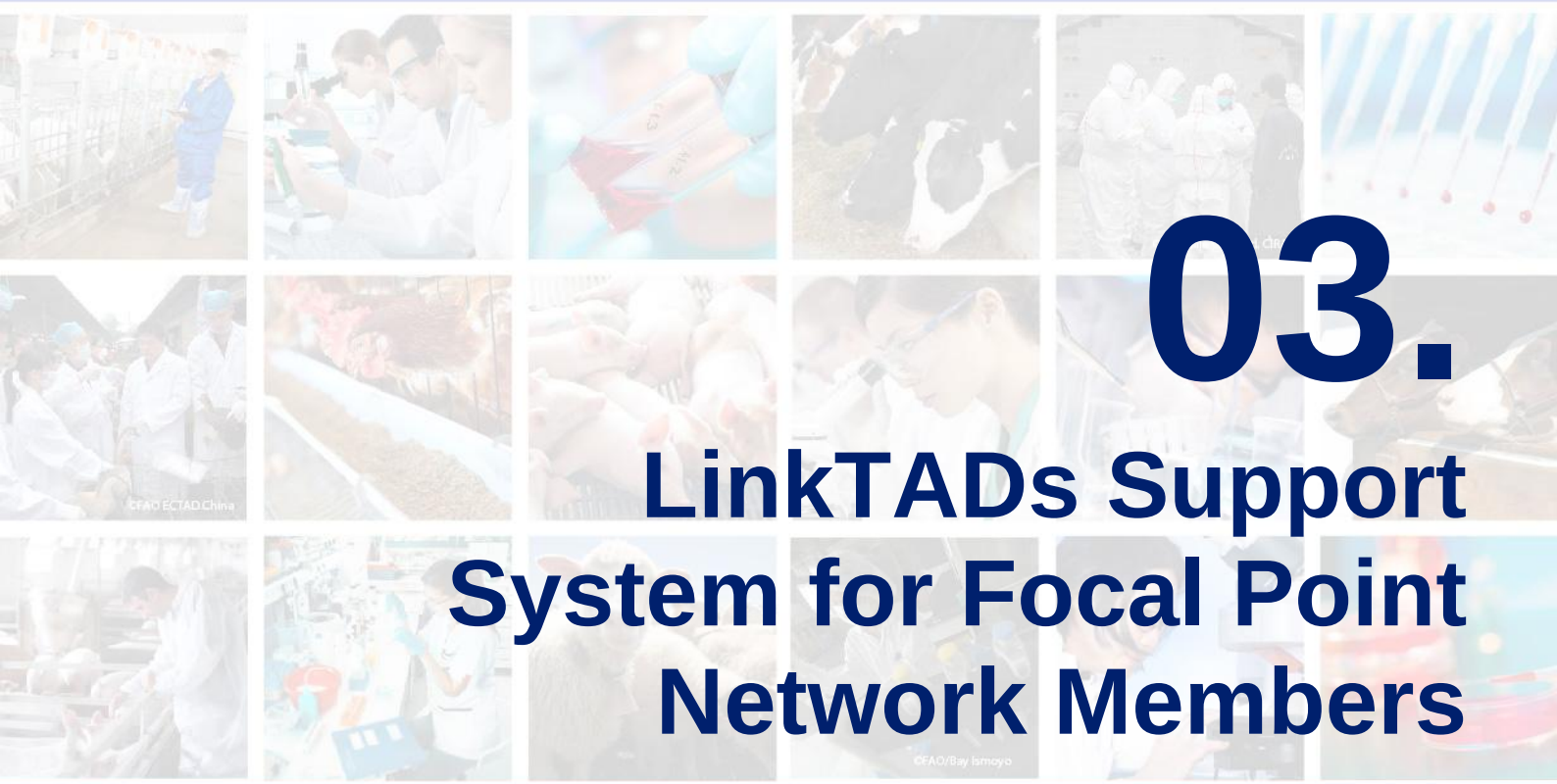


03.

LinkTADs Support System for Focal Point Network Members

LinkTADs Support System for Focal Point Network Members

In order to ensure smooth communication between the Focal Point Network Members as well as provide them with access to relevant information to be disseminated, Europa Media has developed a comprehensive Support System which will facilitate functioning of the Focal Point Network during and beyond the implementation of LinkTADs.

The LinkTADs Focal Point Network Support System includes:

1. Focal Point Network Guide (LinkTADs D8.8)
2. Focal Point Network Report (LinkTADs D8.9)
3. Best Practices Report (LinkTADs D8.10)
4. Website Tools
5. External instruments

1. Focal Point Network Guide

The current document should serve as **Terms of Reference** for all Focal Point Network Members. It will be distributed to each Focal Point and uploaded to the LinkTADs public website as well as partner area.

