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Page: 1/3

**Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

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## 82<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE SPS COMMITTEE

### COMMUNICATION FROM THE WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH (OIE)

The following communication, received on 4 March 2022, is being circulated at the request of the OIE.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) is pleased to provide this report for the information of WTO Members attending the 82<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the SPS Committee.

The report summarizes key activities in the OIE's standard-setting work programme, animal health information, capacity building activities and other relevant topics.

#### 1 OIE 89<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL SESSION

1.1. Unfortunately, the 89<sup>th</sup> Annual General Session of the World Assembly of National Delegates to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) will be held virtually from Monday 23 to Thursday 26 May 2022 and will be conducted through a series of virtual sessions each day. This decision was taken by the OIE Council in coordination with the Director General in light of the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic.

#### 2 OIE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC ANIMALS

2.1. The four Specialist Commission met virtually during February 2022 to continue work to review existing, and develop new, OIE international standards in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code, the Aquatic Animal Health Code, the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals and the Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals, along with other activities relevant to each Commission's terms of reference.

2.2. During the 89<sup>th</sup> OIE General Session new and revised chapters of the OIE International Standards will be proposed for adoption. To facilitate this process, the February 2022 meeting report of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission, the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission and the Biological Standards Commission will be distributed in two parts: Part A (to be published during March 2022) will provide information about the new and revised texts that will be proposed for adoption at the 89<sup>th</sup> General Session; and Part B (to be published during April/May 2022), will provide information about other topics discussed at Commissions' February 2022 meetings including texts circulated for comment and other information. The report of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases will be published as one report during March 2022 because it does not include any draft standards for adoption.

2.3. The reports of these four Commission meetings will be available on the OIE website once finalised. The links to these reports, once available, are provided below:

- [Biological Standards Commission](#) February 2022 meeting report;
- [Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases](#) February 2022 meeting report;
- [Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission](#) February 2022 meeting report ;
- [Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission](#) February 2022 meeting report.

2.4. The OIE would like to highlight to the Committee the following work undertaken during the February meetings:

### **2.1 Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)**

2.5. The Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) in collaboration with the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (Scientific Commission), together with the recommendations from several OIE ad hoc Groups, has undertaken an in-depth review of Chapter 11.4, Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, of the Terrestrial Code. Amendments include updated provisions on official BSE risk status as well as revised provisions on BSE risk assessment and surveillance. The revised chapter was circulated in the Code Commission February 2022 report and will be proposed for adoption at the 2022 General Session.

### **2.2 Rinderpest**

2.6. The deadliest cattle disease in history, was officially declared eradicated from the world in 2011. Chapter 8.16, Infection with rinderpest virus, remained in the Terrestrial Code to address the risk of re-emergence. A thorough review of Chapter 8.16. has been conducted to improve surveillance, notification, and control provisions, and the structure of the chapter and trade provisions have also been revised to ensure the maintenance of global freedom and its prompt recovery in the case of re-emergence. The revised chapter was circulated in the Code Commission February 2022 report and will be proposed for adoption at the 2022 General Session.

### **2.3 Rabies**

2.7. Following the recent adoption of the revised Chapter 8.14, Infection with rabies virus, the Code Commission, in collaboration with the Scientific Commission, has addressed some outstanding aspects of the chapter, including the revision of recommendations for the importation of dogs from countries or zones infected with rabies virus. The revised chapter was circulated for member comments in the Code Commission February 2022 report.

### **2.4 New chapter on biosecurity**

2.8. The Code Commission has agreed to develop a new chapter on biosecurity for Section 4 of the Terrestrial Code and has requested that an ad hoc Group be convened to draft a new chapter. It is expected that the ad hoc Group will report back to the Code Commission at its September 2022 meeting.

### **2.5 Section 5 Trade measures, import/export procedures and veterinary certification**

2.9. The Code Commission has agreed to revise Chapters 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 in Section 5 of the Terrestrial Code, to update recommendations to address the key steps in the process of international trade, including measures at origin, in transit, and on arrival, given that these chapters have not updated for many years. and has requested that ad hoc Group be convened to draft a new chapter. The Code Commission has requested that an ad hoc Group be convened to scope this work and report back to the Code Commission at its September 2022 meeting.

### **2.6 Chapter 1.4. Aquatic Animal Health Surveillance of the Aquatic Code**

2.10. The Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission has continued its substantial revision of Chapter 1.4. to provide guidance for self-declaration of freedom from disease, rather than providing general guidance on aquatic animal health surveillance. This revision also supports the work being undertaken to revise Articles X.X.4–X.X.8 in the disease-specific chapters of the Aquatic Code which provide recommendations for the demonstration of disease freedom. The revised Chapter 1.4. and model Articles X.X.4–X.X.8 will be circulated in the February 2022 report and will be proposed for adoption at the 2022 General Session.

## **3 PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE TO THE OIE AND ITS MEMBER COUNTRIES**

3.1. The Director General establishes ad hoc Groups to provide specific technical and scientific advice required to support the work of the OIE and the OIE Specialist Commissions. The OIE

publishes information on its website providing the dates and terms of reference of proposed ad hoc Groups as well as reports once these have been validated and considered by the relevant Specialist Commissions. This information is available on the OIE website at: [ad hoc Groups information](#).

3.2. Two permanent OIE Working Groups, Wildlife and AMR, also provide specific technical and scientific advice required to support the work of the OIE and the OIE Specialist Commissions. Information and report of these Working Groups is available on the OIE website at: [Working Groups & Reports: OIE - World Organisation for Animal Health](#).

#### **4 SELF-DECLARED DISEASE STATUS**

4.1. In accordance with the provisions of the Terrestrial Code or the Aquatic Code, OIE members may wish to self-declare the freedom of their country, zone or compartment from a disease. A member wishing to publish its self-declaration for disease-freedom, should provide the relevant documented evidence of compliance with the provisions of the relevant chapters of the Codes. The OIE will screen any applications and consider them for publication in accordance with its [Standard Operating Procedure](#). Since the 81st SPS Committee meeting, the OIE has published a country self-declaration for high pathogenicity avian influenza and rabies, respectively.

4.2. All published self-declarations are available on the OIE website at: [Self-declared Disease Status - OIE - World Organisation for Animal Health](#).

#### **5 MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF OIE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS – THE OIE OBSERVATORY**

5.1. The pilot phase of the OIE Observatory's was completed in 2021. During this phase, five prototypes were developed to identify internal and external sources of information that could be used to monitor the implementation of OIE standards. The last prototype, focused on the OIE Standards related to African swine fever, will be published in April 2022. Lessons learned from these prototypes have been instrumental in the establishment of a set of indicators to assist in monitoring members' adherence to OIE Standards. This work has assisted the OIE Observatory in the development of its first annual implementation review report, planned for publication at the end of 2022.

5.2. The indicators identified have different data sources, internal to the OIE (e.g. the OIE World Animal Health Information System, the Performance of Veterinary Services Evaluation Tool) but also external to the OIE. WTO SPS notifications and disputes are an important part of the external information supporting the monitoring of the implementation of OIE Standards.

5.3. Further work will follow-up on the gaps identified in the prototypes and the development of the annual implementation review report(s) and assess the value, impact and cost-benefits that potential adjustments could deliver for the OIE and its members.

5.4. For more information on the work and importance of the Observatory, the OIE Panorama published a [special edition](#) about the Observatory in December 2021.

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