

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

**DECISIONS RELEVANT TO THE SPS AGREEMENT TAKEN
BY THE OIE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
AT THE 66TH GENERAL SESSION**

Submission by the Office international des épizooties (OIE)

The 66th General Session of the OIE International Committee was held from 25 to 29 May 1998 at the headquarters of the Organization (Paris, France).

The decisions relevant to the SPS Agreement taken by the OIE International Committee during the Session are as follows:

Adoption of new measures for the *International Animal Health Code*

Additions or amendments on the following subjects were made to the *International Animal Health Code* (the Code):

1. Animal pathogens
2. Anthrax
3. Leptospirosis
4. Old World screwworm (*Chrysomya bezziana*)
5. Collection and processing of equine embryos/ova
6. Collection and processing of South American camelid embryos/ova
7. Collection and processing of cervid embryos/ova
8. Zoonoses transmissible from non-human primates
9. Risk analysis for veterinary biologicals
10. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)

The International Committee continued to pay particular attention to BSE:

The newly adopted chapter provides a more precise definition of the various aspects of risk analysis, such as the manner in which countries should carry out surveillance for the disease. The description of the conditions that a country must fulfil in order to be recognized as free from the disease was amended to take into account all the criteria to be considered in this analysis.

A new category of country was created for countries that have not demonstrated a BSE free status and have not declared any cases of the disease. This definition remains under study, however, along with all the provisions relating to international trade in live cattle and products from cattle from these countries.

Semen, protein-free tallow and dicalcium phosphate as well as gelatin and collagen prepared exclusively from hides and skins were added to the list of products for which no restrictions should be applied in international trade, subject to their being derived from healthy cattle.

New articles were adopted to cover international trade in gelatin and collagen prepared from bones as well as trade in tallow that is not protein free.

A number of recommendations in the chapter remain under study. This method of proceeding was chosen in order to identify clearly the questions to which no answer has yet been found, and which the OIE will be studying in depth during the coming months.

Recognition of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy status of Member Countries

The OIE International Committee assigned to the Foot-and Mouth-Disease and Other Epizootics Commission the task of developing, for presentation at the 67th General Session, a procedure that would allow the OIE to accept the evidence supplied by Member Countries in support of their declaration of freedom from BSE. This same Commission is also to examine whether it would be opportune for the OIE to establish a list of BSE-free countries.

Recognition of the foot and mouth disease status of Member Countries

The Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission, meeting in September 1997 and January 1998, revised the list of countries or zones of countries that it considers to be free from foot and mouth disease, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Chapter 2.1.1 of the *Code*. This list was sent to all Member Countries, who were given a period of 60 days in which to react in writing. No comments on the subject were received by the OIE Central Bureau.

In the form of a Resolution, the OIE International Committee adopted the proposed list, to which were added, in respect of the May 1997 list, additional countries free from foot-and-mouth disease without vaccination (Bulgaria, El Salvador, Greece, Latvia), an additional country with a free zone without vaccination (Botswana), and a country with a free zone with vaccination (Brazil).

Epidemiological surveillance systems for rinderpest

The OIE International Committee adopted in the form of a Resolution the *Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance Systems for Rinderpest* revised by the Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Other Epizootic Commission.

Amendments to the International *Aquatic Animal Health Code*

The OIE International Committee adopted a revised chapter on gyrodactylosis in the *International Aquatic Animal Health Code*.

OIE Reference Laboratories

The OIE International Committee took note of the additions and changes recommended by the Standards Commission in regard to Reference Laboratories and disease experts. The OIE currently has 116 Reference Laboratories covering 45 diseases or groups of diseases in Lists A or B.

The International Committee was also informed on progress made in terms of international standardisation of diagnostic tests applicable to a certain number of animal diseases.

Designation of a new Collaborating Centre

The centers for epidemiology and risk analysis of the United States Department of Agriculture, located at Fort Collins in Colorado, have been chosen as OIE Collaborating Centre for animal disease surveillance systems and risk analysis, thus bringing the number of OIE Collaborating Centres to seven.
