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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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68TH MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

COMMUNICATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

The following communication, received on 10 March 2017, is being circulated at the request of the OIE.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) is pleased to provide this report for the information of WTO Members attending the 68th meeting of the SPS Committee.

The report summarises key developments in the OIE's standard-setting work programme, along with updates on the OIE's Capacity Building activities.

1 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OIE STANDARDS FOR TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC ANIMALS

1.1. The full reports of the four Specialist Commission meetings will be available on the OIE website by the end of March 2017. Following is a summary of key outcomes.

1.2. The Biological Standards Commission met from 7 to 10 February 2017 and reviewed comments from member countries and experts on the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*. It revised twenty-one chapters as well as the Glossary. These will be circulated for second-round member country comment and eventual proposal for adoption by the Assembly in May 2017.

1.3. The Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases met from 13 to 17 February 2017. The Scientific Commission examined technical questions from member countries on specific *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)* chapters under discussion. Advice in relation to the questions was forwarded to the Code Commission for its consideration. The Scientific Commission reviewed the opinion of the OIE experts and other available scientific information including the Working Group on Wildlife to:

- Assess whether or not chronic wasting disease of cervids (CWD) matched the criteria to be included in the OIE list of diseases;
- Develop a MERS-Cov case definition for camelids to support member countries in their reporting obligations to the OIE.

1.4. Antimicrobial resistance ad hoc Group report: the Group proposed the way forward for the second round of collection of data on the use of antimicrobial agents in animals and also proposed to define "growth promotion", "preventative use" and "therapeutic use" for the purpose of Chapter 6.8. The proposal was forwarded to the Code Commission for consideration in reviewing Chapter 6.8. with an additional specification on preventative use.

1.1 Official recognition of disease status

1.5. The Scientific Commission evaluated 27 new applications from 21 member countries for official recognition of disease status and endorsement of official control programmes.

1.6. In terms of official status maintenance, the Scientific Commission comprehensively reviewed 10% of annual reconfirmations for official status and all annual reconfirmations of member countries' endorsed national official programmes. A report of all annual reconfirmations including those reviewed by the Scientific Commission and those reviewed by the OIE Status Department will be annexed to the February 2017 report of the Scientific Commission.

1.7. The Scientific Commission was informed on the progress made in the revision of the Standard Operating Procedures related to Status recognition.

1.8. The Scientific Commission endorsed a draft resolution related to the progressive elimination or sequestration of FMD serotype C to be presented at the forthcoming General Session in May 2017.

1.9. The Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission met from 22 February to 2 March 2017 and reviewed member country comments and prepared new and revised texts for the *Aquatic Animal Health Code (Aquatic Code)* and the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals (Aquatic Manual)*. The Commission revised fourteen chapters and the Glossary in the *Aquatic Code* and seven chapters in the *Aquatic Manual* which will be proposed for adoption at the 85th General Session in May 2017.

1.10. The OIE draws the attention of WTO Members to the following important developments in the *Terrestrial Code* and *Aquatic Code*. As reported at the October 2016 SPS Committee meeting, the following chapters and the Glossary were circulated for member country comments, these are now being proposed for adoption by the Assembly in May 2017.

1.2 Aquatic Code

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

1.11. The revised chapter which is aligned with the corresponding chapter in the *Terrestrial Code* will be proposed for adoption.

1.2.2 Proposed listing of infection with *B. salamandrivorans (Bsal)*

1.12. The Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that the criteria for listing have been met and will propose that *Bsal* be added to the OIE list of diseases in Chapter 1.3.

1.2.3 General obligations related to certification (Chapter 5.1.)

1.13. In response to a number of member country comments, Article 5.1.4. was amended to improve consistency with the corresponding article of the *Terrestrial Code* and will be proposed for adoption.

1.2.4 List of susceptible species

1.14. The new criteria for listing species as susceptible to infection with a specific pathogen (described in Chapter 1.5.) has been applied to the crustacean disease-specific chapters in the *Aquatic Code* and has resulted in the amendment of the list in Article X.X.2. of some of these chapters.

1.15. A new disease-specific chapter for acute hepatopancreatic necrosis disease in the *Aquatic Code* and *Manual* will be proposed for adoption.

1.2.5 Glossary

1.16. The definition for *zone* was revised taking into account the existing definition of *compartment* in the *Aquatic Code*, and amendments being proposed for the term *zone* in the *Terrestrial Code*.

