

Reports

**of the Meetings of the OIE Regional Commissions
held during the 81st General Session
in Paris, 27 May 2013**

NOTE FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

Draft Recommendations proposed during the meetings of the Regional Commissions held during the General Session must be presented again for adoption during the next Regional Commission Conference held in the respective regions, so as to be examined and possibly adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates during the General Session that follows the Regional Conferences.

**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

Paris, 27 May 2013

The OIE Regional Commission for Africa met on 27 May 2013 at the Maison de la Chimie, Paris, at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by 94 participants, including Delegates and observers from 38 Members of the Commission and 3 observer countries and representatives from 11 international or regional organisations:

Members of the Commission: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Observer countries/territories: Liberia, South Sudan, United States of America.

International/regional organisations: AU-IBAR⁴¹, AU-PANVAC⁴², FAO, CEBEVIRHA⁴³, CIRAD⁴⁴, ECCAS⁴⁵, ICAFAW⁴⁶, IFAH, ILRI, WAEMU⁴⁷, World Bank.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Theogen Rutagwenda (Rwanda), Vice-President of the Commission, and Dr Yacouba Samaké, OIE Regional Representative for Africa.

Dr Theogen Rutagwenda, Delegate of Rwanda and Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, presented apologies from Dr Molomo who had been unable to attend the meeting in person. He welcomed all participants to the meeting.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda, described in the Appendix, was unanimously adopted. The Agenda and the annexes concerning agenda items were circulated.

⁴¹ AU-IBAR: African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources

⁴² AU-PANVAC: African Union, Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre

⁴³ CEBEVIRHA: Economic Commission on Cattle, Meat and Fish resources in CEMAC

⁴⁴ CIRAD: Center for International Research on Environment and Development

⁴⁵ ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States

⁴⁶ ICAFAW: International Coalition for Animal Welfare

⁴⁷ WAEMU: West African Economic and Monetary Union

2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE

Dr Jaouad Berrada, Delegate of Morocco and member of the Council, reported that outstanding contributions from a number of countries had become a matter of concern and urged OIE Delegates from the region to follow up on their country's contribution to the OIE.

He encouraged Member Countries of the region to upgrade their contribution when possible.

3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa

Dr Theogen Rutagwenda, Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, on behalf of Dr Marosi Molomo, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, gave a brief review of the activities in which the OIE Regional Commission had participated since the last annual meeting of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa at the 80th OIE General Session.

He described the key issues discussed at the last OIE General Session and made special reference to the elections of the Bureau of the Regional Commission, Council and Specialist Commissions.

Speaking on the launch of the project Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa (VET-GOV), Dr Rutagwenda commented on the VET-GOV workshop held in Paris in May 2012.

Making reference to the 20th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa held in Togo in February 2013, Dr Rutagwenda said that, the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of Togo and the OIE Director General had urged participants to discuss issues relating to the safeguarding and preservation of livestock. He also remembered that, during the Conference, OIE and Uganda had signed an agreement for a technical assistance programme on veterinary legislation.

Dr Rutagwenda reported that the African common position had been valuable in helping African Delegates to put forward Africa's point of view on such matters as the proposed changes to the OIE *Terrestrial* and *Aquatic Animal Health Codes*.

The Vice-President of the Commission concluded by encouraging countries to increase their participation in OIE activities and stressed the utmost importance of Member Countries implementing OIE standards in line with the OIE Strategic Plan.

He concluded by welcoming the new OIE Delegates and, on behalf of the Regional Commission, congratulated and offered support from the OIE Regional Commission to the African Union Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (AU-PANVAC) for submitting an application to the OIE for a new Collaborating Centre for Quality Control of Veterinary Vaccines.

4. Report of the activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for Africa and of the OIE Sub-Regional Representations, including Focal Point Seminars

Dr Yacouba Samaké, OIE Regional Representative for Africa, provided a summary of the activities carried out by the Regional Representation and three OIE Sub-Regional Representations for Africa between 1 January and 1 May 2013, and their planned activities for the rest of the year.

He started his presentation by detailing the main activities and events carried out:

- Capacity-building activities, including veterinary legislation training in Cotonou (Benin) in January 2013, attended by 70 participants from 15 ECOWAS countries, delivered as part of the EU-funded VET-GOV project on veterinary governance in Africa, with WAEMU financial and technical support;
- The regional rabies proficiency test for Member Countries in the SADC, Congo Basin and East Africa regions, run by the Agricultural Research Council-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (ARC-OVI) in South Africa;
- Training on laboratory diagnosis of Rift Valley fever in Tanzania;
- Pilot training programme on peste des petits ruminants (PPR) and training for African newly appointed OIE Delegates.

He reported that the PPR pilot project entitled “Vaccine Standards and Pilot Approach to Peste des Petits Ruminants Control in Africa” (VSPA), funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, had been launched in African Union Headquarters in Addis Abeba in February 2013.

Dr Samaké commented on the OIE sub-grant to AU-PANVAC for capacity-building on PPR vaccine control, launched in Dakar in February 2013, and on the 20th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, held in Lomé (Togo) from 18 to 22 February 2013, which had been attended by 26 African countries and by several regional and international organisations.

The Regional Representative announced that the OIE laboratory twinning project on (notifiable) avian influenza and Newcastle disease between the Botswana National Veterinary Laboratory (BNVL) and its parent laboratory, the United Kingdom Animal Health Veterinary Laboratory Agency (AHVLA), was officially ended with success.

Referring to staff, Dr Samaké reported that Dr Florência Massango Cipriano, Deputy Regional Representative for Africa, had been temporarily relocated to the OIE Gaborone office as of 1 February 2013 and that Dr Patrick Bastiaensen had been appointed Programme Officer at the OIE Nairobi office as of 1 January 2013.

He explained that activities between 1 January and 1 May 2013 had also included a number of coordination meetings and courtesy visits to Member Countries, together with consultations on potential new regional and sub-regional joint programmes and funding with the following organisations: Agence Française de Développement (AFD), AU-IBAR, European Commission Delegation, FAO-ECTAD⁴⁸, ILRI, Kenyan Government, PAAWA⁴⁹, VSF⁵⁰-Germany, World Bank and USDA/APHIS⁵¹.

⁴⁸ FAO-ECTAD: FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases Operations

⁴⁹ PAAWA: Pan Africa Animal Welfare Alliance

⁵⁰ VSF: *Vétérinaires Sans Frontières* (Doctors without Borders)

⁵¹ USDA/APHIS: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture

Dr Samaké also reported on meetings organised by AU-IBAR in Member Countries, attended by the Regional Representation at both regional and sub-regional levels, on the issues of: standard methods and procedures for the IGAD⁵² region; harmonisation of veterinary legislation in the ECCAS region. Coordination meetings also took place.

Dr Samaké said that actions had been undertaken to raise Member Countries' awareness of the importance of complying with international standards, in particular by following the OIE PVS Pathway and by reporting animal diseases.

He summarised the main activities to be conducted by the end of 2013, consisting of attendance at the following events:

- 81st OIE General Session and the Regional Commission meeting in Paris (France) in May 2013;
- OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body (Foz do Iguazu [Brazil]) in December 2013;
- 31st World Veterinary Congress in Prague (Czech Republic) in September 2013.

Dr Samaké concluded by saying that further planned activities would include continued capacity-building activities and support to Member Countries in a range of areas, with the emphasis on OIE PVS Pathway implementation, focusing mainly on: good governance of Veterinary Services; veterinary legislation; donors round table organisation; laboratory twinning agreements and recognition of Reference Centres; twinings on veterinary education establishments and Veterinary Statutory Bodies; disease notification; PPR pilot project and other relevant PPR activities. The Regional Representation and Sub-Regional Representations for Africa will also continue their coordination activities with partners (regional and international organisations), including visits to Member Countries and raising their awareness of the need to pay regularly their OIE contributions and to report animal diseases.

Discussions

Dr Rachid Bouguedour, OIE Sub-Regional Representative for North Africa, briefly supplemented Dr Samaké's information on the Mediterranean Network of Establishments for Veterinary Education (REEV-Med). He explained that this new network had been launched in Rabat (Morocco) in September 2012 as a direct consequence of the recommendations of the OIE Global Conferences on Veterinary Education (Paris 2009 and Lyon 2011). He added that the next General Assembly of REEV-Med would be held in Italy in September 2013 and all OIE Delegates from neighbouring Mediterranean countries were requested to support the involvement of their veterinary education establishments in REEV-Med.

5. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015

The Regional Commission proposed the following technical item (including a questionnaire to Members) to be included in the agenda of the 83rd General Session:

- “Foodborne illness risk reduction programmes”

⁵² IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development

6. Confirmation, date and venue of the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa to be held in February 2015

Dr Jaouad Berrada, Delegate of Morocco, confirmed his country's willingness to host the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa. The Conference will be held in February 2015.

7. Selection of Technical Item I (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa

The following technical item (with questionnaire) was adopted for the 21st Regional Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa:

- “Impact of neglected diseases on animal productivity and public health in Africa”

8. Election of the Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa

Dr Rutagwenda informed the participants that the Delegate of Chad had stepped down, leaving a position of Vice-President of the Regional Commission vacant, meaning that an election had to be held.

Dr Komla Batassé Batawui, Delegate of Togo, was unanimously elected as Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa.

9. Recommendations of the 20th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, held in Lomé (Togo) from 18 to 22 February 2013

Dr Theogen Rutagwenda, Delegate of Rwanda and Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, commented on the recent 20th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa held in Lomé (Togo). He described the main recommendations made following the discussions of each technical item.

Discussion of Technical Item I (with questionnaire), entitled “Promoting intra-African trade of animals and animal products”, led to the following conclusions:

- Intensification of production systems and consumption of animal products in Africa are low despite the presence of many animals, and the continent is an importer of animal products;
- Constraints in the area of customs tariffs, legislation and policies hinder trade; and
- Lack of infrastructure and poor border control make trade difficult.

The following major recommendations were made:

- Implement the recommendations of OIE PVS Pathway missions to the respective countries;
- Develop policies/programmes for improving the competitiveness of animal products.
- Apply OIE standards to overcome sanitary and non-sanitary constraints to trade in animals and animal products;

- Harmonise at bilateral, sub-regional and regional levels all sanitary and non-sanitary standards, reference systems and procedures governing trade in animals and animal products; and
- Strengthen market information systems for animals and animal products.

Discussion of Technical Item II (without questionnaire), entitled “The importance of integrating animal welfare, environmental health and veterinary legislation in improving food security and contributing to agricultural Gross Domestic Product in Africa”, led to the following conclusions:

- Livestock plays a significant socio-economic role in Africa;
- Implementation of animal welfare, environmental health and veterinary legislation increases productivity;
- Some welfare standards and guidelines require efforts by Member Countries; and
- Delivery of veterinary services demands awareness, capacity-building, human and financial resources and a clear organisational structure.

