



86TH MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

COMMUNICATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (WOAH)

The following communication, received on 12 June 2023, is being circulated at the request of the WOAH.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) is pleased to provide this report for the information of WTO Members attending the 86th meeting of the SPS Committee.

1 90TH GENERAL SESSION

1.1. The 90th Annual General Session of the World Assembly of Delegates (the Assembly) was held from 21 to 25 May 2023 in Paris, France. More than 1,000 participants attended the General Session, including 141 WOAH Delegates.

1.2. The General Session included the adoption of administrative and technical resolutions, as well as elections for vacancies in some of the governing bodies of the Organisation. The General Session also included an Animal Health Forum on avian influenza. This innovative Forum provided a unique opportunity for Delegates and partners to discuss in depth this disease which has seriously impacted many members.

1.3. In addition, side events and exhibition stands took place before and after the daily plenary sessions. These activities permitted delegations to interact with experts on a number of specific initiatives relevant to WOAH and its missions.

1.4. The Report of the 90th General Session and adopted Resolutions are available on the [WOAH website](#).

1.1 Standard setting activities at the 90th General Session

1.5. The WOAH World Assembly of Delegates adopted new and revised texts in the WOAH International standards: the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)*, the *Aquatic Animal Health Code (Aquatic Code)*, the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals (Terrestrial Manual)*, and the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals (Aquatic Manual)*.

1.6. Information regarding all new and revised texts adopted for inclusion in the 2023 editions of the WOAH International standards are available in the report of the 90th General Session.

1.7. More details about some of the new and revised texts adopted in the WOAH International standards of interest to the SPS Committee are noted below.

1.1.1 Terrestrial Animal Health Code

1.8. 13 revised chapters, revised User's Guide and three new glossary definitions were adopted in the *Terrestrial Code*.

- A thoroughly revised version of Chapter 11.4. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy was adopted. The revision included revision of general criteria for the determination of the BSE risk and of requirements for negligible and controlled BSE risk status, revision of recommendations for trade of certain commodities based on differentiated risk depending on date of birth, revision of recommendations for the trade of the commodities with the greatest BSE infectivity and revision of recommendations on surveillance (i.e. less prescriptive and cumbersome approach, focused on targeted passive surveillance). Chapter 1.8. Application for official recognition by WOA of risk status for bovine spongiform encephalopathy was also revised to ensure alignment with amendments proposed for the revision of Chapter 11.4.;
- Chapter 8.14. Infection with rabies virus was partially revised to add a new article to address the implementation of a rabies vaccination programme for dogs;
- Chapter 8.15. Infection with Rift Valley fever virus was revised to clarify the obligations of members to notify when there is an epidemic of the disease in an endemic country or zone and to provide further guidance on surveillance to members on factors that may signal a transition to an epidemic of the disease;
- Chapter 12.2. Contagious equine metritis, Chapter 12.6. Infection with equine influenza virus and Chapter 12.7. Equine piroplasmiasis underwent comprehensive revisions;
- A new Chapter 16.1. Infection with Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus and a new Chapter 8.Y. Infection with *Leishmania* spp. were developed to provide members with precise definitions to fulfil their notification obligations in accordance with Chapter 1.1. Notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information.

1.9. Details of texts adopted are provided in [Resolution No. 23](#) Amendments to the *Terrestrial Code*.

1.10. The online version of the 31st edition (2023) of the [Terrestrial Code](#) will be available by August 2023 (in English, French and Spanish) on the WOA public website.

2 MANUAL OF DIAGNOSTIC TESTS AND VACCINES FOR TERRESTRIAL ANIMALS

2.1. 15 revised chapters and two new glossary definitions were adopted.