1.17. The Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) met from 12 to 24 February 2017 and reviewed comments from member countries and advice provided by experts (including ad hoc Groups and the Scientific Commission) and prepared new and revised texts for the *Terrestrial Code*. The Commission finalised eighteen revised and new chapters for adoption by the Assembly in May 2017 as previously indicated in the report of their September 2016 meeting. It considered a further seventeen new or revised chapters as well as the Glossary and work programme which will be circulated for member country comments and considered at its September 2017 meeting. Further detail on the *Terrestrial Code* chapters being proposed for adoption is below.

1.3 Terrestrial Code

1.3.1 New chapter on criteria applied by the OIE for assessing the safety of commodities

1.18. Following member countries' comments on the glossary definition of "safe commodity" adopted in 2015, the Code Commission developed a draft chapter on the criteria to be used by the OIE ad hoc Groups and specialist commissions in the process of evaluating the safety of certain commodities. This chapter is to ensure consistency in the development of a list of "safe commodities" for which specific measures are not required, regardless of the status of the exporting country or zone for the disease. The new chapter is to be proposed for adoption in May 2017.

1.3.2 New chapters on prevention and control of *Salmonella* in bovines and pigs

1.19. These chapters have been drafted to align the *Terrestrial Code* with the recent Codex work on *Salmonella* spp. in bovines and pigs (Guidelines for the Control of Non-typhoidal *Salmonella* spp. in Beef and Pork Meat (CAC/GL 87-2016)). The Code Commission emphasized that these chapters are intended to provide guidance for the prevention and control of *Salmonella* and are not intended to be used as conditions for trade. The new chapters are to be proposed for adoption in May 2017.

1.3.3 New chapter on infection with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex

1.20. The chapters on tuberculosis (Chapter 11.6 on bovine tuberculosis and Chapter 11.7 on bovine tuberculosis of farmed Cervidae) have been merged into a single multispecies chapter with management options per species affected. The Code Commission noted that the inclusion of *Mycobacterium bovis*, *M. caprae* and *M. tuberculosis* in the chapter was intended to manage the human and animal health risks associated with the disease. The new chapter is to be proposed for adoption in May 2017.

1.3.4 New chapter on infection with porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus

1.21. The Code Commission has completed its work on the development of the new porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) chapter, an important disease of pigs. The new chapter is to be proposed for adoption in May 2017.

1.3.5 Revision of chapter on infection with lumpy skin disease (Chapter 11.11.)

1.22. In response to member countries' comments and following consultation with experts, the Code Commission has undertaken a comprehensive revision of this chapter. The Code Commission noted that the current chapter is outdated and of no significant use to member countries dealing with lumpy skin disease and that update of the chapter is needed as a matter of urgency. The revised chapter is to be proposed for adoption in May 2017.

1.3.6 Revision of chapter on infection with African swine fever virus (Chapter 15.1.)

1.23. Since the beginning of the revision of this chapter in 2014, a significant number of member countries comments had been received. A major review of the chapter on African swine fever has now been completed and the revised chapter is to be proposed for adoption in May 2017.

1.3.7 Revision of chapter on the OIE procedures relevant to WTO SPS Agreement (Chapter 5.3.)

1.24. The Code Commission has updated and revised Chapter 5.3. to take into account comments of recent WTO DSB panels and to remove unnecessarily text, and further align the chapter with established *Terrestrial Code* format. This chapter sets out the obligations of importing and exporting countries and the OIE procedures relevant to the SPS Agreement, and contains the key SPS concepts, such as equivalence, zoning and compartmentalisation, which should be considered as the basis for sanitary measures to facilitate safe trade. The revised chapter is to be proposed for adoption in May 2017.

1.4 Future work

1.4.1 Revision of chapter on infection with avian influenza viruses (Chapter 10.4.)

1.25. Given the increasing problems being experienced by member countries in the trade of commodities in relation to outbreaks of avian influenza, the Code Commission proposes to undertake a general revision of the chapter and has included it in its work programme. The revision will take into account the differing risk mitigating measures when responding to low pathogenicity avian influenza (LPAI) or high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) and examine the need to include articles on safe commodities, recovery of free status and whether there is a need to expand on surveillance requirements.

1.4.2 Revision of chapter on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (Chapter 11.4.)

1.26. The Code Commission and the Scientific Commission also noted that the *Terrestrial Code* Chapter on BSE was in need of an extensive revision and included it on their work programmes.

2 CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

2.1 Implementation of Standards Workshops

2.1. With the assistance of funding provided by Australia and the EU, the OIE is planning a series of workshops on the development and the implementation of standards in the OIE *Terrestrial Code*. To support the delivery of these workshops the OIE plans to develop training modules including an e-learning platform. As OIE standards also address aquatic animals it is proposed that an "overview" module be created to provide a summary of the OIE with respect to the development of the OIE international standards, including the standard setting process and the context of the WTO SPS Agreement.