The Conference recommended that Member Countries:

- Appoint National Focal Points for animal welfare;
- Take steps to implement standards on animal welfare and veterinary legislation laid down by the OIE;
- Take environmental health seriously as it relates to animal health and animal welfare;
- Increase knowledge and awareness of animal welfare and environmental health management; and
- Increase capacity-building to enhance skills and expertise in animal welfare and environmental health management as they relate to livestock production.

10. Perspectives regarding RECs targeted Veterinary Legislation Seminars in cooperation with IBAR

Dr Patrick Bastiaensen, Programme Officer at the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa, began his presentation by saying that OIE involvement in veterinary legislation was nothing new but had come to the forefront because of the outcomes of Veterinary Service evaluations conducted since 2006 under the OIE PVS Pathway, a programme to improve the performance of Veterinary Services.

He explained that the recurring shortages or shortcomings identified in most of the countries evaluated had led to the development of a Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP), under the umbrella of the overall OIE PVS Pathway.

Dr Bastiaensen described the important milestones that had paved the way for the formal launch of the VLSP, in particular country visits and stakeholder capacity-building at country and Regional Economic Community levels, including: publication of OIE Guidelines on Veterinary Legislation in 2008, followed in May 2012 by the adoption of the revised

guidelines as international standards (Chapter 3.4. of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*); implementation of pilot veterinary legislation support missions in 2007 and 2008; and First OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Legislation, held in Djerba (Tunisia) from 7 to 9 December 2010.

Dr Bastiaensen added that a first pilot training seminar, targeting the 15 SADC countries, had been held in Gaborone (Botswana) in November 2011 as part of the Better Training for Safer Food (BTSE) programme, which was implemented in part by the OIE and funded by the European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG-SANCO), with additional technical and financial support from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA). A second training seminar had been held for ECOWAS countries in Cotonou (Benin) in January 2013, funded by the European Union under its contribution agreement with the OIE for the VET-GOV project on veterinary governance in Africa, with additional technical and financial support from WAEMU.

He explained that the VET-GOV project was implemented through three contribution agreements with the European Commission: the main one (in financial terms) with AU-IBAR, based in Nairobi (Kenya); and two smaller ones with OIE and FAO respectively.

Dr Bastiaensen said that, in order to complete the round of training of senior veterinary officials (OIE Delegates, OIE National Focal Points and registrars of veterinary councils) on this particular topic, OIE and AU-IBAR had pooled their resources to hold two additional training seminars by the end of 2013. The participants will be senior veterinary officials and legal advisors for the remaining Member States not targeted yet in the previous seminars.

He explained that the main purpose of the training seminar was to enhance veterinary officials' understanding of the fundamentals of legislation, in general, and veterinary or animal health legislation, in particular. The training course will be structured around the new OIE standards on veterinary legislation. The first training course (for English speakers) will take place in Arusha (Tanzania) in October 2013, while the second course will take place in Algiers (Algeria) in late 2013.

Dr Bastiaensen concluded by saying that the OIE and AU-IBAR were delighted at the prospect of renewed technical collaboration for the benefit of African Veterinary Services and Veterinary Statutory Bodies.

Discussions

Dr Letlhogile Modisa, Delegate of Botswana, requested clarification from Dr Rutagwenda on the recommendations arising from Technical Item 1 of the Regional Conference entitled "Promoting intra-African trade of animal and animal products". He asked for more details regarding one of the Conference conclusions that intensification of production systems and consumption of animal products in Africa was low, despite abundant animal resources, and that the continent was an importer of animal products.

Dr Rutagwenda replied that the technical item had led the Conference to conclude that the African scenario was contradictory because, despite an abundance of animal resources on the continent, Africa's level of production and consumption of animal products was very low. Dr Rutagwenda therefore underlined the Conference recommendations that it was important, among other things, to intensify animal production and improve the competitiveness of animal products, as well as to ensure the use of OIE standards to overcome sanitary and non-sanitary constraints to intra-African trade in animals and products of animal origin.

Making reference to Dr Bastiaensen's presentation, Dr Baba Soumare, Representative of AU-IBAR, emphasised on the importance, for the region, of the on-going collaboration between the OIE and AU-IBAR for the organisation of veterinary legislation seminars.

11. Proposal for designation of a new Collaborating Centre

Dr Karim Tounkara, Director of the Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre, presented the Commission with an application for the OIE to consider the "African Union Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (AU-PANVAC), Debre-Zeit, Ethiopia" as an OIE Collaborating Centre for "Quality Control of Veterinary Vaccines".

He provided a brief review of the centre and its activities and said that full details could be found in the Working Document of the meeting.

Dr Bewket Siraw Adgeh, Delegate of Ethiopia, the host country of this proposed centre, supported the proposal of AU-PANVAC.

The Commission approved the proposal from AU-PANVAC/Ethiopia. It will be presented for endorsement by the World Assembly of Delegates.

12. Update on the PPR control strategy in Africa

Dr Domenech from the OIE Scientific and Technical Department began his presentation by reminding that an update on the status of PPR in Africa and worldwide had been made at the recent Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa in Lomé (Togo), from 18 to 22 February 2013, covering: disease characteristics (including virology, epidemiology, symptoms and lesions); economic and social importance; and control methods.

He then added that a particular emphasis had been placed on the highly effective tools now available, such as vaccines, and the importance of epidemiological surveillance, early warning and national and international disease reporting via the OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS/WAHID). Dr Domenech pointed out that a prerequisite for implementing any PPR control and prevention programme was to strengthen animal health services.

Dr Domenech gave a brief review of OIE activities and of documents published by OIE both alone and jointly with FAO, as part of GF-TADs, since the Regional Commission meeting in Lomé. The activities he highlighted included: meetings of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission and Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases in February 2013 and publication of the meeting reports; the on-going work of the GF-TADS PPR Working Group of the OIE and FAO; and continuation of the VSPA regional project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

He said that, in addition to the OIE-implemented VSPA pilot project in West Africa, national and regional PPR experiences were being monitored and would be analysed for use in preparing the global strategy.

He concluded by saying that a number of organisations, including FAO and OIE Reference Centres and the ILRI, were developing research programmes in various fields, including: heat-stable vaccines; diagnostic tests; and service delivery systems. The OIE is supporting this research and, jointly with FAO, it will establish a network of research institutions and organisations for preparing and implementing PPR control programmes, which will bring together researchers and experts to support the global strategy and develop new tools and methods.

13. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS): Status of Notification by Members in Africa

Dr Aziza Mustafa, Chargée de Mission at the OIE Animal Health Information Department, gave a brief update on the most relevant aspects of animal disease reporting in Africa. She started by emphasising the importance of timely disease reporting by countries via WAHIS, and of providing further epidemiological information on disease prevention and control, in order to maintain transparency, enhance trade and contribute to global early warning and information on disease/health distribution worldwide. She went on to provide detailed regional information on compliance with reporting for 2012, which revealed that 27 countries in Africa (51%) had provided on time complete annual reports. Dr Mustafa also reported on how the submission time of six-monthly and annual reports from African countries had evolved compared with that of all countries reporting to the OIE between 2009 and 2012, showing an overall reduction in reporting times, particularly for the second six-monthly and annual reports.

Finally, Dr Mustafa described some of the improvements made to the new version of WAHIS in order to improve disease notification in wild species. Dr Mustafa said that 63 countries worldwide had submitted their wildlife annual reports, adding that any interested countries that had not yet submitted a report on the section relating to non-OIE listed diseases specific to wild animals were welcome to do so at any time in the near future.

Discussions

The representative from Zimbabwe asked if it was possible to have an extension of the notification deadline for the six-monthly and annual reports. She pointed out that a 45-day delay for submitting the annual report was always difficult to manage.

Dr Moustafa explained that deadlines for the annual report were flexible and always took into account the size of the country and its animal population.

14. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Africa

Dr Daniel Bourzat, Advisor to the OIE Regional Representative for Africa, began his presentation by providing Regional Commission Members with a brief overview on the status of implementation of the various OIE PVS Pathway missions undertaken in the region. He indicated the countries that would be eligible for some mission categories and invited them to officially request such missions.

He went on to provide an update on the specific tools used in the different missions. He explained that all the tools used in the OIE PVS Pathway are regularly updated with the aid of experienced experts to ensure that they comply with the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Regarding the PVS Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services, he indicated that, starting this year, the OIE would be giving countries requesting a PVS evaluation follow-up mission the opportunity to evaluate upon request their capacity for implementing the ‘One Health’ concept. He explained that, following the outcomes of pilot missions, the OIE had identified 14 existing Critical Competencies for that purpose. He also reported on the first version of the PVS tool for evaluating the performance of aquatic animal health services.

After providing some background on how the OIE was developing the “treatment” tools used under the PVS Pathway, Dr Bourzat gave details regarding the current and new treatments available to Members. He said that the OIE considered laboratory twinning and the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme as well-established treatments and

explained that new treatments had recently been made available to Members, namely PVS Pathway laboratory missions and the possibility of undertaking twinning in veterinary education and between Veterinary Statutory Bodies.

He reminded the Regional Commission of OIE efforts to share with donors and partners the outcomes of the different missions undertaken through the OIE PVS Pathway, when requested by countries. He indicated that the OIE was also giving countries the opportunity to share, at national level, mission reports with any relevant ministries that might be called upon to support activities to strengthen their Veterinary Services.

Dr Bourzat concluded by reiterating that the OIE PVS Pathway was a continuous process aimed at sustainably improving Veterinary Services' compliance with international standards. He added that the OIE worked ceaselessly to convince governments and donors to support not only the PVS Pathway, but also the implementation of its recommendations and outcomes. Dr Bourzat acknowledged that the Better Training for Safer Food programme in Africa, which had ended in 2012, had greatly supported OIE efforts to build the capacity of newly appointed Delegates and National Focal Points. There was a risk that the end of this intensive capacity-building programme, combined with high turnover of Delegates and Focal Points, would undermine the ability of Member Countries in the region to fully implement the recommendations of OIE PVS Pathway reports. He concluded by stating that Veterinary Services could be improved only with the strong commitment and ownership of countries themselves, and that this should be a priority of the Regional Commission for Africa.

15. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE

• **African Union - Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)**

Dr Baba Soumare, AU-IBAR Chief Animal Health Officer, began his presentation by saying that the volume of trade and marketing activities had grown considerably over the past year. He explained that these activities focused mainly on: animal health certification, identification and traceability; and support for stakeholder organisations. AU-IBAR has also embarked on a process to establish a continental market information system for livestock commodities.

Dr Soumare stated that AU-IBAR remained heavily committed to supporting and enhancing the participation of African nations in standard-setting, particularly in the OIE's animal health standards process.

He added that development of an enhanced version of the Africa Animal Resource Information System was complete and was being rolled out in its Member States.

He confirmed that animal health interventions remained the main focus of AU-IBAR, with strong support for veterinary institutional reform through implementation of the VET-GOV project on veterinary governance in Africa, complying with OIE PVS guidelines.