- Chapter 3.1.5. Crimean–Congo haemorrhagic fever was revised to align Table 1. Diagnostic test formats with the proposed case definition. The classification of the virus clades was updated in the section on nucleic acid detection, and the text was amended to emphasize that it is necessary to combine at least two molecular assays to ensure detection of the different CCHFV clades;
- Chapter 3.1.18. Rabies (infection with rabies virus and other lyssaviruses) underwent a moderate revision to add important technical details to the descriptions of the diagnostic tests and to update the tests and their ratings in Table 1 Test methods available for the diagnosis of rabies and their purpose. In the vaccine section, it was stressed that as injectable live-attenuated vaccines have been documented to cause vaccine-induced rabies, their use should be discontinued;
- Chapter 3.1.19. Rift Valley fever (infection with Rift Valley fever virus) underwent a moderate revision to update some of the test protocols. In the section on the MP-12 RVF vaccine, a statement and a reference were added indicating that the vaccine has also been successfully tested in Camelidae;
- Chapter 3.1.22. Trichinellosis (infection with *Trichinella* spp.) was extensively revised including updating the taxonomy of the genus *Trichinella* and re-ordering the preferred samples to be taken to maximize test sensitivity. In the diagnostic techniques section, the digestion and detection methods were updated, and three new direct detection methods were added;
- Chapter 3.2.2. American foulbrood of honey bees (infection of honey bees with *Paenibacillus larvae*) was revised to take account of the new genotype (ERIC V);
- Chapter 3.2.3. European foulbrood of honey bees (infection of honey bees with *Melissococcus plutonius*) underwent a moderate revision to include information on atypical strains, and to revise and update the sections on epizootiology and clinical signs and culture methods;
- Chapter 3.3.10. Fowlpox was revised to update the diagnostic methods and Table 1 Test methods available for diagnosis of fowlpox and their purpose;
- Chapter 3.3.13. Marek's disease was extensively updated including the addition of new sections on the nature and classification of the pathogen, zoonotic potential and biosafety

and biosecurity requirements and differential diagnosis. In the diagnostic techniques section, certain protocols were amended; and the vaccine section was thoroughly updated;

- Chapter 3.9.7. Influenza A virus of swine was extensively updated including thoroughly updating most of the diagnostic test protocols in the section on diagnostic techniques, adding a new section on gene sequencing, and revising Table 1 Test methods available for diagnosis of IAV-S and their purpose.

2.2. Details of texts adopted are provided in [Resolution No. 24](#) Amendments to the *Terrestrial Manual*.

2.3. The online version of the 12th edition (2023) of the *Terrestrial Manual* will be available by August 2023 (in English) and October 2023 (in Spanish) on the WOAHP public website.

2.1 Aquatic Animal Health Code

2.4. One new and 12 revised chapters in the *Aquatic Code* were adopted.

- A new Chapter 10.X. Infection with tilapia lake virus was adopted;
- The list of susceptible species in Chapter 10.9. Infection with spring viremia of carp virus, Chapter 11.4. Infection with *Marteilia refringens*, Chapter 11.2. Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa* and Chapter 11.3. Infection with *Bonamia ostreae* were amended after consideration of the work of the ad hoc Groups on Susceptibility of fish and molluscs species to infection with WOAHP listed diseases;
- Model Articles 11.X.9. to 11.X.14. for all mollusc disease-specific chapters were adopted to align with horizontal amendments previously applied to other disease-specific chapters.

2.5. Details of texts adopted are provided in [Resolution No. 21](#) Amendments to the *Aquatic Code*.

2.6. The online version of the 25th edition (2023) of the *Aquatic Code* will be available by August 2023 (in English, French and Spanish) on the WOAHP public website.

2.2 Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals

2.7. Twelve revised chapters of the *Aquatic Manual* were adopted. The following chapters were revised using the new disease-chapter template:

- Chapter 2.2.1. Acute hepatopancreatic necrosis disease;
- Chapter 2.2.3. Infection with *Hepatobacter penaei* (necrotising hepatopancreatitis);
- Chapter 2.2.4. Infection with infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus;
- Chapter 2.2.5. Infection with infectious myonecrosis virus;
- Chapter 2.2.7. Infection with Taura syndrome virus;
- Chapter 2.2.8. Infection with white spot syndrome virus;
- Chapter 2.3.1. Infection with *Aphanomyces invadans* (epizootic ulcerative syndrome);
- Chapter 2.3.2. Infection with epizootic haematopoietic necrosis virus.

