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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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65TH MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

COMMUNICATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

The following communication, received on 4 March 2016, is being circulated at the request of the OIE.

The OIE is pleased to provide this update for the information of SPS Committee Members.

As a preliminary matter, please note that from 1 January 2016 Dr Monique Eloit has assumed the responsibilities of OIE Director General as successor of Dr Bernard Vallat, who served for 15 years.

This report focuses on: 1) the developments in the OIE standards for terrestrial and aquatic animals; 2) the survey on the participation of Veterinary Services in National Committees for implementation of the new Trade Facilitation Agreement of the World Trade Organization; 3) the fourth OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education in June 2016; and 4) capacity building using the OIE PVS Pathway.

1 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OIE STANDARDS FOR TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC ANIMALS

1.1. The Biological Standards Commission met from 2-5 February 2016 and reviewed member countries' comments and prepared new and revised text portions in the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* to be proposed for adoption at the 84th General Session (22-27 May 2016).

1.2. The Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) met from 8-19 February 2016 and reviewed member countries' comments and prepared new and revised text portions in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)*. Texts will be proposed for adoption, at the 84th General Session, or circulated for member countries' comments.

1.3. The Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission met from 15-19 February 2016 and reviewed member countries' comments and prepared new and revised text portions in the *Aquatic Animal Health Code (Aquatic Code)* and *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*. Texts will be proposed for adoption at the 84th General Session, or circulated for comments.

1.4. The OIE draws the attention of WTO Members to the following important developments in the *Terrestrial Code* and *Aquatic Code*. The number of chapters to be proposed for adoption is limited this year, respecting the principle of the two-year cycle of standard development so as to provide member countries with enough time to examine, and opportunities to comment on, the text.

1.1 Terrestrial Code

1.1.1 Glossary definitions for OIE Standards, Guidelines and other matters

1.5. As reported at the October 2015 SPS Committee meeting, draft definitions for OIE Standard and OIE Guideline were circulated among member countries and their comments were examined by all Specialist Commissions. The revised definitions in both *Terrestrial Code* and *Aquatic Code* will be circulated for member countries' further consideration.

1.6. The glossary definitions for "zone" were amended and will be circulated for member countries' consideration.

1.1.2 OIE procedures relevant to WTO SPS Agreement (Chapter 5.3.)

1.7. Taking into account comments of recent WTO Dispute Settlement Body panels and with a view to removing unnecessarily discursive text, Chapter 5.3. was revised to align it with established Code format and will be circulated for member countries' consideration.

1.1.3 Criteria

1.8. The work of developing criteria for assessing the safety of commodities started last year in order to explain the basis of how the lists of safe commodities in disease specific chapters are developed. The revised draft, reflecting consideration of member countries' comments, will be circulated for member countries' further consideration.

1.1.4 Compartments free from FMD with vaccination

1.9. In response to member countries' comments and following consultation with experts, a new article establishing "compartments free from FMD with vaccination" was drafted and will be circulated for member countries' consideration. If adopted in future, this will be a novel approach, as up to now vaccination within a compartment is not considered a biosecurity measure.

1.1.5 African Swine Fever

1.10. Given the continuing challenges of controlling this disease in several parts of the world, there is a high level of interest in the revision of the current *Terrestrial Code* chapter on "Infection with African swine fever virus". Since commencement of the work in 2014, there have been two rounds of consultation on a proposed revision of the current chapter with member countries. The comments from the second round of consultation were examined by the Code Commission in February 2016. Considering the high number of comments received and subsequent substantial amendments made, including the restructuring of the article for free status, it was considered premature to propose the draft for adoption at May 2016 General Session. The latest amended draft will be sent for a further round of consultation with member countries.

1.1.6 New Chapter of PRRS

1.11. The development of a chapter on infection with porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus was discussed when the disease re-emerged in Asia in 2008 but did not begin until 2013 because of uncertainties about the pathways of global spread and inadequate diagnostic tests. The first draft of a new chapter circulated for member countries' consideration in 2014 generated many comments that have now been reviewed by experts and the Specialist Commissions. The amended draft will be circulated for member countries' further consideration.

1.2 Aquatic Code and Manual

1.2.1 Criteria for the inclusion of diseases in the OIE list (Chapter 1.2.)

1.12. The Aquatic Animals Commission considered member countries' comments and made relevant amendments also ensuring harmonisation of respective chapters in the *Terrestrial* and *Aquatic Code*, as far as possible, noting that some differences are necessary due to the different circumstances of aquatic and terrestrial animal diseases.

1.2.2 Infection with *B. salamandrivorans*

1.13. The Aquatic Animals Commission concluded that *B. salamandrivorans*, a fungal infection of salamanders with serious implications for biodiversity, meets the criteria for listing in Chapter 1.3. and is being proposed as an OIE listed disease.

1.2.3 Acute hepatopancreatic necrosis disease (AHPND)

1.14. New draft chapters for AHPND for both the *Aquatic Code* and *Aquatic Manual* have been circulated for member countries' comments. AHPND has resulted in significant mortalities in farmed shrimp in Asia and Latin America.