He went on to say that new regional projects would also target disease surveillance and control capabilities. There has been significant progress with the promotion of and consensus-building on the adoption of the 'One Health' approach within the ECCAS Integrated Regional Coordination Mechanism (IRCM) for the control of transboundary animal diseases and zoonoses in Africa.

Dr Soumare reported that a Pan African Programme for the control of PPR had been developed jointly under the leadership of AU-IBAR and the African Union Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (AU-PANVAC), and had been approved for implementation by the 9th Conference of Ministers. In addition, a strategy to control African swine fever in Africa was being developed jointly with FAO and ILRI.

Dr Soumare concluded by announcing that AU-IBAR had recently embarked on a process for developing a continental strategy to expand the continent's livestock sector, together with a related continental programme, adding that the consultation processes for formulating the two instruments had been initiated.

- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Dr Cheikh Ly, FAO Animal Production and Health Officer, informed the meeting that FAO had been implementing its programmes since 2012 within a context marked by decentralisation and merging of emergency and development action, with five new strategic objectives:

1. Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
2. Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner;
3. Reduce rural poverty;
4. Enable more inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems at local, national and international levels;
5. Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

He said that, in Africa, implementation of the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) were drivers for effective action to assist beneficiaries. In several animal health areas, FAO works in full cooperation and partnership with the OIE and other organisations, including AU-IBAR and Regional Economic Communities, and also through its strong participation in the Regional GF-TADs Steering Committee.

He explained that key areas were: an integrated and people-centred approach to disease control; 'One Health'; prevention and control of PPR, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, African swine fever, foot and mouth disease, zoonoses (including rabies and Rift Valley fever); anti-microbial resistance; rinderpest post-eradication actions; food safety; and mobile devices used for field surveillance. Renewed attention is being paid to the tsetse/trypanosomosis complex. FAO supports partnerships on priority transboundary animal diseases and trypanosomosis/zoonoses to reduce the impact on livelihoods and public health.

- **World Bank**

Dr Stéphane Forman, World Bank (WB) representative for Africa, pointed to the steadily increasing collaboration between the WB and its partners in the area of livestock development and animal health, especially the OIE. He said that the WB was currently finalising its Global Agenda of Action for livestock, aimed at building a 10-year corporate vision of livestock development for the WB, which would be translated into three-year Regional Action Plans, including one for Africa. The Global Agenda comprises three pillars – health, environment and equity – of which partnership is one of the key

elements, as evidenced by the OIE’s secondment of a veterinarian to the WB to advance the health pillar. The WB is currently preparing a grant for the OIE and World Health Organization to conduct analytical work and develop tools relating to ‘One Health’. The WB representative reiterated the importance of OIE activities as a Global Public Good and reconfirmed WB support for the OIE. He recognised the crucial work that Chief Veterinary Officers were doing in this regard in their respective countries, both in Africa and worldwide. WB support for the OIE’s work on good governance of Veterinary Services, including active WB involvement in the recently published OIE Scientific and Technical Review on “Good governance and financing of efficient Veterinary Services” is another example of collaboration between the two institutions.

The WB widely recognises the OIE PVS Pathway as the tool to guide investment for strengthening Veterinary Services. It is now routinely used to support the preparation and implementation of WB-funded projects in the agriculture and livestock sector in Africa and other regions. The “Regional Pastoral Livelihoods Resilience Project” being prepared jointly with IGAD will involve Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. Major interventions under this project will include strengthening Veterinary Services and national and sub-regional animal disease surveillance and diagnostic networks, as well as building capacity on sanitary and phytosanitary standards, identification and traceability. OIE support during the preparation process and later with implementation would therefore be much appreciated.

16. Other matters

Dr Albertina Shilongo, Delegate of Namibia, announced her country’s wish to host the 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa in 2017.

The meeting officially ended at 5:50 p.m.

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**MEETING OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

Paris, 27 May 2013

Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda (Dr Theogen Rutagwenda, Delegate of Rwanda and Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa)
 2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE (Dr Jaouad Berrada, Delegate of Morocco and Member of the Council)
 3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa (Dr Theogen Rutagwenda)
 4. Report of the activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for Africa and of the OIE Sub-Regional Representations, including Focal Point Seminars (Dr Yacouba Samaké, OIE Regional Representative for Africa)
 5. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015 (Dr Yacouba Samaké)
 6. Confirmation, date and venue of the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa to be held in February 2015 (Dr Jaouad Berrada)
 7. Selection of a Technical Item I (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa (Dr Yacouba Samaké)
 8. Election of the Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa (Dr Theogen Rutagwenda)
 9. Recommendations of the 20th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa held in Lomé (Togo) from 18 to 22 February 2013 (Dr Theogen Rutagwenda)
 10. Perspectives regarding RECs targeted Veterinary Legislation Seminars in cooperation with IBAR (Dr Patrick Bastiaensen, Programme Officer OIE Sub Regional Representation for Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa)
 11. Proposal for designation of new Collaborating Centre (Dr Karim Tounkara, Director AU-PANVAC)
 12. Update on the PPR control strategy in Africa (Dr Joseph Domenech, OIE Scientific and Technical Dept)
 13. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) – Status of Notification by Members in Africa (Dr Aziza Mustafa, OIE Animal Health Inf. Dept)
 14. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Africa (Dr Daniel Bourzat, Advisor to the OIE Regional Representative for Africa)
 15. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE
 - African Union - Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)
 - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
 - World Bank
 16. Other matters
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**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS**

Paris, May 27 2013

The OIE Regional Commission for the Americas met on 27 May 2013 at the Maison de la Chimie, Paris, at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by 93 participants, including Delegates and observers from 23 Members of the Commission and representatives from 7 international or regional organisations:

Members of the Commission: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, United States of America and Uruguay.

International/regional organisations: CAN⁵³, CVP⁵⁴, IICA⁵⁵, OIRSA⁵⁶, PAHO-PANAFTOSA⁵⁷, World Bank, WSPA

The meeting was chaired by Dr John Clifford, President of the Regional Commission for the Americas and Delegate of the United States of America, seconded by Dr Luis Osvaldo Barcos, OIE Regional Representative for the Americas, Dr Carlos Correa Messuti, Past President of the World Assembly of OIE Delegates and Delegate of Uruguay, Dr Guilherme H. Figueiredo Marques, Vice-President of the Regional Commission and Delegate of Brazil, Dr Miguel Ángel Azañón Robles, Vice-President and Delegate of Guatemala, and Dr Mark Trotman, Secretary General of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas and Delegate of Barbados.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda, described in the Appendix, was adopted unanimously.

2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE

Dr Carlos Correa, Past President of the World Assembly of OIE Delegates and Delegate of Uruguay, described the status of Members' contributions. Although there are still outstanding contributions from few Members, he highlighted with enthusiasm that some countries, on a voluntary basis, decided to upgrade their contribution category to the OIE.

He proposed that, when possible, other countries increase their contribution category.

⁵³ CAN: Andean Community

⁵⁴ CVP: Permanent Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone

⁵⁵ IICA: Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture

⁵⁶ OIRSA: International Regional Organization for Plant Protection and Animal Health)

⁵⁷ PAHO: Pan American Health Organization - PANAFTOSA: Pan American Foot and Mouth Disease Center

3. Report on the activities of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas

Dr John Clifford, President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas and Delegate of the United States of America, began by reporting that the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas had met several times in 2012. The meetings had addressed administrative and technical matters. The President of the Regional Commission said that the latest meetings of the Bureau of the Regional Commission had been held during the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas and prior to the 81st General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates. The next Bureau meeting was scheduled to take place just before the OIE Regional Conference on Animal Welfare to be held in Montevideo (Uruguay) at the end of 2013.

The administrative activities discussed by the Bureau of the Regional Commission included: the status of Member Countries contributions; planning for the next Regional Conference in Mexico in November 2014; and elections for the Council position left vacant by the retirement of Dr Brian Evans.

On the technical side, Dr Clifford said that meetings planned in the region for 2013 included those of CAMEVET⁵⁸ (Panama), National Focal Points for animal welfare (Uruguay) and National Focal Points for aquatic animal diseases (Mexico).

Dr Clifford highlighted the success of the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas, held in Bridgetown (Barbados) from 26 to 29 November 2012, which had been attended by more than 30 countries in the region, including 6 non-member countries.

Lastly, the President discussed the OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body, to be held in Brazil in the first week of December 2013.

4. Report of the activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for the Americas and the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for Central America, including Focal Point Seminars

Dr Luis O. Barcos, OIE Regional Representative for the Americas, presented a summary of the activities of the Regional Representation (Buenos Aires) and Sub-Regional Representation (Panama).

Dr Barcos reported that the Regional Representation would continue to coordinate regular meetings of the Bureau of the Regional Commission to follow up on: the conclusions of the Regional Conference in Barbados in 2012; the organisation of the next Regional Conference in Mexico in 2014; and the work programme for the Americas.

He said that the participation of Member Countries in the updating of OIE standards would be promoted by building the capacity of Veterinary Services, including in the area of aquatic animal health, by holding seminars for Delegates and National Focal Points and by promoting the implementation of OIE PVS Pathway missions, including building the capacity of the region's laboratories. He reported on the interest of the Permanent Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone (CVP) in having PVS Evaluation missions conducted in its Member Countries every two years as well as OIE PVS missions for the evaluation of their aquatic animal health services, reflecting a growing interest in this issue among Central American countries. He reported on actions in the Central American sub-region to implement the OIE recommendations on the competencies of graduating veterinarians.

⁵⁸ CAMEVET: Committee of the Americas for Veterinary Medicines

He described activities to ensure OIE membership for countries in the Caribbean that are not yet OIE Members.

He also described activities to ensure the effective implementation of OIE standards on foot and mouth disease (FMD), including: promoting an agreement between the OIE and the Andean Community (CAN) to implement actions at borders; interaction with regional and international organisations based on the FAO/OIE Global FMD Control Strategy; and the occurrence of a regional seminar entitled “Required actions to achieve and maintain the status of free from Foot and Mouth Disease”.

Dr Barcos reported that a questionnaire had been sent to ascertain the degree of progress made by countries in the region in disseminating and implementing the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy for the Americas, which had been approved by the latest Regional Conference. As feedback thus far had been poor, he urged Delegates to answer the questionnaire.

He reported that a videoconference on acute hepatopancreatic necrosis syndrome had been coordinated with the OIE Reference Laboratory for shrimp diseases (University of Arizona, United States of America) and Central American countries had been provided with information to assist them in adopting further preparedness measures to counter this potential disease threat.

He said that, following a regional seminar for OIE National Focal Points for veterinary laboratories in Mexico in 2012, work would continue on implementing a web application to share information on the capabilities of national laboratories in the region.

He reported on meetings with international organisations as part of the GF-TADs. In this connection, he added that coordination would continue and relations would be strengthened with international organisations, producer organisations, industry, researchers, donors and universities.