2. Focal Point Network Report

The report will be developed by Europa Media by the month 36 of the project based on the Focal Point Network activities during project implementation. It will include recommendations for future cooperation and sustainability of the network.

3. Best Practices Report

The report will be developed by Europa Media in the month 30 of the project and will include five identified based practices in terms of EU-China cooperation related to TADs and zoonoses and include recommendation on networking, joint project preparation, participation in research programmes, collaboration benefits, lessons learned and barriers encountered. LinkTADs Focal Points will be able to refer to the report when they provide practical advice to identified User Group or external users.

4. Online Tools

Europa Media has developed the LinkTADs platform which incorporates a set of online tools available for external users as well as Focal Point Network members in order to assist them in information dissemination. These tools are aimed at providing relevant information to facilitate communication between the Focal Points and interested users. The tools include:

a) LinkTADs Focal Point Network Area

A specific section on the LinkTADs platform has been dedicated to the LinkTADs Focal Point Network. This section lists the objectives and services provided by the Focal Point Network members as well as the approved list of members. It is also available in Chinese language.

Europa Media will create an e-mail account (fpn@linktads.com) in the form of a mailing list. The email account will be used both to send monthly alerts to the identified User Group and for internal communication between all LinkTADs Focal Points.

In addition, external users will be able to send queries online as Europa Media will extend the Focal Point Network Area with a 'contact' function. No prior registration is required to contact the Focal Point Network Members.

Pressing the "contact" button, users will be able to direct their questions according to the expertise of Focal Point Members:

- Funding opportunities for EU-China collaboration;
- News on EU-China collaboration in animal health;
- Epidemiology in the EU and China;
- Laboratory issues in the EU and China.

Europa Media will be responsible for technical implementation of the "contact" button. In this way, relevant Focal Points will receive specific questions sent by external visitors of the LinkTADs platform and reply based on their expertise. The email exchange will be private and sent directly to users. The Chair of the Focal Point Network (currently the LinkTADs coordinator, Daniel Beltran Alcrudo from FAO) will be responsible to inform Europa Media on the expertise division for the technical implementation of the "contact button" by the end of January 2016. The Chair will check regularly during LinkTADs implementation if the questions received were answered using the email fpn@linktads.com for internal communication.

The Focal Point Network area on the LinkTADs website may be extended with the monthly alert summaries.

Europa Media will monitor the statistics on requests for assistance and input by external users to the Focal Points after February 2016, when the first monthly alert will be distributed. Europa Media will be available for technical assistance, future Monthly Alert sendings and platform maintenance for at least two years after LinkTADs completion as well.

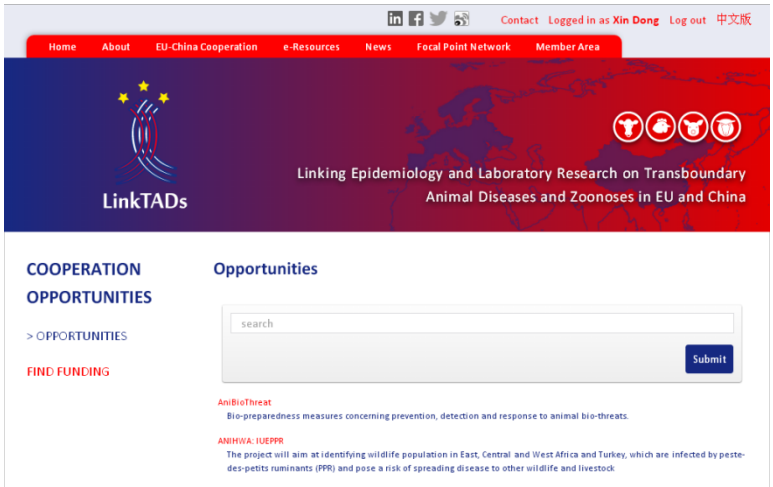
b) LinkTADs Member Area

The LinkTADs Member Area is available for registration for anyone interested in international research on animal health and food safety issues. It is highly recommended for all the Focal Points to register on the website in order to receive access to the additional features the platform offers and share available information with external users.

The users can search and identify cooperation opportunities as shown below. The database of cooperation opportunities consists of two parts: Opportunities and Find Funding.

Cooperation opportunities

The LinkTADs member area includes a database of relevant projects in the field of international cooperation on TADs and zoonoses with a particular focus on China. Members can check the full list of projects or search for a project and identify the consortium members using key words.

