

**DECISIONS RELEVANT TO THE SPS AGREEMENT
TAKEN BY THE OIE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
AT THE 68th GENERAL SESSION**

Submission by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE)

The 68th General Session of the International Committee of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) was held from 22 to 26 May 2000 at the headquarters of the Organisation (Paris, France).

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

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

By Resolution No. IX of the OIE International Committee, additions or amendments were made to the *International Animal Health Code* (the *Code*) on the following subjects:

1. Definitions
2. Evaluation of Veterinary Services
3. Zoning/regionalisation
4. Aujeszky's disease
5. Anthrax
6. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)
7. Japanese encephalitis
8. Various provisions relating to embryos (African horse sickness, bovine brucellosis, foot and mouth disease, rinderpest, peste des petits ruminants and vesicular stomatitis)
9. Processing of bovine embryos

The International Committee also adopted a Resolution on the equivalence between the measures applied in the United Kingdom including the slaughter and destruction of cattle presenting a risk of bovine spongiform encephalopathy and those relating to the elimination of cohorts of cattle recommended in Chapter 3.2.13 (BSE) of the *Code*.

Recognition of the status of Member Countries in regard to foot and mouth disease and rinderpest

The OIE Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission, meeting in September 1999 and January 2000, revised the list of countries that it considers to be entirely or partly free from foot and mouth disease (FMD), in accordance with the conditions laid down in Chapter 2.1.1 of the *Code*, and established a first list of countries free from rinderpest infection, in accordance with Appendix 4.5.1.1 of the *Code*. These two lists have been sent to the Member Countries, who have a period of 60 days in which to respond.

In Resolution No. XII, the OIE International Committee asked the Director General of the OIE to publish the list of Member Countries recognised as FMD-free countries. Compared to the list published in May 1999, the May 2000 list includes three more countries free from FMD without vaccination (Argentina, Swaziland and Ukraine), and six States in Brazil that are FMD-free with vaccination (District Fédéral, Goiás, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais, Paraná and São Paulo).

In Resolution No. XIII, the International Committee asked for the list of countries free from rinderpest infection to be published.

Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines

By Resolution No. X, the OIE International Committee adopted a new edition of the *Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines* prepared by the OIE Standards Commission with the help of numerous experts. This new edition will be available at the end of 2000.

Management and technical requirements for veterinary diagnostic laboratories

By Resolution No. XI, the OIE International Committee adopted a standard for management and technical requirements for laboratories conducting tests for infectious animal diseases. This text is an interpretative document, for veterinary laboratories, of standard ISO 17025. It provides a standard for use by accrediting bodies carrying out assessments of veterinary laboratories in the field of infectious diseases.

International Aquatic Animal Health Code and Diagnostic Manual for Aquatic Animal Diseases

By Resolution No. XIV, the OIE International Committee adopted the updates of the third edition of the *International Aquatic Animal Health Code* and of the *Diagnostic Manual for Aquatic Animal Diseases*. In the 2000 edition, these two works will be combined in a single volume.

OIE Reference Laboratories

The OIE International Committee took note of the additions and amendments recommended by the Standards Commission regarding Reference Laboratories and experts on diseases. The OIE currently has 139 Reference Laboratories covering 64 diseases or groups of diseases on Lists A or B.

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

Collaborating Centres

The list of OIE Collaborating Centres remains unchanged. There are currently nine. These Centres can provide Member Countries with technical assistance in the field of animal disease diagnosis and control, risk analysis, and veterinary drugs.

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During the 68th General Session, other decisions were taken relating to the management or future strategic directions of the OIE.

Appointment of the new Director General of the OIE

On 24 May 2000, Dr Bernard Vallat was appointed Director General of the Office International des Epizooties for a period of five years. He will take up his duties on 1 January 2001.

Election of members of the OIE Specialist Commissions

The statutory term of office of members of the OIE Specialist Commissions is three years. As this period expired this year, the OIE International Committee conducted new elections. The list of newly elected or re-elected members is given in the Appendix.

Third Strategic Plan

A document entitled "Third Strategic Plan 2001 – 2005" was adopted by the International Committee. Without modifying the statutory missions of the OIE, this document indicates the orientations that should be priorities for the next five years, and the strategies to be considered for implementing them. It recommends strengthening the activities of the OIE in the field of animal disease information, development of scientific standards and preparation of guidelines on surveillance and control of animal diseases and zoonoses. At the same time, the plan emphasises the need to strengthen and co-ordinate research on animal diseases by means of OIE Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres.

Appendix

Election of the Members of the Specialist Commissions

International Animal Health Code Commission

President : Dr Alejandro B. Thiermann (United States of America)
Vice-President : Dr Wolf-Arno Valder (Germany)
Secretary General : Dr David Wilson (Australia)

Members

Dr Alexander N. Panin (Russia)
Dr Rachid Benaissa (Algeria)
Dr Stuart K. Hargreaves (Zimbabwe)

Foot and Mouth Disease and Other Epizootics Commission

President : Dr Gavin R. Thomson (South Africa)
Vice-President : Prof. Vincenzo Caporale (Italy)
Secretary General : Dr Eduardo Correa Melo (Chile)

Standards Commission

President : Prof. Marian Trusczyński (Poland)
Vice-President : Dr Steve Edwards (United Kingdom)
Secretary General : Dr Beverly Schmitt (United States of America)

Fish Diseases Commission

President : Prof. Tore Håstein (Norway)
Vice-President : Dr Christian Michel (France)
Secretary General : Prof. Barry J. Hill (United Kingdom)

Members

Dr Eva-Maria Bernoth (Australia)
Prof. Donald V. Lightner (United States of America)