He concluded by detailing planned activities to be carried out in 2013 and 2014, thanking Member Countries that are providing financial support.

5. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates, to be held in May 2015

The Regional Commission proposed the following Technical Items (with a questionnaire to Members) for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session:

- “Public health impact of antimicrobials for veterinary use and their economic repercussions”
- and
- “The process of assessing intervention options as a tool to compare different methods to address a particular disease event”

6. Date and venue of the 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas to be held in November 2014

The Delegate of Mexico confirmed his country’s offer to host the 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas. The Conference will be held in Guanajuato (Mexico) from 10 to 14 November 2014.

7. Selection of Technical Item I (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas

The Regional Commission proposed the following Technical Item (with questionnaire) for inclusion in the agenda of the 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas:

- “Veterinary education on aquatic animals and its impact on aquatic animal disease control strategies in the region”

8. Recommendations of the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas held in Barbados from 26 to 29 November 2012

Dr Guilherme H. Figueiredo Marques, Delegate of Brazil and Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas, said that the recommendation arising from Technical Item I entitled “Disaster management: the role and preparedness of Veterinary Services”, was based on the relationship between natural and technological disasters and the incidence of emerging and re-emerging animal disease, including zoonoses, which called for joint and coordinated action by Veterinary Services and other sectors, including public health. He added that the level of involvement of Veterinary Services in the prevention phase of the disaster reduction cycle was low.

The recommendations for Veterinary Authorities included the need for them to participate in developing disaster reduction plans and to form partnerships with other stakeholders, as well as to exchange expertise between countries, together with the appropriate human and material resources. The recommendations for the OIE included supporting Veterinary Services through the OIE PVS Tool, and greater involvement in disaster risk reduction and management, including forging closer links with the Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). The recommendations also mentioned the need for training, both for Veterinary Services staff and undergraduate students, and support for the Collaborating Centre specialised in the issue.

In relation to Technical Item II, entitled “Innovative strategies for strengthening regional animal health networks“, he said that the transboundary nature of animal diseases and global trade required Veterinary Services to even more fulfil their duties in line with OIE standards. He also reminded the activities of the Caribbean Animal Health Network (CaribVET) as an example of a collaborative network bringing together Veterinary Services, academia, regional and international organisations, diagnostic laboratories and research institutions (including OIE Reference Laboratories) to provide technical support for improving animal health and veterinary public health in the Caribbean.

Recommendations included promoting the consolidation of existing regional animal health networks, creating new networks where appropriate and assisting countries, encouraging the participation of universities, research centres, OIE Reference Centres, interested partners and other relevant stakeholders, as well as promoting network sustainability, for which the support of OIE Members and other stakeholders is crucial, sharing best practices, information, knowledge and resources. A further recommendation was that the OIE should establish cooperation and collaboration agreements with these networks, as well as a procedure for their international recognition.

9. Candidates for the Bureau of the Regional Commission and the Council

Dr Carlos Correa Messuti said that the retirement of Dr Brian Evans as Delegate of Canada to the OIE called for the election of a replacement to his position in the Council until 2015.

The Regional Commission voted to elect Dr John Clifford, OIE Delegate for the United States of America, to the position of Council Member.

In addition, Dr Guilherme H. Figueiredo Marques, current Vice-President of the Regional Commission, was unanimously elected as President of the Regional Commission to replace Dr Clifford.

Dr Mark Trotman will become Vice-President and Dr Glen Halze Hodgson, Delegate of Peru, was elected to take over his position as Secretary General.

The composition of the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas until 2015 is as follows:

President:	Dr Guilherme H. Figueiredo Marques (Brazil)
Vice-President:	Dr Miguel Angel Azañón Robles (Guatemala)
Vice-President:	Dr Mark Trotman (Barbados)
Secretary General:	Dr Glen Halze Hodgson (Peru)

10. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) – Status of notifications by Members in the Americas

Dr Paula Cáceres, veterinary epidemiologist in the OIE Animal Health Information Department, gave a brief update on the most important aspects of animal disease reporting in the Americas.

She began by emphasising the importance of timely disease reporting by countries through WAHIS, and of their providing further epidemiological information on disease prevention and control in order to maintain transparency, enhance trade, contribute to the global early warning system and disseminate information on the status of disease/health worldwide.

She went on to provide detailed regional information on compliance with reporting for 2012, which revealed that 21 countries in the Americas (66%) had provided complete annual reports on time. Dr Cáceres also reported on how the submission time of six-monthly and annual reports from countries in the Americas had evolved compared with that of all countries reporting to the OIE between 2009 and 2012, showing an overall improvement in the region's reporting times, which were better than the world median for the first six-monthly and annual reports.

Dr Cáceres described some of the improvements made to the new version of WAHIS in order to improve disease notification in wild species. She said that 63 countries worldwide had submitted their wildlife annual reports, adding that any interested countries that had not yet submitted a report on the section relating to non-OIE listed diseases specific to wildlife were welcome to do so at any time in the near future.

Dr Cáceres concluded by explaining that, in the case of immediate notifications, weekly follow-up reports should be sent even when no cases have been reported, indicating that this is the case.

11. Regional Animal Welfare Strategy

Dr Barcos explained that the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy was adopted during the past Conference of the OIE Regional Commission. He reminded that this strategy was providing a regional consultation approach for animal welfare to take into account the governmental and non-governmental sectors involved, as well as coordination between the Regional Representation and the Regional Commission, Delegates and National Focal Points for animal welfare, which will ensure that OIE standards and guidelines be implemented.

He added that progress on the implementation of the Regional Strategy would be reported every two years at Regional Commission meetings.

He stressed the importance of ascertaining country progress with disseminating and implementing the Regional Strategy and urged Delegates to answer the questionnaire sent for this purpose.

Dr Mariela Varas, from the OIE International Trade Department, explained that the Regional Strategy was effective following its adoption by the last Regional Conference.

Dr Barcos ended by saying that answers to the questionnaire and progress would be followed up at the next seminar for National Focal Points for animal welfare, to be held in Uruguay in October 2013, and announced that National Focal Points from the European Union Member Countries would be participating in this seminar.

Referring to the circulation of a draft International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard on animal welfare, based on OIE standards, he urged countries to contact their standardisation agencies to offer their support.

12. Acute Hepatopancreatic Necrosis Syndrome (AHPNS) – Concerns of the Americas region

Dr Filiberto Frago, OIE Sub-Regional Representative for Central America, described the status of acute hepatopancreatic necrosis syndrome (AHPNS) caused by *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, affecting shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei* and *P. monodon*), for which histological diagnosis is the only technique currently available.

He said that the disease had not been reported in any country in the Americas thus far but that, based on cases that had occurred in South-East Asia, Central American and Caribbean countries had proposed revising and updating import protocols, implementing an epidemiological surveillance programme involving producers, and developing and updating contingency and emergency plans.

13. African horse sickness: procedure for recognising historically free countries

Referring to the new procedure for officially recognising countries as historically free from African horse sickness and the presentation of Dr Lissette Gómez, Delegate of the Dominican Republic to the OIE, Dr Barcos reported that the OIE had decided to continue the previous procedure for a further year, and urged countries historically free from African horse sickness to submit their application for official recognition.

14. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in the Americas

Dr Luis Barcos, OIE Regional Representative for the Americas, began his presentation by providing Regional Commission Members with a brief overview on the status of implementation of the various OIE PVS Pathway missions undertaken in the region. He indicated the countries that would be eligible for some PVS Pathway mission categories and urged them to officially request such missions.

He went on to provide an update on the specific tools used in the different missions. He explained that all the tools used in the PVS Pathway are regularly updated by experts to ensure that they comply with the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Regarding the PVS Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services, he indicated that, starting this year, the OIE would be giving countries requesting a PVS evaluation follow-up mission the opportunity to evaluate, upon request, their capacity for implementing the ‘One Health’ concept. He explained that, following the outcomes of pilot missions, the OIE had identified 14 existing Critical Competencies for that purpose. He also reported on the first version of the PVS Tool – Aquatic for evaluating the performance of aquatic animal health services.

After providing some background on how the OIE was developing the “treatment” tools used under the PVS Pathway, Dr Barcos gave details regarding the current and new treatments available to Members. He said that the OIE considered laboratory twinning and the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme as well-established treatments and explained that new treatments had recently been made available to Members, namely PVS Pathway laboratory missions and the possibility of establishing twinning projects between veterinary education establishments and between Veterinary Statutory Bodies.

He reminded the Regional Commission of OIE efforts to share with donors and partners the outcomes of the different missions undertaken through the PVS Pathway, when requested by countries. He indicated that the OIE was also giving countries the opportunity to share, at national level, mission reports with any relevant ministries that might be called upon to support activities to strengthen their Veterinary Services.

Dr Barcos concluded by reiterating that the OIE PVS Pathway was a continuous process aimed at sustainably improving Veterinary Services’ compliance with international standards. He added that the OIE worked ceaselessly to convince governments and donors to support not only the PVS Pathway but also the implementation of its recommendations and outcomes. Lastly, he stated that Veterinary Services could be improved only with the strong commitment and ownership of the countries.

15. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE

• Permanent Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone (CVP)

Dr Julio Urzúa Sotomayor, CVP Technical Secretary, said that the CVP had been in operation for 10 years and that Southern Cone countries had established it in order to implement coordinated actions in response to a resurgence of foot and mouth disease.

He highlighted the work with the OIE to control foot and mouth disease, resulting in the establishment of high surveillance zones and CVP activities as part of the MERCOSUR Foot and Mouth Disease-free Action Plan (PAMA) and coordination with PANAFTOSA/PAHO-World Health Organization. He emphasised CVP involvement following the foot and mouth disease outbreaks in Paraguay, saying that these animal health events were a regional problem whose solution called for joint action by countries.

He reported that, in response to a case of atypical bovine spongiform encephalopathy detected in Brazil, the CVP had reactivated the *ad hoc* group to discuss the situation, issue technical recommendations and hold a workshop coordinated by PANAFTOSA.

He described CVP work to strengthen Veterinary Services as part of the mandate of the Ministers of Agriculture of Member Countries, and its current joint work with the OIE.

- **Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (OIRSA)**

Dr Abelardo De Gracia, OIRSA's Regional Coordinator for Animal Health, reported on OIRSA activities in 2012 designed to facilitate access by its Member Countries to world markets for their animal products and by-products by strengthening their Veterinary Services.

He described OIRSA activities in the following areas.

- Aquatic animal health: training in diseases of farmed shrimp and preparation of a manual of good practices for fish.
- Bee health: a bee health course was established for producers, and another will be established for technicians.
- Poultry health: the regional emergency plan for Avian Influenza and Newcastle disease was updated and a simulation exercise was conducted for these diseases.
- Cattle health: prevalence studies for brucellosis and tuberculosis; support for OIE recognition for bovine spongiform encephalopathy status; foot and mouth disease prevention actions; cooperation to build the capacity of the Panama's laboratory for the diagnosis of vesicular diseases (LADIVES); harmonisation of regional standards for cattle traceability and animal movements.
- Classical swine fever: establishment of an emergency control plan in Guatemala, and strengthened epidemiological surveillance in Mexico, Honduras, Belize, El Salvador and the department of Peten in Guatemala.
- Veterinary medicinal products: preparation of a manual of good practices in the use of veterinary medicinal products.
- Animal welfare: training for National Focal Points by developing a course for Veterinary Services.

