

**COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS AND
THE OFFICE INTERNATIONAL DES EPIZOOTIES**

Submission by the OIE

The following is a summary of collaboration between the Codex Alimentarius and the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) as expressed by the Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Mr. Tom Billy, when reporting on the outcome of the meeting of the Codex Executive Committee of 28-29 June 2001, and in the intervention of Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director-General of the OIE, during the 24th General Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

1. The WTO SPS Agreement requires the international standard-setting organisations to further the implementation of the objectives of the Agreement by increasing coordination and integration between international and national systems, secure the best available scientific and technical advice, and to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.
2. In accordance with those mandates, the Director-General of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) and the Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) met to consider appropriate collaboration in the areas of their respective competence. So as to modernise and update current practices (to ensure a seamless interface between the two standard-setting organisations) common concerns relating to food safety and trade were discussed. The needs of developing countries, including technical assistance by the appropriate bodies aimed at maximizing the benefits of the SPS Agreement, were also discussed.
3. A number of general (such as those set out in the Agreement itself) and specific areas were identified for further collaboration:

General

- equivalence;
- risk analysis;
- regionalization and zoning;
- surveillance and monitoring;
- transparency; and
- control, inspection and approval procedures (e.g. certification, traceability, quality assurance).

Specific

- zoonoses;
- veterinary drugs, including on antimicrobial resistance;
- animal feed;
- pre-harvest food safety; and
- biotechnology.

4. These matters are elaborated in the strategic plans of both OIE and Codex and will be implemented in their respective work plans. The areas of mutual interest are addressed in the following subsidiary bodies:

Codex

- Codex Committee on General Principles;
- Codex Committee on Food Hygiene;
- Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems;
- Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food;
- Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling;
- Codex Committee on Meat and Poultry Hygiene;
- Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products;
- Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Foods Derived from Biotechnology; and the
- Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding.

OIE

- International Animal Health Code Commission;
- Foot-and-Mouth and Other Epizootics Commission
- Standards Commission;
- Working Group on Biotechnology;
- Working Group on Veterinary Drugs; and the
- Ad Hoc Group on Antimicrobial Resistance.

5. Mr. Billy and Dr. Vallat committed to improve cross-utilisation of experts in the provision of scientific and technical advice, such as in ad-hoc groups, subsidiary bodies and conferences. They also agreed to explore mechanisms to: conduct a census so as to facilitate a comparison of existing OIE/Codex standards on the same subjects; review and harmonize future and existing standards, including on consistency of terminology and principles; improve transparency; and enhance the exchange of information on subjects of mutual interest.

6. Both Codex and OIE agreed to update existing, or, if appropriate, develop a new arrangement between OIE and /FAO and WHO reflecting the collaboration required of both OIE and Codex pursuant to the SPS Agreement.
