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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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RELEVANT ACTIVITIES

COMMUNICATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

The following communication, received on 13 March 2013, is being circulated at the request of the OIE.

1. The OIE is pleased to provide this update for the information of SPS Committee Members. This report focuses on (1) developments in the OIE standards for terrestrial animals, (2) recent progress on vaccine standards and a pilot approach to Peste des Petits Ruminants control in Africa, (3) OIE Scientific Commission review of Brazil BSE status, (4) the forthcoming OIE Conference on Veterinary education and the role of Veterinary Statutory Bodies, and (5) capacity building using the OIE PVS Pathway.

1 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OIE STANDARDS FOR TERRESTRIAL ANIMALS

2. The Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) met on 19-28 February 2013. The meeting focused on new and revised Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code) texts proposed for adoption at the 81st General Session (26-31 May 2013).

3. The OIE draws the attention of WTO Members to the following important developments.

1.1 African horse sickness

4. The OIE has developed provisions for the official recognition of freedom of countries and zones from African horse sickness. Further revision of the text adopted in 2012 is proposed in response to member comments and expert review. A key change in the text proposed for adoption this year is removal of the articles that recognised seasonally free zones, given the practical challenges of demonstrating seasonal disease freedom for vector borne diseases.

1.2 Classical Swine Fever

5. A major review of the chapter on classical swine fever has been completed and will be proposed for adoption, along with a questionnaire to support applications for official recognition by the OIE of a classical swine fever free country or zone.

1.3 Peste des Petits Ruminants

6. The OIE has updated current provisions on Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), an important disease of sheep and goats in Africa. With the support of Members, the OIE is proposing conditions for official recognition of freedom from PPR, with the eventual objective of global eradication of this disease, as recently achieved for rinderpest.

1.4 Rabies

7. Following the OIE, WHO and FAO efforts to develop a Global Strategy for rabies control in collaboration with other key partners, the OIE has developed a new article for freedom of rabies in

dogs. Although rabies affects many species, eradication of rabies in dogs effectively minimises the public health risks of rabies. This revised text is proposed for adoption at the 81st General Session (2013).

1.5 OIE Guidelines on assessing the risk of non-native animal species becoming invasive

8. As we reported at 53rd SPS Committee meeting, the OIE developed Guidelines on assessing the risk of non-native animal species becoming invasive, which are now available on the OIE website at:

["http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/OIEGuidelines_NonNativeAnimals_2012.pdf"](http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Our_scientific_expertise/docs/pdf/OIEGuidelines_NonNativeAnimals_2012.pdf).

2 VACCINE STANDARDS AND PILOT APPROACH TO PESTE DES PETITS RUMINANTS CONTROL IN AFRICA

9. The OIE together with the African Union (AU) held a launch meeting for this project at the AU Headquarters in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, 11-12 February 2013. The project aims to establish a Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) Regional Vaccine Bank and develop a pilot strategy to control the disease in selected countries in Western Africa. It also intends to strengthen the capacities of the Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre of the African Union (AU-PANVAC) to improve the quality control of PPR vaccines produced and used in Africa.

10. The meeting was a determining step forward in the effective deployment of the three components of the project and addressed the following:

- Vaccine quality control component with discussions between laboratories producing PPR vaccines in Africa and AU-PANVAC;
- Vaccine Bank with the Botswana Vaccine Institute (BVI), which was chosen to supply the PPR vaccines following an OIE international call for tender launched in October 2012. Among others, BVI will be responsible for delivering high quality vaccines and ensuring the rapid and smooth transportation of the vaccines requested to the countries of destination; an estimated 10 million vaccine doses will be delivered primarily to Burkina Faso and Ghana, as well as to other selected West African countries;
- Development of a PPR control strategy: the protocol of the pilot field studies to be implemented in Burkina Faso and Ghana was presented, with the aim to provide countries and partners with PPR control methods relevant for all regional ecosystems and animal populations.

3 OIE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION REVIEW OF BRAZIL BSE STATUS

11. At its recent biannual meeting, from 4 to 8 February 2013, the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases addressed among different issues the occurrence of the first case of BSE recorded in Brazil.

12. The Commission was briefed by a delegation from Brazil on the sequence of events leading to the notification of this case of BSE to the OIE. After extensive deliberation, the Commission concluded in accordance with the standards of the OIE Terrestrial Code, not to withdraw the "negligible risk" status of Brazil.