As regards collaboration with other organisations, he explained that OIRSA was currently working with the OIE and FAO to revise and update secondary veterinary legislation of the countries of the Sub-region covered by the organisation, with a special emphasis on the control and eradication of brucellosis, tuberculosis and Newcastle disease. OIRSA is working on rabies with FAO and PAHO. He also reported that a regional group would be set up to tackle transboundary animal diseases, with the support of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the University of Iowa (USA).

- **Andean Community (CAN)**

Dr Javier Vargas Estrella, President of the Andean Technical Committee on Agricultural and Livestock Health (COTASA), speaking on behalf of the CAN, described animal health activities in the context of CAN and the Andean Agricultural Health System (SASA), objectives for trade-related sanitary and phytosanitary measures and joint action programmes.

He explained CAN actions to harmonise and set standards, which had included decisions by the Commission of the Andean Community and resolutions by the General Secretariat on risk analysis procedures for exotic diseases and the recognition of disease-free zones or countries.

He also described joint action programmes for foot and mouth disease and classical swine fever, and cooperation and coordination actions with FAO, OIE and PAHO, together with communication and dissemination activities.

Dr Vargas Estrella concluded by describing regulations currently being developed, updated and scheduled for adoption.

16. Other matters

Dr Figueiredo Marques showed a video about the Brazilian city of Foz do Iguazu, which would be hosting the forthcoming OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body.

The Secretary of Agriculture of the Brazilian State of Paraná reaffirmed the support that was being given and would continue to be given to the event.

The meeting ended at 6:00 p.m.

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Appendix

**MEETING OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS**

Paris, 27 May 2013

Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda (Dr John Clifford, Delegate of the United States of America and President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas)
 2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE (Dr Carlos Correa, Delegate of Uruguay and Past President of the World Assembly of Delegates)
 3. Report on the activities of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas (Dr John Clifford)
 4. Report on the activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for the Americas and the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for Central America, including Focal Point Seminars (Dr Luis Barcos, OIE Regional Representative for the Americas)
 5. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates, to be held in May 2015 (Dr Luis Barcos)
 6. Date and venue of the 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas to be held in November 2014 (Dr Luis Barcos)
 7. Selection of the Technical Item I (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas (Dr Luis Barcos)
 8. Recommendations of the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas held in Barbados from 26 to 29 November 2012 (Dr Guilherme H. Figueiredo Marques, Delegate of Brazil and Vice President of the Regional Commission for the Americas)
 9. Candidates for the Bureau of the Regional Commission and the Council (Dr Carlos Correa)
 10. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) – Status of notifications by Members in the Americas (Dr Paula Cáceres, OIE Animal Health Inf. Dept)
 11. Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (Dr Luis Barcos)
 12. Acute Hepatopancreatic Necrosis Syndrome (AHPNS) – Concerns of the Americas region (Dr Filiberto Frago, OIE Sub-regional Representative for Central America)
 13. African horse sickness: procedure for recognising historically free countries (Dr Lissette Gomez, Dominican Republic)
 14. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in the Americas (Dr Luis Barcos)
 15. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE
 - Permanent Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone (PVC)
 - Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (OIRSA)
 - Andean Community (CAN)
 16. Other matters
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**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA, THE FAR EAST AND OCEANIA
Paris, 27 May 2013**

The OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania met on 27 May 2013 at the Maison de la Chimie, Paris, at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by 120 participants, including Delegates and observers from 23 Members of the Commission and 3 observer countries and representatives from 3 international or regional organisations:

Members of the Commission: Australia, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China (People's Rep. of), Chinese Taipei, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea (Dem. People's Rep. of), Korea (Rep. of), Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam.

Observer countries/territories: France, Hong Kong, United Kingdom

International/regional organisations: FAO, FEI, IFAH

Dr Zhang Zhongqiu, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania and Delegate of the People's Republic of China, welcomed the Delegates, observers and representatives of the regional and international organisations and introduced the Members of the Regional Commission.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda and the annexes related to agenda items were circulated.

Dr Catbagan, Vice-President of the Commission and Delegate of the Philippines, proposed to postpone agenda item relating to the organisation of the 28th Conference of the Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania to the end of the session.

The revised Agenda was adopted.

2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE

Dr Mark Schipp, Delegate of Australia and Member of the OIE Council, reminded the meeting that, in relation to country statutory contributions to the OIE, there were six different categories. He indicated that each Member Country should belong to the category suited to that country's economic level and that, once a Member Country makes a commitment, it should ensure that contributions be paid in a timely manner.

Dr Schipp pointed out that most Regional Commission Members comply with their financial commitments to the OIE. However, he reported that contributions from 18 countries were still outstanding and urged any Members with arrears to settle them promptly. He reminded that Members with arrears can lose their ability to vote and participate in the corresponding OIE decision-making procedures. He took the opportunity to inform the Commission that the OIE contribution would increase by 5%; linked to this, Dr Schipp also announced that the allowances paid to experts and Delegates had also increased by 5%.

He urged Member Countries to increase their level of contribution category when possible.

3. Report on the OIE Council meetings

Dr Toshiro Kawashima, Delegate of Japan and Member of the OIE Council, gave a presentation on the outcomes of Council meetings. He introduced the new members of the Council who had been elected at the 80th General Session of the OIE, including Dr Mark Schipp from Australia as the other Member representing Asia, the Far East and Oceania at the OIE Council. He said that Council meetings had been held in October 2012, February 2013 and just prior to the 81st General Session.

Dr Kawashima reported a number of improvements made by the Council since the last General Session. He noted that the Council meeting of October 2012 had agreed to publish an agenda and summary of each OIE Council meeting on the Delegates' website in order to inform Delegates more fully about the Council's work and improve exchanges with Member Countries. He added that the Council had recommended that the agenda for the General Session should include follow-up of the recommendations of OIE Global Conferences in order to increase the visibility of OIE activities. He explained a proposal for regional matters to be discussed at the Council, saying that regional Members were encouraged to notify regional Council Members of any regional concerns that needed to be discussed at the Council.

He reported that Council discussions had covered the relationship between the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* and World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) with regard to wildlife diseases. He said that the Council acknowledged that the obligations for notifying wildlife diseases needed to be clarified in the *Code*. He also explained that the OIE Sixth Strategic Plan would be included as a main item in the future agenda of the Council. He emphasised that inputs from regional Members in Asia, the Far East and Oceania were therefore important for the development of the Sixth Strategic Plan.

Dr Kawashima concluded by mentioning some specific points arising from Council meetings. The first was that any replacement of an OIE expert at an OIE Reference Centre must be submitted by the head of the establishment to the OIE Director General via the OIE Delegate. OIE Delegates were also urged to foster young competent experts to ensure the renewal of the membership of the Specialist Commissions.

4. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania

Dr Zhang Zhongqiu, President of the OIE Regional Commission, gave a presentation on the activities of the Commission. He had been invited to two key world conferences held in the region after the 80th OIE General Session: FAO/OIE Global Conference on Foot and Mouth Disease Control in Thailand in June 2012; and Third OIE Global Conference on Animal Welfare in Malaysia in November 2012. While he regretted having been unable to attend the former, owing to previous commitments in his own country, he was pleased that so many Regional Commission Members had participated. He also thanked Thailand and Malaysia for hosting these important OIE events, which had certainly helped to improve regional participation.

He also made reference to the OIE Global Conference on the Responsible and Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents for Animals held in March in Paris (France) and pointed out that antimicrobial resistance is a priority for the OIE-WHO-FAO tripartite. He also emphasised its regional relevance given that 67% of Members do not have an official monitoring system. In view of the aforementioned, he urged Members to develop a national system for collecting data to monitor antimicrobials based on OIE standards.

Dr Zhang reported that, while a previous engagement had prevented him from attending the Sixth Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok (Thailand) in July 2012, Dr Toshiro Kawashima had attended as the Chair of the GF-TADs Regional Steering Committee. He said that the Regional Representative would provide details on this meeting following his report.

Dr Zhang said that, thanks to the efforts of his predecessor and fellow Commission members, the Regional Conference had adopted the Regional Work Plan Framework 2011-2015 in November 2011. He explained that a regional core group established pursuant to a recommendation in the Work Plan had met twice following the 80th General Session: once at the Third OIE Global Conference on Animal Welfare and again just prior to the current General Session. He said that not only had this improved communication and dissemination of the agenda within the region, Council members had also been briefed on important topics, which had helped to increase awareness of OIE management issues.

Dr Zhang reported that, at its meeting during the 80th General Session, the Regional Commission had discussed at length how to nominate appropriate candidates from the region for Specialist Commissions, working groups and *ad hoc* groups. He commended the selected experts on their work in the various commissions and groups and encouraged Members to continue striving to find experts for future OIE activities.

Dr Zhang also announced that, later this week during the plenary session, he would provide to the World Assembly with an update of the Chinese situation regarding H7N9.

He reported on his participation in the OIE seminar for National Focal Points on communication in Beijing (China) in March 2013.

Further to the presentation of a specific slide on foot and mouth disease in the region, Dr Zhang urged Members to enhance cooperation in order to effectively prevent and control the disease. Relevant references were made to the recently endorsed global foot and mouth disease control strategy, as well as to South-East Asia and China Foot and Mouth Disease (SEACFMD) Campaign.

He also addressed two other transboundary diseases for the region: African Swine Fever (ASF) and Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS). Although not identified as priority diseases by the GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific, he requested that greater attention be paid by Members to better control both diseases regionally.

Moreover, he appealed to eligible Members which had not yet done so to submit their specific procedure for official recognition of historical freedom status of African Horse Sickness (AHS). The possibility to apply for this status was supposed to conclude in 2013, however, further to a decision from the Director General of the OIE, he informed the Commission that the deadline for applications has been extended.

He concluded by reminding the Commission that the 28th Regional Conference for Asia, the Far East and Oceania would be held in the Philippines in November 2013, and that the Third OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the role of the Veterinary Statutory Body would be held in Brazil in December 2013. He urged Delegates to participate in these important events.

5. Report of the activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific including Focal Point Seminars and an update on the GF-TADs mechanism

Dr Hirofumi Kugita, newly appointed as the OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, began his presentation by describing recent staff changes at the OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific, including his own appointment, and briefly described the Regional Representation's responsibilities. He then reported on the regional activities of the past year, in line with the OIE Strategic Plan for 2011-2015 and the Regional Work Plan Framework 2011-2015.

