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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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59TH MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

COMMUNICATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

The following communication, received on 14 March 2014, is being circulated at the request of the OIE.

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 and aquatic animals, 2) the launch of the WAHIS Wild interface, 3) the recommendations from the OIE Conference on Veterinary Education and the role of Veterinary Statutory Bodies, and 4) capacity building using the OIE PVS Pathway.

SPS Committee members may also be interested to note that January 2014 marked the 90th anniversary of the establishment of OIE. Throughout this anniversary year there is a dedicated page on our website noting key OIE achievements over the last 90 years.

1 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OIE STANDARDS FOR TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC ANIMALS

1.1. The Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) met on 11-20 February 2014. The meeting focused on new and revised texts for the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)* to be proposed for adoption at the 82nd General Session (25-30 May 2014).

1.2. The Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission (Aquatic Animals Commission) met on 24-28 February 2014. The meeting focused on new and revised texts for the *Aquatic Animal Health Code (Aquatic Code)* and *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals* to be proposed for adoption at the 82nd General Session (25-30 May 2014).

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

a. User's Guides

The OIE has revised the *Terrestrial Code* User's Guide, which to date has been provided for member country's information and guidance only. In recognition of the growing member country interest and participation in development of OIE standards, the revised User's Guide will be proposed for formal adoption by the World Assembly of Delegates in May 2014. The Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission is also revising the "Guide to the Use of the Aquatic Animal Health Code" to align it with the revisions proposed for the *Terrestrial Code* User's Guide.

b. Application of new OIE disease listing criteria

Following the adoption of revised OIE disease listing criteria in 2011, in the *Terrestrial Code*, several diseases on the current list were proposed for de-listing in 2013. The proposals to de-list Swine Vesicular Disease and Vesicular Stomatitis drew significant debate in 2013, and were left under study. Following further consultation with OIE member countries these two diseases will again be proposed for delisting at the 2014 General Session.

- c. Notification of diseases, infections and infestations, and provision of epidemiological information

Along with revision of the OIE definition of emerging diseases, both the Code Commission and Aquatic Animals Commission have proposed changes to the above standard, in the respective *Codes*, to clarify and differentiate the obligatory notification requirements for listed diseases and emerging diseases not yet listed.

- d. Anti-microbial resistance

Following the successful 2013 OIE Global Conference on the Responsible and Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents for Animals, a significant revision of the OIE *Terrestrial Code* standard on Risk assessment for antimicrobial resistance arising from the use of antimicrobial agents in animals is proposed for adoption in May 2014. Experts are also continuing to work on revising the standard on Harmonisation of national antimicrobial resistance surveillance and monitoring programmes.

- e. High health status horse subpopulation

The sport horse industry has developed significantly, in the last decade, leading to great socio-economic benefits to the national economies, the horse industry and other stakeholders. Presently, there are several OIE regions that have a substantial horse industry, and yet face a number of challenges that impede the free and safe international movement of competition horses, as well as the expansion of the equine industry. Some of the obstacles are inconsistent approaches to the application of intergovernmental health regulations and quarantine, leading to excessive and irregular health requirements for importation of horses, without benefit for horse disease prevention and control.

In order to address these constraints, the OIE, together with the Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI), in collaboration with the International Federation of Horse Racing Authorities (IFHA) and other experts, are elaborating the "high health, high performance horse (HHP)" concept. It draws heavily on existing OIE standards covering zoning and compartmentalisation, biosecurity, identification and traceability, and health certification.

A new standard that brings these fundamental SPS principles together in the context of a high health status horse subpopulation will be proposed to the World Assembly of Delegates for adoption in May 2014.

2 WAHIS-WILD INTERFACE - A NEW APPLICATION PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT WILD ANIMAL DISEASES

2.1. In January, the OIE announced the public release of a newly developed web application named *WAHIS-Wild* Interface, available on its website (http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahidwild.php). This interface contains information on non OIE-listed diseases of wild animals, collected annually on a voluntary basis by the OIE member countries.

2.2. One of the main missions of the OIE is to ensure transparency of the worldwide animal disease situation, in particular through the legal obligation for all member countries to report cases of 116 diseases of domestic and wild animals grouped in an official OIE list. These notifications help to improve animal health and to safeguard safety of world trade without setting up unjustified sanitary barriers. Since 2005, information about OIE-listed diseases of domestic and wild animals is available through the World Animal Health Information System Interface, WAHID (http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahid.php/Wahidhome/Home).

2.3. Nevertheless, to protect animal and human health, we must also monitor non OIE-listed emerging and re-emerging diseases in both domestic and wild animals, which can be reservoirs, hosts or victims of these diseases. A specific surveillance procedure dedicated to wildlife has been defined by a working group of experts from several member countries. These experts identified 53 priority infectious and non-infectious diseases to be monitored based on their importance for wildlife and to protect animal and human health.

2.4. The WAHIS-Wild Interface now allows open access to this information about wildlife non OIE listed diseases, and is accessible at: <http://www.oie.int/wahiswild>.

3 VETERINARY EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF VETERINARY STATUTORY BODIES

3.1. The third OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the role of Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSBs) was held in Foz de Iguazu (Brazil) from 4 to 6 December 2013. More than 1,000 international participants from 110 countries addressed the need for better quality and harmonisation of veterinary education worldwide, based on OIE guidelines. The Conference also focused on strengthening the role of VSBs in supporting better Veterinary Education and in regulating veterinarians, to ensure their quality and ethics.

3.2. The Conference recommendations are available at:
http://www.oie.int/eng/A_EDUVSB2013/recommendations/A_Recommendations_Brazil_Final.pdf.

4 CAPACITY BUILDING USING THE OIE PVS PATHWAY

4.1. 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.

4.2. The OIE will organise a training seminar in April 2014 for PVS evaluators to update them on recent revisions to the PVS Pathway tools.

4.3. A summary of OIE Members' engagement in the PVS Pathway may be found in the Annex.

ANNEX

A SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON PVS PATHWAY EVALUATIONS

PVS Evaluation missions: State of play (25 February 2014)

	OIE members	PVS Evaluation requests received	PVS Evaluation missions implemented	Reports available for (restricted) distribution to Donors and Partners
Africa	52	53*	50	39
Americas	29	25	22	18
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	21	18	11
Europe	53	16	16	12
Middle East	12	13	11	5
TOTAL	178	128	117	85

* One non OIE member requested a PVS mission.

PVS Gap Analysis: State of play (25 February 2014)

	OIE members	PVS Gap Analysis requests received	PVS Gap Analysis missions implemented	Reports available for (restricted) distribution to Donors and Partners
Africa	52	44	38	22
Americas	29	15	11	10
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	18	12	7
Europe	53	8	7	2
Middle East	12	8	4	0
TOTAL	178	93	72	41

Veterinary Legislation: State of play (25 February 2014)

	OIE members	PVS Legislation mission requests received	PVS Legislation missions implemented
Africa	52	29	19
Americas	29	7	5
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	5	5
Europe	53	3	2
Middle East	12	4	4
TOTAL	178	48	35