2.8. Details of texts adopted are provided in [Resolution No. 22](#) Amendments to the *Aquatic Manual*.

2.9. The online version of the 10th edition (2023) of the *Aquatic Manual* will be available by August 2023 (in English) and October 2023 (in Spanish) on the WOAHP public website.

3 WOAHP OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF ANIMAL HEALTH STATUS AND CONTROL PROGRAMMES OF MEMBERS

3.1. WOAHP members can apply to be included in the list of countries with an officially recognised status for the following six priority diseases: bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), foot and mouth disease (FMD), contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP), African horse sickness, peste des petits ruminants (PPR) and classical swine fever (CSF).

3.2. At the 90th General Session, three countries were recognized as having new official animal health status:

- Colombia was officially recognized as being 'free from CBPP';
- A zone in Colombia and a zone in Russia were officially recognized as 'free from FMD with vaccination';
- A zone in Bolivia was officially recognized as 'free from FMD without vaccination'. For Bolivia, the entire territory has been officially recognized as free from FMD and this recognition was an extension of the areas where vaccination is no longer practised.

3.3. The [full list of countries and their recognized status for AHS, BSE, CBPP, CSF, FMD, and PPR can be accessed online](#) on the WOAHP public website.

4 TECHNICAL ITEM AND ANIMAL HEALTH FORUM ON AVIAN INFLUENZA

4.1. The 90th WOAHP General Session included the Technical Item '[Strategic challenges in the global control of high pathogenicity avian influenza](#)' as well as an Animal Health Forum, a format introduced for the first time in the General Session, to explore the challenges for the global control of HPAI.

4.2. The Technical Item, which was based on a questionnaire of WOAHP members, provided a comprehensive review of the unprecedented shift in the epidemiology and ecology of HPAI, the ensuing challenges this brings and possible solutions for consideration.

4.3. The [Animal Health Forum: 'Policy to action – The case of avian influenza'](#) was divided into four themes where invited WOAHP Delegates and industry representatives discussed issues on surveillance and monitoring for early detection and prevention, disease control strategies for prevention and control, trade aspects and global co-ordination. This multipronged approach aimed to facilitate a rich discussion and debate around science-based disease control strategies required to assist countries, and options for better global and regional coordination, prioritization and financing.

4.4. [Resolution No. 28](#) "Strategic challenges in the global control of high pathogenicity avian influenza" was adopted during the General Session. This resolution outlines the recommendations for WOAHP, its members and other partners to deal with the global threat of HPAI. It recommends to maintain transparency through timely and comprehensive reporting of avian influenza events to WOAHP; to promptly share samples and virus isolates, virus sequence data, and associated epidemiological information; to address capacity gaps, and ensure the sustainability of laboratories in under-resourced countries. The Resolution endorses a risk-based, comprehensive and systematic monitoring and surveillance in domestic birds, wild birds and in other susceptible animal species to support early warning and risk management at the human–animal–environment interface. It recommends that Members respect and implement the adopted WOAHP standards and recognize compliant zones and compartments of their trade partners; members, in consultation with the poultry sector may consider the implementation of vaccination as a complementary disease control tool that is based on sound surveillance and takes into account local factors and conditions. The resolution advocates for the implementation of national disease control and operational plans in cooperation and coordination with wildlife health authorities, public health authorities and the private sector to ensure a multi-stakeholder One Health effort to combat HPAI; and for increased investment in low- and middle-income countries.

5 GLOBAL ANIMAL HEALTH SITUATION

5.1. The "[Current animal health situation worldwide in regard to selected global strategies and infection with lumpy skin disease virus: analysis of events and trends](#)" was presented to the World Assembly during the General Session and focused on four areas. The first section provided an update on the state of play of WAHIS modernization and reporting by members. The second section presented an update on infection with lumpy skin disease virus, for which epizootic situations were observed in 2022. The third section focused on indicators on the progress made by members in relation to selected global animal disease control or eradication strategies. Finally, the role of the Data Integration Department was briefly highlighted.