Dr Kugita explained that, in its capacity as Secretariat for GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Representation had held the Sixth Regional Steering Committee Meeting of GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific in Thailand in July 2012 which, among other issues, had actively discussed the draft Five-Year Action Plan for GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific. He reported that, after agreeing on the framework, electronic communications had been used to discuss the details and, lastly, the revised draft was submitted to and approved by the GF-TADs Global Steering Committee.

Dr Kugita reported on progress with the OIE/Japan Trust Fund (JTF) Project for Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Control in Asia, including: the National Contact Person Meeting in Tokyo in August 2012, which discussed development of a Roadmap for FMD control in East Asia; the First Coordination Committee Meeting of the OIE/JTF Project for FMD Control in Asia in Tokyo (Japan) in November 2012, which endorsed the project scheme; and field work conducted in Laos from October 2012 to February 2013 using vaccine donated by Japan.

Dr Kugita also reported that the OIE/JTF Project for Strengthening Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Control in Asia, which had begun in 2008, was complete. The field-work findings included surveillance results for five years and a discussion at the Fifth Regional Expert Group Meeting for Implementation of the OIE/JTF Project for HPAI Control in Tokyo (Japan) in December 2012 yielding many suggestions, which will be analysed and reported on in the near future.

In the area of capacity-building, Dr Kugita reported on a laboratory training session on FMD diagnosis and a short-term training session on vaccine assessment, both supported by Collaborating Centres. He informed the Commission that two regional seminars for OIE National Focal Points – one on animal production food safety in Tokyo (Japan) and another on communication in Beijing (China) – had been attended by most regional Members and had been useful in enhancing regional Members' capacities on these topics as well as in understanding the role and responsibilities of OIE National Focal Points.

Dr Kugita informed the Commission of the recent launch of a new regional website, featuring frequently updated activities and news from both the Regional Representation and Sub-Regional Representation. He hoped that this communication tool would improve understanding of regional activities, both among Members and other interested parties.

Dr Kugita presented activities planned for the remainder of 2013, including: Seventh FAO/OIE Regional Steering Committee Meeting on GF-TADs for Asia and the Pacific in July; the First Scientific Meeting of the OIE/JTF FMD Control Project, to be held back-to-back with that Project's Second Coordination Committee meeting in Mongolia in September; and field work of that Project connected with vaccine use in certain countries. He also informed the Commission of the imminent launch of a project "OIE/JTF 'One Health' Project" (exact final name to be confirmed), whose activities would include the control of animal influenza with zoonotic potential and rabies.

6. Report of the activities and work programme of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asian countries including an update on the STANDZ, HPED and IDENTIFY Programmes

Dr Ronello Abila, OIE Sub-Regional Representative for South-East Asia, presented a report on the role and responsibilities of the Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asia. He said that, in addition to the ten countries of South-East Asia, the Sub-Regional Representation had also covered the People's Republic of China in connection with FMD programmes since 2010, when China had joined the SEACFMD Campaign as well as Singapore and Brunei. He added that the Sub-Regional Representation had three major donor-funded programmes: Stop Transboundary Animal Diseases and Zoonoses (STANDZ), funded by the Australian Government's overseas aid program (AusAID); Regional Cooperation Programme on Highly Pathogenic and Emerging and Re-Emerging Diseases (HPED), funded by the EU; and IDENTIFY, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Dr Abila reported briefly on the main recommendations of the SEACFMD Sub-Commission Meeting in Singapore, including: Members' application to the OIE for the recognition of official national control programmes; examination of cost recovery options for vaccination programmes; and inclusion of 'One Health' issues (e.g., rabies) in future Sub-Commission meetings. He added that the following papers had been presented at the meeting: "Operationalising SEACFMD Control Strategies"; "Comprehensive Approach to FMD Vaccination in SEACFMD Countries"; and "SEACFMD Research Directions."

Dr Abila provided details of the following activities of the Sub-Regional Representation conducted for Members:

- National consultation meetings on FMD control in Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, to align these national plans with the SEACFMD 2020 Roadmap and the joint OIE/FAO Global FMD Control Strategy;
- In-country meetings with OIE Focal Points in Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar;
- Provision, from OIE vaccine banks, of FMD vaccines to Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia, and rabies vaccines to the Philippines, under the HPED programme;
- Two OIE-approved Small Grant Facilities (SGFs) under the STANDZ initiative for Laos and Myanmar to conduct vaccination campaigns (completed);
- SGF implementation for Laos for preparing a twinning in order to enhance the capacity of veterinary teaching staff at the Faculty of Agriculture on OIE 'Day 1' competencies, in cooperation with Khon Kaen University in Thailand (on-going).

Dr Abila informed the Commission that, since the first reported outbreak of avian influenza A virus sub-type H7N9 in China, the Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asia had worked closely with the OIE Regional Representation and Headquarters and with FAO-OIE-WHO tripartite regional partners on updates and consultations so to ensure a proper monitoring of the situation.

Dr Abila also presented the following activities programmed for the rest of the year, listed in accordance with the strategic objectives of the OIE Fifth Strategic Plan.

- Animal health information: organising an epidemiology network meeting and conducting training on surveillance, outbreak investigation and disease reporting.
- Prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases, including zoonoses: providing assistance to Members by facilitating transactions with donors and developing implementation modalities for FMD and rabies vaccination programmes; assisting with the delivery of FMD and rabies vaccines; pursuing rabies control through pilot projects on islands; and jointly organising the annual Meeting on Laboratory Strengthening for Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Asia Pacific Region, with FAO, and the annual tripartite meeting on ‘One Health’ zoonoses, with FAO and WHO.
- Capacity-building for national Veterinary Services: working with the South East Asia Veterinary School Association (SEAVSA) to document the status of veterinary education in South-East Asia; assisting Members in developing in-country and regional focal point networks, and, as needed, in following the OIE PVS Pathway.
- Influence on policy design, applied research and governance: developing Sub-Regional Representation policy engagement/communication; mobilisation and advocacy strategy; assisting Members in developing and operationalising their communication strategies and action plans; and developing a vaccination tool for evaluating comprehensive vaccination campaigns in South-East Asia and interview instruments for pre-vaccination campaigns in targeted vaccination areas.

7. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015

The following technical item (including a questionnaire to Members) was proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session:

- “The use of information technology in animal health management, such as raising awareness, early reporting, surveillance and emergency response”

8. Selection of Technical Item II (without questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 28th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania

Following proposals from the Members, the following technical item (without questionnaire) was adopted for the 28th Regional Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania:

- “PRRS control in the Region”

9. Outcome of the 19th Meeting of the OIE Sub-Commission for Foot and Mouth Disease in South-East Asia and China, held in Singapore from 19 to 22 March 2013

Dr Ronello Abila presented a report on the outcomes of the 19th Meeting of the OIE Sub-Commission for Foot and Mouth Disease in South-East Asia and China, held in Singapore in March 2013.

Dr Abila said that the regional overview of the FMD situation had revealed a marked decrease in the number of FMD outbreaks reported between 2011 and 2012 and that the meeting had updated participants on key achievements of the SEACFMD programme, as well as on current laboratory findings from the World Reference Laboratory for FMD in the United Kingdom and the regional FMD laboratories in Pakchong (Thailand) and Lanzhou (China). He added that FMD-endemic countries had reported on activities conducted during the past year and planned to align their national FMD controls plans with the joint OIE/FAO Global FMD Control Strategy and the SEACFMD roadmap, in the case of Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, and to expand FMD-free zones in the case of Thailand. He said that the meeting had acknowledged the progress and success achieved by Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam with the seven SGF projects under the STANDZ initiative.

Dr Abila then described the discussion on a series of strategies designed to achieve FMD freedom by 2020 – categorised under technical activities, communication & advocacy and coordination – based on presentations of participants’ experience and study. He referred to other issues discussed for their relevance to SEACFMD, including: gender; updates on the SGF; progress on implementing the EU-funded OIE vaccine bank; research directions; and private sector participation. He also noted that key issues had arisen from a separate workshop for delegates and observers on advancing FMD control in the region, including: coordination with other organisations; governance; sustainability of the Sub-Regional Representation; and SEACFMD and vaccination.

Dr Abila concluded by presenting the key recommendations and priority actions that had emerged from the meeting, adding that the list of recommendations was included in the Working Document.

10. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) – Status of notifications by Members in Asia, the Far East and Oceania

Dr Manuel Sanchez Vazquez, Deputy Head of the Animal Health Information Department, gave a brief update of the most relevant topics on animal disease reporting concerning Asia. He started by emphasizing the importance of timely disease reporting through WAHIS by the countries, and of the provision of other epidemiological information on disease prevention and control, to maintain transparency, to enhance trade and to contribute to the global early warning and to disease/health distribution knowledge worldwide. Then, he provided detailed regional information on the compliance with reporting for 2012, thus within the Asian Region 28 (74%) countries provided on time complete annual reports. Dr Sanchez Vazquez also showed the evolution of the submission time of six-monthly and annual reports from countries of Asia compared with the submission time of all the countries reporting to the OIE between 2009 and 2012; showing an good trend, with an overall improvement in the reporting by reducing the reporting time.

Finally, Dr Sanchez Vazquez presented some of the improvements implemented in the new version of WAHIS allowing a better reporting for disease notification in wild species. Concerning the Wildlife Annual reports, Dr Sanchez Vazquez explained that 63 countries worldwide had provided their reports and that those interested countries that had not yet provided a report on the section dedicated to non-OIE listed diseases specific to wild animals could do it at any time in the near future.

11. Proposal for designation of a new Collaborating Centre

Dr Matthew Stone, OIE Delegate of New Zealand, presented the Commission with an application for the OIE to consider the “EpiCentre and the mEpiLab, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand” as an OIE Collaborating Centre for “Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health”.

He provided a brief review of the centre and its activities and said that full details could be found in the Working Document of the meeting.

Australia, Japan and Singapore expressed their strong support for this application.

The Commission approved New Zealand's proposal. It will be presented for endorsement by the World Assembly of Delegates

12. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Asia, the Far East and Oceania

Dr Tomoko Ishibashi, Deputy Regional representative, started her presentation by providing the Members of the Commission with a brief overview of the state of play regarding the implementation of the different OIE PVS Pathway missions undertaken in the Region. She indicated the countries that would be eligible for certain categories of PVS Pathway missions and invited them to officially request missions accordingly.

She then went on to provide the audience with an update on the specific tools used in the different missions. She explained that all the tools used in the PVS Pathway are regularly updated with experienced experts in order to ensure that they are in line with the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Regarding the PVS Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services, she indicated that starting this year, the OIE will give the opportunity to countries requesting a PVS Evaluation Follow-Up mission to evaluate upon request their capacity to implement the One Health concept. She explained that following the outcomes of pilot missions, the OIE identified 14 existing Critical Competencies for that purpose. She also informed the meeting participants of the development of the first edition of the PVS Tool – Aquatic, dedicated to evaluating the performance of Aquatic Animal Health Services.