13. The Commission also affirmed that the identification of this single case of BSE is not putting the country's or its trading partners' animal and public health at risk, notably because the animal was destroyed and no parts of it entered the food or feed chain.

14. The Commission, however, noted with concern that there had been a considerable delay before Brazil sent the clinical samples for a confirmatory diagnosis to an OIE Reference Laboratory. The Commission therefore agreed that it needed more detailed information on the procedures in place for processing samples and the improvement of the surveillance system in the country so as to further monitor the continuous compliance by Brazil with the relevant provisions of the Terrestrial Code to be respected for the sustainable maintenance of its official status for BSE.

15. At its next meeting in September 2013, the Commission will again assess the additional information to be provided by Brazil.

4 VETERINARY EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF VETERINARY STATUTORY BODIES

16. As previously advised, the OIE is organising a Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the role of Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSB) in Brazil, 4-6 December 2013.

17. The Conference will feature presentations from representatives of international organisations and national Veterinary Services (VS), as well as experts on veterinary education and the performance of VSBs. The Conference will:

- analyse the current situation with veterinary education and the performance of VSBs globally, including relevant issues pertaining to the national veterinary legislation;
- provide information on general principles and best practices on establishing a VSB;
- raise international awareness of OIE standards and recommendations relevant to the quality and performance of VS, (including the legislative basis and organisational structure), veterinary education and VSB performance;
- raise awareness of veterinarians in both the public and the private sector on their role and responsibilities under the legal framework of responsibilities given to the VSB;
- review the experiences of OIE member Countries in the domain of veterinary education and VSB quality, including the challenges and priorities of developing countries;
- discuss how OIE members can improve governance using the OIE twinning procedures for Veterinary Education Establishments (VEEs) and VSBs and other elements of the OIE PVS framework (initial PVS evaluation, PVS gap analysis, PVS follow-up and veterinary legislation missions);
- identify other tools and support that can be provided to national VS in developing countries, as appropriate to their needs;
- launch a discussion on future needs and priorities to strengthen veterinary education and VSB performances, within the framework of the PVS Pathway, including recommendations to the OIE on future activities and initiatives.

18. Approximately 500 international participants are expected to attend the Conference, including:

- OIE National Delegates and other national government representatives;
- Deans of VEES and other professional educators;
- Leaders and decision makers of VSBs;
- International and national organisations/private sector organisations, individual experts;
- Representatives of organisations having official agreements with the OIE.

19. The conference will include ministerial statements, keynote addresses, technical presentations and discussions to develop conference recommendations for future action.

20. More information on this Conference can be found at:
http://www.oie.int/eng/A_EDUVSB2013/introduction.htm.

5 CAPACITY BUILDING USING THE OIE PVS PATHWAY

21. The OIE continues its global initiative to support member Countries wishing to strengthen Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services (AAHS) using the OIE PVS Pathway.

22. A summary of OIE members' engagement in the PVS Pathway may be found at Annex 1.

ANNEX 1**A SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON PVS PATHWAY EVALUATIONS****PVS Evaluation missions: State of play (21 January 2013)**

	OIE members	PVS Evaluation requests received	PVS Evaluation missions implemented	Reports available for (restricted) distribution to Donors and Partners
Africa	52	53*	49	37
Americas	29	25	21	18
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	18	18	11
Europe	53	16	14	12
Middle East	12	12	11	5
TOTAL	178	124	113	83

* One non OIE Member requested a PVS mission.

PVS Gap Analysis: State of play (21 January 2013)

	OIE members	PVS Gap Analysis requests received	PVS Gap Analysis missions implemented	Reports available for (restricted) distribution to Donors and Partners
Africa	52	38	33	20
Americas	29	14	10	9
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	13	10	7
Europe	53	8	6	2
Middle East	12	8	4	0
TOTAL	178	81	63	38

Veterinary Legislation: State of play (21 January 2013)

	OIE members	PVS Legislation mission requests received	PVS Legislation missions implemented	PVS Legislation documents received
Africa	52	23	16	15
Americas	29	6	4	4
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	5	5	5
Europe	53	3	2	2
Middle East	12	4	4	4
TOTAL	178	41	31	30