Recommendation No. 1

Disaster management: the role and preparedness of Veterinary Services

CONSIDERING THAT

1. The growing interdependence between humans, animals and the environment in which they live is causing global health problems whose resolution requires a more holistic approach;

2. Veterinary Services have the primary responsibility for ensuring early detection and rapid response to emerging and re-emerging animal diseases, meaning that they must be strengthened in their entirety to prepare them to face the challenges arising from globalisation and disaster hazards, including climate change and bioterrorism;

3. There is a link between natural and technological disasters and the incidence of emerging and re-emerging animal diseases, including zoonoses;

4. OIE Members in the Region view with concern the obstacles facing Member Countries and their under-preparedness to cope with disasters influencing the incidence of emerging and re-emerging animal diseases;

5. Veterinary Authorities should prepare their disaster reduction plans, including emergency plans, at all technical and administrative levels of the Veterinary Service and forge partnerships with other related sectors;

6. It is cheaper to prevent and prepare for the consequences of disasters and that the Veterinary Authority has little involvement in the prevention stage of the disaster reduction cycle;

7. Member Countries of the Region have requested the OIE to become more directly involved in the issue of disaster risk reduction and management; and

8. Member Countries are willing to cooperate on disaster risk reduction and management.

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. Member Countries identify and include in their priorities the human and material resources needed to avoid and reduce the impact of potential disasters on animal health and welfare;

2. Veterinary Services enhance their cooperation and coordination with all sectors involved in disaster risk reduction and management, in particular public health authorities, to prevent and control zoonoses;

3. Member Countries promote the exchange of expertise on disaster risk reduction and management among countries in the Region;
4. The OIE continue its support for building the technical, management and good governance capacity of Veterinary Services, in order to contribute to reducing the incidence of emerging and re-emerging diseases and to animal welfare through disaster risk reduction and management;

5. The OIE continue its work of supporting Members by means of programmes such as the evaluation of performance of Veterinary Services (OIE PVS Tool), PVS Gap Analysis, legislation missions and any other support via the PVS Pathway, in order to strengthen Veterinary Services, giving appropriate coverage to disaster risk reduction and management;

6. The OIE, through its Reference Centres and in collaboration with other international organisations, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), and with relevant regional organisations, continue supporting Veterinary Authorities in developing surveillance, simulation models and other tools that take into account the relationship between natural and biological disasters, no matter whether it is of natural or intentional origin;

7. The Director General of the OIE contact the Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in order to promote interaction between the two organisations in the areas of animal health and welfare, and disaster risk reduction and management;

8. The OIE support Member Countries by creating opportunities for Veterinary Service training and capacity-building on disaster risk reduction and management, and by promoting the need for countries to share information and experience, with the emphasis on hazard, vulnerability and risk studies, and the development of disaster reduction plans;

9. The OIE consider disaster risk reduction and management in its veterinary curriculum development work; and

10. The OIE work with Cuba on finalising the establishment of an OIE Collaborating Centre on disaster risk reduction and management.

(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas on 29 November 2012 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 30 May 2013)