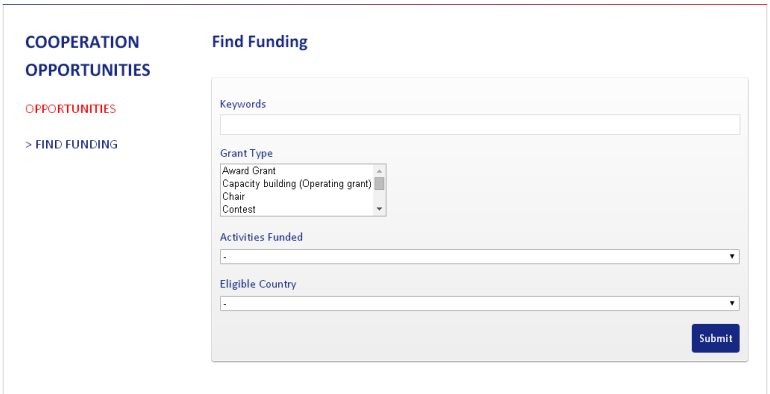


A short description is provided for each project. For additional information, members need to click on the name of the project, and they will be directed to the official website of the project. The Focal Point Network members can use the database both to identify potential User Groups and to spread information on ongoing projects among the end users.

Find Funding

The Funding Opportunities section includes programmes aimed at increasing the mobility of researchers in the animal health and food safety field, with a particular focus on funding available for research in China.

Members may use filters to easily see the programme they are interested in: by keywords of the programme name, grant type, activities funded and eligible country.

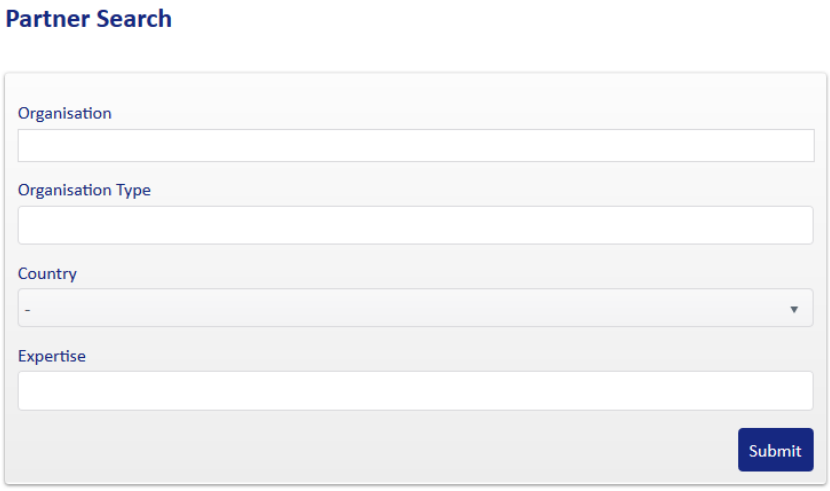


For each programme, grant type, activities funded and a short description are presented. For example, if members search with key word "NSFC", they will get the following result.

For further information on the programme, members need just to click on the name of the programme and they will be directed to the official website. Focal Point Network members can make use of this unique funding database specifically targeting LinkTADs' end users and disseminate information on travel grants, PhD or research scholarships available for international researchers via monthly alerts.

Partner search

LinkTADs member area also lists organisations working in the field of animal health. The database is particularly useful for those researchers, who are looking for partners in future projects. Users can search by type of organisation, country and expertise. This function is particularly useful as Focal Point members can direct external users who are interested in finding partners for joint EU-China applications to this database.



Epi-Lab Community

Registered members can also initiate discussions regarding ongoing projects, calls or a particular research area. Thus, Focal Points can start discussions with registered members, and LinkTADs partners in particular, or, on the other hand, they will be able to answer the forum questions posted by the Epi-Lab community members.

c) Informational databases

In addition to the exclusive LinkTADs Member Area for registered users, the Focal Point Network members can also use publicly available data collected by the LinkTADs consortium in order to disseminate information regarding available research materials and progress in EU-China cooperation in the field of animal health and food safety.

LinkTADs E-resources

LinkTADs consortium collected publications by researchers involved in the LinkTADs project as well as other scientific and research materials produced by international scholars and experts from international research organisations. Materials were collected from open sources within past and ongoing relevant projects and initiatives. Scientific materials are divided thematically under "Epidemiology" and "Laboratory science". In addition, visitors can access the Training section, listing

relevant links and training materials, and the Webinar section, which contains presentations from the webinars held by the LinkTADs partners. Focal Point members can disseminate information regarding the e-resources section.

EU-China Cooperation

This section on the public LinkTADs platform summarizes the current progress in EU-China cooperation in animal health research, as well as provides links to important programmes and documents. This section can serve as a primary source of information for Focal Point Network members, who may also suggest updates to be included by Europa Media as the site administrator.

