

## **Seminar on sound governance for Veterinary Services**

Gaborone, Botswana, 16-18 January 2008

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### Recommendation 2

Facilitation of regional and international trade of livestock and livestock products.

#### **CONSIDERING**

That in 1994, the founding countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) gave the OIE a mandate to publish standards aimed at avoiding the introduction of pathogens via international trade in animals and animal products, while at the same time preventing countries from setting up unjustified sanitary barriers,

That the standards developed by the OIE and contained in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code deal with Chapters relating to both generic issues and specific animal diseases. Generic issues also deal with ethics in international trade and the quality of national Veterinary Services, a prerequisite for trust in the reliability of veterinary export certificates. Specific disease Chapters spell out the recommendations aimed at avoiding spread of transboundary animal diseases during export of live animals and products,

That the risk of disease spread during exports of animals and animal products such as meat, milk, hides and skins, wool, honey and products derived from aquatic animals differ according to the product in question and, in particular, according to the procedures used to inactivate any harmful pathogens it may be carrying,

That OIE standards are science-based and are developed by leading scientific experts and adopted and updated through an annual transparent and democratic approach by all OIE Members,

That the OIE already has a voluntary dispute settlement mechanism to resolve trade disputes on a scientific basis,

That OIE standards are being developed on the basis of a highly meticulous risk analysis but taking into account that zero risk does not exist. These more detailed standards will avoid the use of arbitrary risk analysis and favour a more systematic use of published science based OIE standards,

That some Chapters in the Code dealing with the innocuousness of certain products that have undergone processes to render them harmless regardless of the animal health status of the exporting country are sometimes incomplete or not in line with new processes adopted by the Agrifood industry,

The OIE is actively promoting the concepts of zoning and compartmentalisation in order to facilitate trade from countries where certain important animal diseases exist but which can be brought under control through strict biosecurity measures complying with OIE standards,

## **THE SEMINAR ON GOOD GOVERNANCE**

### **RECOMMENDS THAT:**

1. The OIE continues to develop standards based on meticulous risk analysis in order to enable especially importing countries to base their import conditions primarily on OIE standards and thus avoid carrying out expensive or arbitrary national risk analysis activities before authorising imports. In this respect, the OIE should as far as practically possible, make optimal use of expertise gathered in developing countries;
2. The OIE publish guidelines on the use of commodity approach based on existing standards contained in the OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes;
3. The OIE continuously develops standards on commodity based trade covering a wider range of products taking into account that new research programmes on the safety of certain animal products need to be undertaken to address unresolved issues of major importance to the development of world trade. Safety of matured meat coming from animals from FMD infected zones will be a priority;
4. The OIE Reference Laboratories be encouraged to carry out more research on the risk assessment of harmful pathogens in animal products to ensure food safety and to avoid the spread of pathogens; While the OIE will do its utmost to convince countries to base their import and export conditions on OIE standards and not on the mere existence of animal diseases or only on national risk analysis, Countries should also be warned not to base their import/export approach solely on the systematic inactivation of pathogens in products and thus relax on epidemio-surveillance and other activities relating to the prevention and control of animal diseases;
5. Countries be encouraged to develop and apply the concepts of zoning and compartmentalisation as a measure to promote trade of animals and animal products from zones and compartments complying with OIE guidelines and recommendations on husbandry and biosecurity practices under the close supervision of the Veterinary Services.
6. The OIE continues to act as mediator of trade dispute for countries wishing to undertake such dispute settlements on a voluntary basis;
7. The OIE continues to encourage developing and in-transition countries to strengthen their Veterinary Services using the OIE-PVS tool which is an important consideration for importing countries to trust the reliability of veterinary certificates accompanying consignments of animals and animal products;