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**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

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**OIE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS RELATED TO INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES**

Communication from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

The following communication, received on 11 October 2006, is being circulated at the request of the OIE.

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**Summary**

1. Under the mandate decided by its 167 Member Countries, the OIE develops international standards, guidelines and recommendations for animal diseases and pathogens, including pathogens with zoonotic potential, which meet the criteria established by the OIE. This mandate does not cover invasive species that are unrelated to a disease or pathogen of animals (including zoonotic diseases). The OIE will however continue to be sensitive to the needs of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by incorporating risk mitigation measures for potentially alien species if such species are linked to a specific OIE listed disease. The OIE will remind its Member Countries of the CBD's concerns in regard to the spread of invasive alien species and will encourage them to take relevant considerations into account when formulating veterinary certificates for international trade. A few months ago, the OIE wrote to the CBD proposing an official cooperation agreement between the two international organisations that would be submitted to the Member Countries of both organisations for endorsement and that would establish a technical cooperation between the CBD and the OIE on issues of common interests. The OIE stands ready to maintain close collaboration under an official agreement or less formal arrangements.

**Background**

2. At the Committee's 36th Meeting, the Secretariat raised the issue of international standards related to invasive alien species and foreshadowed the possibility that the CBD would make an informal presentation to the Committee at a subsequent meeting. The OIE is pleased to provide this clarification of the OIE mandate and the scope of OIE standards in relation to invasive alien species as defined by the CBD.

**Introduction and definitions**

3. The OIE met with the Secretariat of the CBD in The Hague in April 2002 and discussed issues relating to the mandates and activities of the two organizations. The CBD defines *alien species* as a species (including viruses and bacteria) occurring outside its normal distribution and *alien invasive species* as one that may threaten ecosystems, habitats or species.

4. As discussed at this meeting, the role of the OIE as a standard setting body must be judged relative to the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the so-called SPS Agreement) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the OIE internal texts and resolutions voted by OIE member countries. The SPS Agreement applies to sanitary and phytosanitary measures to protect human, animal and plant life or health relative from importation of pathogens, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers. The recommendations for animal health outlined in the *OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Codes and Manuals* are recognized within the SPS Agreement as reference standards that have the objective of safeguarding international trade in animals and animal products and controlling animal diseases and zoonoses worldwide while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers. Within this framework, the OIE does not have a clear role in the containment or exclusion of alien species, or alien invasive species, where these are not related to diseases of animals (including zoonotic disease agents).

5. The CBD has placed emphasis on the greater likelihood of incursions of invasive species due to rapidly accelerating trade and modern forms of transport. The OIE is similarly concerned about the increased spread of pathogens (and their vectors) and the emergence of new pathogens, arising from these factors. There is a significant difference in the two organizations' mandates. For the CBD, species of interest are classified according to their spread outside their normal distributions, while the OIE does not classify pathogens on the basis of origin. OIE Standards are developed and Member Countries' reporting obligations are based on the relevance of diseases/pathogens to international trade in animals and animal products, and on their potential public health impact.

6. Moreover, the OIE mandate does not address the impact that a species (except in the case of pathogenic agents and disease vectors) may have on the environment of an importing country. Save for pest species that are subject to compulsory reporting (see examples below), the OIE's primary concern is to prevent the importation of a significant pathogen or its vector into an importing country via an imported commodity (animal or animal product). This approach reflects the OIE's primary orientation towards health protection. Notwithstanding these differences in approach, the OIE acknowledges the important goals of the Convention, which aims to develop strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. The OIE recently wrote to the CBD proposing an official agreement between the two international organisations that would make it possible to establish a high level of technical cooperation on issues of common interests.

## **Discussion**

7. Since January 2005 the OIE has listed diseases and/or pathogens for reporting purposes and has, for many of these diseases, developed international standards, guidelines and recommendations in regards to the protection of animal and human health and trade.

8. The following criteria apply to the classification of diseases for reporting purposes:

- Potential for international spread;
- Zoonotic potential;
- Significance of spread of a disease within native populations; and
- Zoonotic potential and probability of rapid spread of emerging diseases.

9. The current OIE lists of diseases (terrestrial and aquatic animals) are attached. Diseases are listed according to the species of animal affected (cattle, sheep and goats, equines, multiple species etc.), not according to possible intermediate species or vector associated with the disease. Nevertheless, the OIE does provide guidance on risk mitigation measures relevant to the management

of disease vectors in order to prevent spread of the disease via trade. Thus, OIE guidelines could be helpful in protecting against the entry of potentially alien species, such as ticks, mosquitoes and *Culicoides* spp. etc., on the basis that the OIE disseminates technical information relevant to the detection and prevention of diseases such as anaplasmosis, Japanese encephalitis virus and bluetongue that can be spread by these vectors. To further illustrate, if a country imports sheep from a bluetongue infected country, the risk mitigation measures to be implemented before export apply to both the sheep and to the vector (*Culicoides* spp.) that might infect the sheep, even though the primary concern may be perceived to be prevention of the disease *per se*. The OIE also publishes recommendations in regard to prevention of spread of parasites via contamination of the environment (as well as infestation of the animal host) for certain pathogens, such as screwworm fly (*C. hominivorax* and *C. bezziana*), which have resistant free living forms.

10. Many other examples can be quoted to illustrate how the current OIE international standards support the objectives of the CBD by implication.