2.2. The target audience for these workshops is representatives from the Veterinary Services who work in the area of import/export of animals and their products, in particular those that are involved in the development and implementation of national rules and regulations as well as compliance and enforcement.

2.3. Initial funding has been provided for three workshops, Middle East (March), Asia (June) and Americas (August).

2.2 OIE PVS Pathway

2.4. 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.

2.5. Over 136 member countries actively engaged via requesting an OIE PVS Evaluation mission, with over 100 of those also requesting the next step of an OIE PVS Gap Analysis mission, and nearly 50 requesting a second round through a PVS Evaluation Follow-up mission.

2.6. Contrary to a prevailing myth that the PVS Pathway was only suitable for developing countries, recent years have seen interest and full, active engagement from highly developed nations including Australia (OIE PVS Evaluation mission in 2015), Japan (OIE PVS Evaluation

mission in 2016) and Canada (OIE PVS Evaluation mission in 2017). This is all firmly aligned with OIE's core mission of improving animal health and welfare around the world.

2.7. In 2017, the OIE is also planning a review of its flagship PVS Pathway programme to ensure that it continues to evolve to best serve the needs of its member countries and to set directions for an even brighter PVS Pathway future.

2.8. A summary of OIE member countries' engagement in the PVS Pathway may be found at Annex 1.

2.3 Regional Seminars for OIE National Focal Points

2.9. OIE capacity-building activities also include Information Seminars for Recently Appointed OIE Delegates and Regional Seminars for OIE National Focal Points appointed for eight different areas (Animal Disease Notification to the OIE, Veterinary Products, Communication, Animal Production Food Safety, Animal Welfare, Veterinary Laboratories, Wildlife and Aquatic Animals). The aim of this programme is to provide good governance concepts for improving animal health, animal welfare and food safety of animal-origin products at the national, regional and international levels, and to explain and clarify the role and responsibilities of newly-appointed OIE Delegates and of OIE national focal points with respect to OIE activities.

2.10. A revised list of regional seminars scheduled for 2017 is attached as Annex 2.

ANNEX 1**A SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON PVS PATHWAY EVALUATIONS****PVS Evaluation missions: State of play up to 1 March 2017**

	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	26	24	10	9
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	25	25	11	3
Europe	53	19	19	10	1
Middle East	12	13	11	5	1
TOTAL	180	136	130	70	23

PVS Evaluation missions of the Aquatic Animal Health Services*: State of play up to 1 March 2017

	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	3	3	0	0
Europe	53	1	1	0	0
Middle East	12	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	180	16	10	0	1

* Does not include PVS Evaluation of the AAHS Follow-Up missions (1).

PVS GAP Analysis missions*: State of play up to 1 March 2017

	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	52	49	20	11
Americas	29	18	13	5	5
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	21	15	7	2
Europe	53	9	9	3	1
Middle East	12	10	4	0	0
TOTAL	180	110	90	35	19

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

PVS Evaluation - Follow up missions* : State of play up to 1 March 2017

	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	17	16	1	3
Americas	29	9	8	0	5
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	9	7	1	2
Europe	53	7	4	2	0
Middle East	12	6	3	1	0
TOTAL	180	48	38	5	10

* Including Second Follow-Up (2) and Evaluation Follow-Up of the AAHS (1) missions.

Veterinary Legislation Support missions* : State of play up to 1 March 2017

	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	35	35	10	5
Americas	29	9	7	7	3	1
Asia, the Far East and Oceania	32	7	7	7	1	1
Europe	53	5	4	4	2	1
Middle East	12	5	4	4	1	0
TOTAL	180	67	57	57	17	8

* Does not include (Pilot project) Botswana, South Africa and 1st mission in Zambia.
Mozambique: Veterinary Legislation Identification mission report available on the OIE website.

ANNEX 2

Dates	Title	Venue
17–19 January 2017	Regional Workshop: Training of OIE National Focal Points for Wildlife (4 th Cycle)	Lomé, Togo
21–23 March 2017	Regional Workshop: Training of OIE National Focal Points for Wildlife (4 th Cycle)	Asunción, Paraguay
23–25 April 2017	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Animal Welfare	Chisinau, Moldova, Republic of
20–May 2017	Regional Information Seminar for Recently Appointed OIE Delegates	Paris, France
27–29 June 2017	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Veterinary Laboratories	Ljubljana, Slovenia
4–6 July 2017	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Wildlife	Indonesia
October TBC	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Communication	Latvia
7–9 November 2017	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Veterinary Products	TBC (Americas)
5–7 December 2017	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Veterinary Products	Swaziland
December TBC	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals	Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of
TBC	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals	China
TBC	Regional Seminar for OIE National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals	Americas