After offering background information regarding how the OIE was developing the tools used as “treatment” under the PVS Pathway, Dr Ishibashi gave details regarding the current and new “treatments” available to Members. She indicated that the OIE considered Twinning Projects between laboratories and the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme as well-established “treatments”. She further explained that new “treatments” were recently made available to Members, namely the PVS Pathway Laboratory missions, as well as the possibility to undertake a Veterinary Education Twinning Project and Twinning Project between Veterinary Statutory Bodies.

Prior to concluding, she reminded the Regional Commission of the efforts made by the OIE to share the outcomes of the different missions undertaken through the PVS Pathway with donors and partners when requested by the countries. She indicated that the OIE was also giving countries the opportunity to share PVS Pathway mission reports with the relevant ministries that could be involved in supporting, at national level, the activities related to the strengthening of their Veterinary Services.

Dr Ishibashi, concluded by reiterating that the OIE PVS Pathway was a continuous process aiming to sustainably improve compliance of Veterinary Services with international standards. The OIE is continuously working to convince governments and donors to not only support the PVS Pathway itself, but also the implementation of its recommendations and outcomes. Finally, she stated that the improvement of the Veterinary Services could only occur with the strong commitment and ownership of the countries.

13. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE

- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Dr Juan Lubroth, Chief Veterinary Officer of FAO, presented FAO activities in the region. He said that, by aligning FAO's strategic objectives, the Asia-Pacific livestock

programme aims to maximise the contribution of livestock to food security and poverty reduction, while enhancing resilience and sustainability and reducing health risks to humans and animals, including the threat from antimicrobial resistance. He emphasised that FAO's work builds on strong partnerships with international 'sister' organisations through OIE and WHO regional and sub-regional offices and, in consultation with national counterpart institutions, through FAO country offices. He added that the FAO-hosted Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific (APHCA) provided a forum for information exchange, support and coordination of collective action in the livestock sector.

Dr Lubroth explained that FAO activities in the region fall broadly into the following areas: (i) strategy/policy guidance; (ii) coordination; (iii) information generation and knowledge sharing; (iv) capacity-building; and (v) support of field programme implementation. All these activities are funded by a variety of sources including: FAO's regular programme; FAO's technical cooperation programme; the APHCA trust fund; and unilateral and multilateral donor trust funds. Dr Lubroth concluded by explaining that FAO's strategy for enhancing animal health builds on direct interventions to strengthen animal health systems, complemented by interventions to improve livelihoods in the livestock value chain, to integrate them into value chains with higher sanitary status.

14. Proposed revision of the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy

Dr Gardner Murray, Chair of the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (RAWS) Coordination Group, said that, since it had been endorsed by the Regional Commission in 2008, the original RAWS had provided the vision and goals for animal welfare in Asia, the Far East and Oceania. From the outset, it had been agreed that RAWS would be a 'living document' reviewed every few years. Accordingly, the RAWS coordination group has revised the original RAWS and developed a new version of RAWS (Edition 2). Dr Murray explained that RAWS edition 2 policy and strategy have remained exactly the same as in RAWS edition 1, as the ideas are still central to animal welfare in the region. All that RAWS edition 2 does is to update the original version to ensure it is current and reflects key developments over the past four years. Dr Murray also noted that, if endorsed by the meeting, RAWS edition 2 would be published for the use of countries and organisations in the region and other interested parties. He said it was hoped that RAWS-related matters, including a RAWS Action Plan, would be discussed at the Regional Conference, to be held in Cebu (Philippines) later in 2013.

New Zealand congratulated the Coordination Group for the work carried out during the first phase and underlined the importance of continuity and consistency during the second phase. He took this opportunity to formally thank Australia for their financial support. Both Australia and Thailand confirmed their support of the proposal for the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, Oceania and the Far East to adopt RAWS 2.

15. Organisation of the 28th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, to be held in Cebu (Philippines) from 18 to 22 November 2013

Dr Davinio Catbagan, Delegate of the Philippines to the OIE, described the arrangements being made by the authorities of his country to host the 28th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, to be held from 18 to 22 November 2013 in Cebu. He invited the Members of the Commission to confirm their participation ideally by September 2013.

He invited all Delegates of the Region to the Conference and underlined the importance of attending this event which, together with the General Session, are part of the OIE statutory meetings and thus, part of the OIE Delegates obligations.

16. Other matters

Dr Schipp provided a brief presentation on the various OIE ad hoc groups. He strongly encouraged Delegates to identify and propose national experts in order to increase regional participation in these fora. It was agreed that when making such proposals to the Director General of the OIE, the Delegates should copy both the Regional Commission and the Regional Representation into their communication.

Further to a request received from Dr Ingo Ernst, the elected regional member to the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission, to directly contact the regional OIE National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals on relevant matters, Dr Kugita sought approval from the Commission to review existing OIE procedures, and enable that communication be issued to National Focal Points directly.

Although Australia and Nepal recognised the benefits garnered by the National Focal Points in accessing such information, they stressed the need for the Delegate to remain the main contact point for the OIE in all communications. Dr Schipp suggested that the regional experts who are members of an OIE Specialist Commission be invited to participate in the 28th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, to be held in Cebu (Philippines) in November 2013. This proposal was supported by New Zealand and Japan.

Dr Stone, Delegate of New Zealand and Secretary General of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, pointed out that such regional experts would only be able to provide assistance to Members to better understand and interpret the relevant texts in view of the legitimate confidentiality agreements that they have signed with the OIE.

A participant from India requested further information on OIE procedures regarding immediate notification and corresponding support to Members. Dr Sanchez provided the requested information.

The meeting officially ended at 5:50 p.m.

.../Appendix

**MEETING OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA, THE FAR EAST AND OCEANIA
Paris, 27 May 2013**

Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda (Dr Zhang Zhongqiu, Delegate of People's Republic of China and President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania)
 2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE (Dr Mark Schipp, Delegate of Australia and Member of the OIE Council)
 3. Report on the OIE Council meetings (Dr Toshiro Kawashima, Delegate of Japan and Member of the OIE Council)
 4. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania (Dr Zhang Zhongqiu)
 5. Report of the Activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific including Focal Point Seminars and an update on the GF-TADs mechanism (Dr Hirofumi Kugita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific)
 6. Report of the Activities and work programme of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asian countries including an update on STANDZ, HPED and IDENTIFY Programmes (Dr Ronello Abila, OIE Sub-Regional Representative for South East Asia)
 7. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015 (Dr Hirofumi Kugita)
 8. Selection of the Technical Item II (without questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 28th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania (Dr Hirofumi Kugita)
 9. Outcome of the 19th Meeting of the OIE Sub-Commission for Foot and Mouth Disease in South-East Asia and China (SEACFMD), held in Singapore, from 19 to 22 March 2013 (Dr Ronello Abila)
 10. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) – Status of notifications by Members in Asia, the Far East and Oceania (Dr Manuel Sanchez, Animal Health Inf. Dept.)
 11. Proposal for designation of a new Collaborating Centre (Dr Matthew Stone, OIE Delegate of New Zealand)
 12. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Asia, the Far East and Oceania (Dr Tomoko Ishibashi, Deputy Regional Representative)
 13. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE
 - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
 14. Proposed revision of the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (Dr Gardner Murray, Chair of RAWS Coordination Group)
 15. Organisation of the 28th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania to be held in Cebu, Philippines, from 18 to 22 November 2013 (Dr Davinio Catbagan, OIE Delegate of Philippines)
 16. Other matters
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**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

Paris, 27 May 2013

The OIE Regional Commission for Europe met on 27 May 2013 at the Maison de la Chimie, Paris at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by 150 participants, including Delegates and observers from 42 Members of the Commission and representatives from 9 international or regional organisations:

Members of the Commission: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

International/regional organisations: CIRAD, COPA/COGECA⁵⁹, EC⁶⁰, EuFMD⁶¹, FAO, FEL, FESASS⁶², FVE⁶³, WFO.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Ago Pärtel (Estonia), President of the Regional Commission, assisted by Professor Nikola T. Belev (Bulgaria), Regional Representative for Eastern Europe and Honorary President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, Dr Nadège Leboucq, Sub-regional OIE Representative based in Brussels, Dr Ivan Bisiuk (Ukraine), Vice-President of the Commission, Dr Lucio Carbajo Goñi (Spain), Vice-President of the Commission and Dr Nihat Pakdil (Turkey), Secretary General of the Commission.

The President welcomed the Delegates, observers and representatives of the regional and international organisations.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda, described in the Appendix, was unanimously adopted. The agenda and the annexes related to agenda items were circulated.

⁵⁹ COPA/COGECA: Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations/General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives

⁶⁰ EC: European Commission

⁶¹ EUFMD: European Commission for the Control of Foot and Mouth Disease

⁶² FESASS: European Federation for Animal Health and Sanitary Security

⁶³ FVE: Federation of Veterinarians of Europe

2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE

The President of the Regional Commission, Dr Ago Pärtel, congratulated the Members of the Regional Commission since outstanding contributions from almost all countries had been made.

3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe

Dr Ago Pärtel, President of the Regional Commission, presented a report on the activities of the Commission highlighting that the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe was partially renewed at the 80th OIE General Session and the current Members are: President, Dr A. Partel (Estonia); Vice-President, I. Bisiuk (Ukraine); second Vice-President, L. Carbajo (Spain); and Secretary, N. Pakdil (Turkey).

Dr Pärtel commented that, in compliance with OIE Basic Texts, the OIE Regional Commission for Europe held its 25th Conference in Fleesensee (Germany) in September 2012, where it examined and discussed animal health, animal welfare and animal food production safety issues within Europe. The Conference was well attended, with 42 countries (out of 53) represented, as well as the key stakeholders in the region. The main outcomes of the Conference included two technical recommendations: one on the role of wildlife in the control of domestic animal diseases and the other on regional steps towards the common animal welfare approach in Europe. The two recommendations were scheduled for submission to the Assembly for approval in May 2013, after which they were expected to become important roadmaps for the OIE Regional Commission for Europe. More specifically, the Conference recommended:

- (i) establishing an OIE Regional Platform for Animal Welfare aimed at improving the implementation of OIE animal welfare standards in the region; and
- (ii) exploring a coordination mechanism for a common regional position on the OIE draft standards being submitted for adoption by the World Assembly of OIE Delegates.

It was decided that the coordination mechanism for a common regional position would be managed through a Task Force. This Task Force is comprised of the Delegates of the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission as well as the Delegates of Russia, Serbia, Norway, Austria, France and a representative of the European Commission. The President of the Regional Commission and Chair of the Task Force has already organised two meetings of the Task Force – one in Brussels (Belgium), in December 2012, and the other in Tallinn (Estonia), in April 2013 – to discuss the *modus operandi* of the Task Force and possible topics for a joint regional position. In preparation of the meeting of the Regional Commission, the Task Force met on Monday, May 27 to identify : (i) the chapters (6) for which a common position could be adopted on behalf of the 53 Member Countries of the region and (ii) the OIE Delegates who would take the floor to present these common positions.