### **Conclusions**

11. It would not, in our view, be feasible to develop additional standards, guidelines and recommendations in the OIE *Codes* with the primary aim of preventing the spread of alien species where these are not systematically linked to a specific disease and vector or group of diseases or with the aim to protect against animal disease and zoonoses. However, the SPS Agreement makes provision for member countries to include non OIE listed disease agents and diseases in international veterinary certificates for trade if these diseases/agents are considered as a non acceptable risk for the importing country and on the basis of a scientifically based import risk analysis. In this context, the OIE stands ready to enhance its close technical cooperation with the CBD. OIE member countries could support by implication the exclusion of potentially invasive alien species but this decision would remain the prerogative of the importing country and not be the subject of a prescription in the sense of the OIE's standards.

**CHAPTER 2.1.1**  
**TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL DISEASES LISTED BY THE OIE**

Article 2.1.1.3.

The following diseases are included in the OIE List.

1. The following diseases are included within the category of multiple species diseases:
  - Anthrax
  - Aujeszky's disease
  - Bluetongue
  - Brucellosis (*Brucella abortus*)
  - Brucellosis (*Brucella melitensis*)
  - Brucellosis (*Brucella suis*)
  - Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever
  - Echinococcosis/hydatidosis
  - Foot and mouth disease
  - Heartwater
  - Japanese encephalitis
  - Leptospirosis
  - New world screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*)
  - Old world screwworm (*Chrysomya bezziana*)
  - Paratuberculosis
  - Q fever
  - Rabies
  - Rift Valley fever
  - Rinderpest
  - Trichinellosis
  - Tularemia
  - Vesicular stomatitis
  - West Nile fever.
  
2. The following diseases are included within the category of cattle diseases:
  - Bovine anaplasmosis
  - Bovine babesiosis
  - Bovine genital campylobacteriosis

- Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
  - Bovine tuberculosis
  - Bovine viral diarrhoea
  - Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia
  - Enzootic bovine leukosis
  - Haemorrhagic septicaemia
  - Infectious bovine rhinotracheitis/infectious pustular vulvovaginitis
  - Lumpy skin disease
  - Malignant catarrhal fever (Wildebeest only)
  - Theileriosis
  - Trichomonosis
  - Trypanosomosis (tsetse-transmitted).
3. The following diseases are included within the category of sheep and goat diseases:
- Caprine arthritis/encephalitis
  - Contagious agalactia
  - Contagious caprine pleuropneumonia
  - Enzootic abortion of ewes (ovine chlamydiosis)
  - Maedi-visna
  - Nairobi sheep disease
  - Ovine epididymitis (*Brucella ovis*)
  - Peste des petits ruminants
  - Salmonellosis (*S. abortusovis*)
  - Scrapie
  - Sheep pox and goat pox.
4. The following diseases are included within the category of equine diseases:
- African horse sickness
  - Contagious equine metritis
  - Dourine
  - Equine encephalomyelitis (Eastern)
  - Equine encephalomyelitis (Western)
  - Equine infectious anaemia
  - Equine influenza
  - Equine piroplasmosis
  - Equine rhinopneumonitis

- Equine viral arteritis
  - Glanders
  - Surra (*Trypanosoma evansi*)
  - Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis.
5. The following diseases are included within the category of swine diseases:
- African swine fever
  - Classical swine fever
  - Nipah virus encephalitis
  - Porcine cysticercosis
  - Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome
  - Swine vesicular disease
  - Transmissible gastroenteritis.
6. The following diseases are included within the category of avian diseases:
- Avian chlamydiosis
  - Avian infectious bronchitis
  - Avian infectious laryngotracheitis
  - Avian mycoplasmosis (*Mycoplasma gallisepticum*)
  - Avian mycoplasmosis (*Mycoplasma synoviae*)
  - Duck virus hepatitis
  - Fowl cholera
  - Fowl typhoid
  - Highly pathogenic avian influenza in birds and low pathogenicity notifiable avian influenza in poultry as defined in Chapter 2.7.12.
  - Infectious bursal disease (Gumboro disease)
  - Marek's disease
  - Newcastle disease
  - Pullorum disease
  - Turkey rhinotracheitis.
7. The following diseases are included within the category of lagomorph diseases:
- Myxomatosis
  - Rabbit haemorrhagic disease.
8. The following diseases are included within the category of bee diseases:
- Acarapisosis of honey bees
  - American foulbrood of honey bees

- European foulbrood of honey bees
  - Small hive beetle infestation (*Aethina tumida*)
  - *Tropilaelaps* infestation of honey bees
  - Varroosis of honey bees.
9. The following diseases are included within the category of other diseases:
- Camelpox
  - Leishmaniosis.

**CHAPTER 1.2.3**  
**AQUATIC ANIMAL DISEASES LISTED BY THE OIE**

Article 1.2.3.1.

The following diseases of fish are listed by the OIE:

- Epizootic haematopoietic necrosis
- Infectious haematopoietic necrosis
- Spring viraemia of carp
- Viral haemorrhagic septicaemia
- Infectious salmon anaemia
- Epizootic ulcerative syndrome
- Gyrodactylosis (*Gyrodactylus salaris*)
- Red sea bream iridoviral disease
- Koi herpesvirus disease

Article 1.2.3.2.

The following diseases of molluscs are listed by the OIE:

- Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*
- Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*
- Infection with *Marteilia refringens*
- Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*
- Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*
- Infection with *Xenohalotis californiensis*
- Abalone viral mortality

Article 1.2.3.3.

The following diseases of crustaceans are listed by the OIE:

- Taura syndrome
- White spot disease
- Yellowhead disease
- Tetrahedral baculovirosis (*Baculovirus penaei*)
- Spherical baculovirosis (*Penaeus monodon*-type baculovirus)



- Infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis
  - Crayfish plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*)
  - Necrotising hepatopancreatitis<sup>1</sup>
  - Infectious myonecrosis<sup>1</sup>.
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<sup>1</sup> Listing of this disease is under study.