Other Resources

As the LinkTADs databases include running projects and funding available in the animal health field, with a particular focus on funds and programmes available in China, the Focal Point Network members should regularly monitor external websites on EU-China research cooperation and share information via monthly alerts. Some examples include:

- EU Research Cooperation with China - http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm?pg=china
- List of calls targeting China in EU Horizon 2020 Programme - https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/sites/horizon2020/files/List%20of%20calls%20targeting%20China%20in%20Horizon%202020%20work%20programme%20for%202014%20and%202015_2.pdf
- OpenChina-ICT partnership - http://openchina-ict.eu/
- Dragon Star Plus project, EU-China research - http://www.dragon-star.eu/eu-china-research/
- EU-China Higher Education Research Center, Vrije University, Brussels - http://research.vub.ac.be/eu-china-education-research
- China-Europe Water Platform, Funding Mechanisms - http://cewp.org/
- EURAXESS Links China Newsletter - http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/links/newsletters/china
- EU-China Research Centre, College of Europe - https://www.coleurope.eu/page-ref/eu-china-research-centre
- EU-China-FIRE Project - http://www.euchina-fire.eu

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04.

External Instruments for Offline Cooperation

External Instruments for Offline Cooperation

Apart from the available online support tools, the Focal Point members are encouraged to use external instruments for offline cooperation and dissemination of information. These below tools help the Focal Point members to collect information for the monthly alerts, establish new contacts and extend their User Group, spread information received from their User Groups members and support their contacts in building new cooperation opportunities.

Events

During the events organized in Europe and China, the Focal Point members can meet, learn from each other's experiences and get to know each other and the Chinese and European partners. These contacts and trust built are useful for further support and implementation of their own projects and in their work to support fellow scientists. In addition, Focal Point members will be able to communicate with external partners and researchers, promoting LinkTADs and EU-China cooperation opportunities in this way.

The Focal Point members will be invited to upcoming LinkTADs events, such as Analytical Training, two final events (in Europe and China) as well as exchanges under WP7, if relevant in order to familiarize themselves better with LinkTADs activities for further dissemination purposes among the User Group.

In addition, the Focal Point members should identify relevant events, for example, LinkTADs twinning project meetings (i.e. EPIZONE, RISKSUR, STAR-IDAZ), EU-China research meetings (i.e. EU-China Business and Technology cooperation fair), Chinese conferences and summits on animal health issues, events organised by FAO, OIE, WHO and EFSA as well as by the LinkTADs partners in the EU and China.

Networking

The Focal Point members will extensively cooperate with relevant networks, such as:

- OIE National Focal Points in Animal Production Food Safety, Veterinary Products, Animal Welfare, Animal Disease Notification and Communication;
- EFSA Focal Points;
- Global Reporting Initiative Focal Point China;
- WHO National IHR Focal Points.

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05.

Sustainability of LinkTADs Focal Point Network

Sustainability of LinkTADs Focal Point Network

To ensure sustainability of the LinkTADs Focal Point Network beyond the project completion, Focal Points are encouraged to:

- Share Monthly Alerts (at the end of the project Focal Point Members will agree on the Network Chair who will coordinate the content for the monthly alerts, while Europa Media will be responsible for the technical implementation);
- Update information on the LinkTADs website: in future, all registered Focal Points will be able to extend the LinkTADs database of projects, funding opportunities and partner organizations with new entries as LinkTADs platform will be maintained by Europa Media for at least two years after the project completion with potential handover to EC / interested research institutions;
- Participate in external events and disseminate relevant information on LinkTADs' achievements as well as further opportunities for enhanced EU-China research cooperation, in particular in the field of animal health;
- Network with other relevant associations and projects, focal points and international organizations, such as FAO, OIE, WHO, EFSA, etc.

Annex

Appointed Members of the Focal Point Network:

1. Nicolas Dandois (DG Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission)
2. Jean-Charles Cavitte (DG Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission)
3. Daniel Beltran Alcrudo (FAO, LinkTADs coordinator)
4. Ivancho Naletoski (focal point for APHS of the Joint FAO/IAEA Division)
5. Guo Fusheng (FAO ECTAD China)
6. Shuo Li (FAO ECTAD China)
7. Lihong Liu (SVA)
8. Julien Cappelle (CIRAD)
9. Timothée Vergne (RVC)
10. Jing Zhang (HVRI)
11. Yafeng Qiu (SHVRI)
12. Ling Zhao (HZAU)
13. Aizhen Guo (HZAU)
14. Ming Zhou (HZAU)
15. Wang Jing (CADC)
16. Xinyan Zhai (CADC)
17. Kang Jingli (CAHEC)
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19. Gabriella Lovasz (EM)