1.2.4 Susceptible species

1.15. The list of susceptible species in disease-specific chapters of the *Aquatic Code* are in the process of review based on the criteria for listing species as susceptible to infection with a specific pathogen as described in Chapter 1.5.

2 THE SURVEY ON THE PARTICIPATION OF VETERINARY SERVICES IN NATIONAL COMMITTEES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

2.1. The OIE and the World Customs Organisation (WCO) revised their cooperation agreement in 2015, aiming to strengthen cooperation and boost collaboration between national Customs Administrations and Veterinary Services (VS) in matters of common interest. One of the key areas of common interest identified is the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA), with a focus on Coordinated Border Management.

2.2. As a first step, adjusting the model WCO questionnaire to OIE purposes, a survey was conducted among all member countries in order to raise awareness of the TFA among VS and to evaluate the current situation to enable consideration of possible development of capacity-building activities.

2.3. The response rate has been rather low (49/180) as compared with general surveys conducted by the OIE. Among the 26 member country responses indicating that a National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) had been established, 14 indicated that the VS had been invited to become an NCTF member. Further awareness-raising and participation of VS in NCTFs is being encouraged, and development of a joint Customs Administration and Veterinary Services capacity building initiative on coordinated border management is being explored.

3 THE FOURTH OIE GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON VETERINARY EDUCATION: IMPLEMENTING OIE GUIDELINES TO ENSURE THE EXCELLENCE OF THE VETERINARY PROFESSION

3.1. With the valuable contribution of the Department of Livestock Development (as National Veterinary Authority) of the Kingdom of Thailand, the 4th OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education will be held in Bangkok on 22–24 June 2016.

3.2. This Conference will address ways to further improve the quality of the veterinary profession globally, through encouraging worldwide harmonisation of veterinary education based on OIE guidelines focusing on global Public Good aspects of veterinary activities. The discussions will extend to the need for closer collaboration between Veterinary Authorities (VAs), Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSBs) and Veterinary Education Establishments (VEEs). The Conference will also take up the importance both of veterinarians' capacity to better face challenges not necessarily within the domain of veterinary science alone, and the availability of various innovative teaching methods.

3.3. Approximately 600 participants from all over the world are expected to attend the Conference.

3.4. Further information about the Conference is available at: <http://www.oie.int/eng/vet-education-conf2016/introduction.html>.

4 CAPACITY BUILDING USING THE OIE PVS PATHWAY

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

4.2. 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 up to 1 March 2016

	OIE members	PVS Evaluation requests received	PVS Evaluation missions implemented	Reports available for restricted distribution to Donors and Partners	Publication on the OIE website
Africa	54	53	51	34	9
Americas	29	25	24	10	9
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	25	24	10	2
Europe	53	19	19	10	1
Middle East	12	13	11	5	1
TOTAL	180	135	129	69	22

PVS Evaluation missions of the AAHS: State of play up to 1 March 2016*

	OIE members	PVS Evaluation requests received	PVS Evaluation missions implemented	Reports available for restricted distribution to Donors and Partners	Publication on the OIE website
Africa	54	4	3	0	1
Americas	29	7	3	0	0
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	4	4	0	0
Europe	53	1	0	0	0
Middle East	12	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	180	17	10	0	1

* Including PVS Evaluation of the AAHS Follow-Up missions.

PVS GAP Analysis missions: State of play up to 1 March 2016*

	OIE members	PVS Gap Analysis requests received	PVS Gap Analysis missions implemented	Reports available for restricted distribution to Donors and Partners	Publication on the OIE web site
Africa	54	51	47	19	10
Americas	29	18	13	5	4
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	20	15	6	1
Europe	53	9	8	3	1
Middle East	12	10	4	0	0
TOTAL	180	108	87	33	16

* Including Second Gap Analysis missions and Aquatic Gap Analysis missions.

PVS Evaluation - Follow up missions: State of play up to 1 March 2016*

	OIE members	PVS Evaluation Follow-Up requests received	PVS Evaluation Follow-Up missions implemented	Reports available for restricted distribution to Donors and Partners	Publication on the OIE website
Africa	54	15	13	1	2
Americas	29	9	8	0	5
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	7	5	1	2
Europe	53	5	4	1	0
Middle East	12	5	2	1	0
TOTAL	180	41	32	4	9

* Including Second Follow-Up missions.

Veterinary Legislation - Support missions: State of play up to 1 March 2016*

	OIE members	Veterinary Legislation Identification mission requests received	Veterinary Legislation Identification missions implemented	Veterinary Legislation Identification mission reports received	Agreement requested	Agreement signed
Africa	54	41	28	26	7	3
Americas	29	8	6	6	2	1
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	7	6	6	1	0
Europe	53	5	4	4	1	0
Middle East	12	5	4	4	1	0
TOTAL	180	66	48	46	12	4

* Does not include (Pilot project) Botswana, SouthAfrica and 1st mission in Zambia.