

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English/
French/
Spanish

**DECISIONS RELEVANT TO THE SPS AGREEMENT TAKEN
BY THE OIE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
AT THE 67TH GENERAL SESSION**

Submission by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE)

The 67th General Session of the OIE International Committee was held from 17 to 21 May 1999 at the headquarters of the Organisation (Paris, France).

The decisions relevant to the SPS Agreement taken by the OIE International Committee during the General Session are as follows:

Adoption of new measures for the *International Animal Health Code*

Additions or amendments on the following subjects were made to the *International Animal Health Code* (the *Code*):

1. Skins and trophies from wild animals susceptible to foot-and-mouth disease
2. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)
3. Import risk analysis
4. Quarantine measures applicable to non-human primates
5. Rinderpest
6. Peste des petits ruminants (embryos/ova from small ruminants and domestic cervids)
7. African horse sickness (equine embryos/ova)
8. *In vitro* fertilised bovine embryos/*in vitro* maturing oocytes
9. Bluetongue
10. Definitions in the *Code*
11. Collection and processing of embryos (harmonisation of *Code* appendices relating to different species)

The International Committee continued to devote special attention to BSE, with a view to improving the OIE recommendations on health conditions applicable to international trade in animals and animal products. In particular, the improvements related to a considerable number of points that had remained under study. The conditions that a country must fulfil in order to be recognised as free from the disease have now been determined, thus enabling the OIE to work on the development of a

procedure and guidelines to allow recognition of this status to be achieved at the international level. Proposals along these lines will be submitted to the International Committee in May 2000.

A certain number of recommendations have been clearly identified as remaining under study within the body of the chapter. The OIE will be working on these points in depth during the next few months.

Recognition of the foot-and-mouth disease status of Member Countries

The OIE Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission, meeting in September 1998 and January 1999, revised the list of countries or zones of countries that it considers to be free from foot-and-mouth disease, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Chapter 2.1.1. of the *Code*. This list was sent to the Member Countries, who have a period of 60 days in which to respond in writing.

In the form of a Resolution, the OIE International Committee adopted the proposed list, to which was added, in respect of the May 1998 list, an additional country free from foot-and-mouth disease without vaccination (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

Procedure for recognising the status of countries or zones free from specific animal diseases

By means of a Resolution, the OIE International Committee decided to improve the procedure enabling the OIE to recognise countries or zones as being free from specific animal diseases, so as to allow recognition to be accorded in the shortest possible time should all the necessary conditions be fulfilled before a General Session is held.

Definition of Newcastle disease

The OIE International Committee adopted a Resolution providing a new definition for Newcastle disease, in order to eliminate a lack of precision existing in the previous definitions given in the *International Animal Health Code* and the *Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines* and thus avoid any error of interpretation.

Amendments to the lists of aquatic animal diseases covered by the OIE

The OIE International Committee decided to include the two iridoviruses affecting catfish and sheatfish among the agents of epizootic haematopoietic necrosis, which appears in the list of "diseases notifiable to the OIE", as well as iridovirus infections of red seabream and white sturgeon in the list of "other significant diseases".

OIE Reference Laboratories

The OIE International Committee took note of the additions and changes recommended by the Standards Commission in regard to Reference Laboratories and disease experts. The OIE currently has 135 Reference Laboratories covering 59 diseases or groups of diseases in Lists A or B.

The International Committee was also informed on progress made in terms of international standardisation of diagnostic tests applicable to a certain number of animal diseases.

Extension of the competence of a Collaborating Centre

The scope of the OIE Collaborating Centre for Diagnosis and Control of Animal Diseases in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Transcaucasia, at the All-Russian Research Institute for Animal Health in Vladimir (Russia) was extended by the addition of the All-Russia State Research Institute for Control, Standardisation and Certification of Veterinary Preparations. Consequently, the

aforementioned region now has a centre specialising in bacteriology whose activities complement the virological studies carried out at the Vladimir Institute.

The OIE currently has 9 Collaborating Centres which can provide Member Countries with technical assistance in the field of diagnosis, surveillance and control of animal diseases, risk analysis and veterinary drugs.