In addition, Dr Pärtel, in his capacity of President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, participated in: (i) a European Union Conference entitled “Need for better animal health global governance” in Brussels (Belgium) in October 2012; (ii) the signing ceremony for the establishment of an OIE Representation in Moscow (Russia) in March 2013; (iii) a Round Table entitled “Emergency diseases situation and its control on the territory of EU and Customs Union” in Moscow in March 2013, including participation in side meetings; (iv) a meeting at the Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences of the Estonian University of Life Sciences in January 2013; and (v) a meeting with the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe, to discuss the agenda of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe for the following six months.

Dr Pärtel concluded by mentioning that the OIE Regional Commission for Europe was assembled that day in order to: (i) present OIE technical and capacity-building activities in the region; (ii) select the Technical Items (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agendas of the 83rd General Session of the Assembly (in May 2015) and 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (in September 2014); and (iii) propose new Collaborating Centres in the region. In addition, the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe will be represented in: (i) World Veterinary Congress, in Prague (Czech Republic) in September 2013; (ii) OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body, on the subject “Ensuring excellence and ethics of the veterinary profession”, in Foz do Iguazu (Brazil) in December 2013; and (iii) Fifth Meeting of the GF-TADs Steering Committee for Europe (of which the four Bureau members are permanent members), in Brussels (Belgium) in October 2013. This agenda will be implemented in close collaboration with the OIE Representations in Sofia, Moscow and Brussels.

4. Report on the activities of the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe, including Focal Point Seminars

Professor Nikola T. Belev, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe, provided information on the activities implemented by the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe in the early months of 2013. Two workshops were held in the region as part of the OIE capacity-building programme: a seminar for OIE National Focal Points for animal welfare in Teramo (Italy) on 5-7 March 2013; and a workshop for OIE National Focal Points for aquatic animals in Lisbon (Portugal) on 9-11 April 2013.

Professor Belev presented an overview of other events attended by the Representation:

- Meeting with the 1st Vice-President of the “Fédération Equestre Internationale” (FEI), Mr John Crossley McEwen, in the presence of the Chief Veterinary Officer of Bulgaria, Dr Damyan Illiev, to discuss the practicalities of OIE/FEI cooperation and standard-setting on the transportation of horses (24 January 2013);
- Meeting with Professor Angel Galabov – virologist and Bulgarian national expert on avian influenza and flu infections – to obtain updated information on the status of avian influenza in Europe and worldwide (1 February 2013);
- Meeting with Dr Miroslav Naydenov – Bulgaria’s Minister of Agriculture and Food at that time – to present OIE mandate and activities (4 February 2013);
- Workshop on laboratory networking, organised by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Multibeneficiary Project: supporting the control and eradication of animal diseases in the Western Balkans (Belgrade [Serbia], 11-12 February 2013);
- Meeting on signing an agreement to establish an OIE Representation in Moscow (Russia), including a round table discussion on the topic “Emergency diseases situation and its control on the territory of EU and Customs Union”, together with a detailed presentation on Veterinary Service structure according to OIE standards (Moscow [Russia], 6-7 March 2013);
- OIE Global Conference on the Responsible and Prudent Use of Antimicrobial Agents for Animals on the subject “International solidarity to fight against antimicrobial resistance” (Paris [France], 13-15 March 2013);
- Meeting with the newly appointed Bulgarian Minister for Agriculture and Food, Professor Ivan Stankov, to present a general overview of the OIE (21 March 2013);

- Meeting of the Executive Council of the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations (Apimondia) on boosting collaboration between the OIE and Apimondia (Kiev [Ukraine], 13-14 April 2013);
- Fifth International 'Turkmen Horse and World Horse-Breeding Art' Conference and Third Meeting of the International Association of Akhal-Teke Breeders (Ashgabat [Turkmenistan], 26-28 April 2013).

To conclude, Professor Belev presented the following activities, scheduled for the period 1 May to 31 December 2013, to be attended by the Regional Representation for Eastern Europe:

- World Veterinary Congress 2013 in Prague (Czech Republic) on 17-20 September 2013;
- OIE Seminar for National Focal Points for animal production food safety in Belgrade (Serbia) on 15-17 October 2013;
- Annual Meeting of Regional and Sub-Regional Representations at OIE Headquarters in Paris (France) on 21-25 October 2013;
- Global Conference on Veterinary Education and the Role of the Veterinary Statutory Body, on the subject "Ensuring excellence and ethics of the veterinary profession", in Foz do Iguazu (Brazil) on 4-6 December 2013.

5. Report on the activities and work programme of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels including an update on the GF-TADs mechanism

Dr Nadège Leboucq, OIE Sub-Regional Representative in Brussels, reported that, since 1 January 2013, the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels had been hosted by Belgium's Federal Agency for Food Safety (AFSCA) and that the official Agreements had been officially signed on 14 March 2013. On that occasion, Dr Leboucq had reiterated warmest thanks to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium and to AFSCA. She added that the staff of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels had been reinforced in March 2013 with the appointment of Dr S. Ralchev, technical assistant, who would be assigned specifically to the Secretariat of the OIE Regional Platform for Animal Welfare.

Dr Leboucq said that, in line with the OIE Fifth Strategic Plan for 2011-2015, the work programme of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels for 2013 carried on from the work of previous years, focusing on two main areas of intervention: (i) participation in OIE sub-regional and regional activities in Europe, in collaboration with the Regional Representation for Eastern Europe and the new OIE office in Moscow; and (ii) providing an interface for Brussels-based organisations.

In the first area of intervention, the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels participated in a PVS Evaluation mission to Turkmenistan in April 2013 as well as in the OIE regional seminar for National Focal Points for animal welfare in Teramo (Italy) in March 2013.

In the second area of intervention, the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels took part in around 20 coordination meetings between 1 January 2013 and 30 April 2013, including a symposium entitled "Preventing human pandemics by improving animal health" at the European Parliament in Brussels (Belgium) in January 2013.

Dr Leboucq also reported that, in its capacity as Secretariat for GF-TADs Europe, the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels monitored implementation of the GF-TADs Europe Five-Year Action Plan and would also be organising the Fifth Meeting of the GF-TADs Steering Committee for Europe in Brussels (Belgium) in October 2013.

Dr Leboucq concluded by presenting the following programme of activities of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels for the coming months.

- Operational start-up of the OIE Regional Animal Welfare Platform, to be endorsed by the 81st General Session of the OIE in May 2013;
- OIE seminar for National Focal Points for animal production food safety, to be held in Serbia in October 2013;
- Support for countries in the region to increase participation in the OIE standard-setting process, by means of two technical seminars - one in the Balkans in November 2013 and the other for Russian-speaking countries in December 2013;
- Further capacity-building activities for national Veterinary Services, based on the OIE PVS Pathway.

Dr Leboucq also reminded participants that all the activities of the Regional Representation and the Sub-Regional Representation are published regularly on the OIE regional website for Europe (www.rr-europe.oie.int), managed by the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels.

6. Update on the OIE Representation in Moscow

Prof. Kazimieras Lukauskas started his presentation by informing the Regional Commission that, thanks to the initiative of Dr Bernard Vallat, OIE Director General, and the good collaboration between OIE and Russian Authorities, the OIE proceeded to the opening of an OIE Representation in Moscow. The agreement regarding that new office has been officialised with the OIE Director General and the Honourable Minister of Agriculture of Russia, Nikolay Fyodorov, during a special ceremony that took place in Moscow on 6 March 2013. He informed the Regional Commission that he was nominated as the OIE Representative for this office.

The scope and the activities of the Representation will include:

1. To monitor the zoosanitary situation;
2. To advocate for exchange of relevant information related to disease control;
3. To promote the collection, analysis and dissemination of scientific information on animal diseases;
4. To assist in improving the veterinary legislation and governance; and
5. To perform other tasks assigned by the OIE Director General in accordance with the 5th Strategic Plan.

Prof. Kazimieras Lukauskas provided the Commission with information regarding some recent activities in which he recently participated. He then gave an idea of the activities to be undertaken by this new office. He finally concluded by expressing his hope for the successful implementation of this Representation.

7. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates, to be held in May 2015

The Regional Commission proposed the following technical item (including a questionnaire to Members) to be included in the agenda of the 83rd General Session:

- “Implementation of OIE standards under the WTO SPS Agreement⁶⁴”

8. Confirmation of the date and venue of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe

Dr Hans Wyss, OIE Delegate of Switzerland, confirmed his country’s offer to host the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe. The Conference will be held in Bern from 22 to 26 September 2014.

9. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to be held in September 2014

The following technical item (with questionnaire) was adopted for the 26th Regional Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe:

- “Animal health in the light of natural disasters and bioterrorism”

10. Proposal for designation of a new Collaborating Centre

Dr Romano Marabelli, OIE Delegate of Italy, presented the Commission with an application for the OIE to consider “Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale della Lombardia e dell’Emilia Romagna (IZSLER), Brescia, Italy” as an OIE Collaborating Centre for “Cell Cultures”.

He provided a brief review of IZSLER and its activities and said that full details could be found in the Working Document of the meeting.

The Commission approved Italy’s proposal. It will be presented for endorsement by the World Assembly of Delegates.

11. Recommendations of the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe held in Fleesensee, Germany, from 17 to 21 September 2012

Dr Nadège Leboucq, OIE Sub-Regional Representative in Brussels, introduced the presentation by highlighting the high turnout for the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, with 42 of the 53 OIE Members of the Regional Commission for Europe represented.

Dr Leboucq reported that the technical items presented at the Conference had related to two areas of interest: (i) the role of wildlife in the control of domestic animal diseases (Technical Item I, with a questionnaire); and (ii) the common animal welfare approach in Europe (Technical Item II, without a questionnaire).

With regard to Technical Item I, Dr Leboucq reported that, as the complexity of infectious disease transmission between domestic animals and wildlife and the persistence of pathogens transmissible from wildlife made it very difficult to control some diseases in domestic animals, it had been recommended to continue implementing effective monitoring

⁶⁴ The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

systems, as well as biosecurity measures designed to avoid direct or indirect contact with wildlife, using zoning or compartmentalisation where appropriate. One statement at the Conference in Germany was that a new OIE Collaborating Centre on the role of wildlife in controlling domestic animal diseases could provide countries in the region with greater technical support in this field.

With regard to Technical Item II, Dr Leboucq explained that contrasting levels of animal welfare policy implementation in the national legislation of the 53 OIE Members of the Europe region had led to endorsement of the need for West and East European countries to work together and share best practices to achieve the progressive and harmonious implementation of OIE animal welfare standards region-wide. She said that the Conference recommendations had therefore included setting up an OIE Regional Platform for Animal Welfare, based on discussions that had begun at the OIE regional seminar for National Focal Points for animal welfare held in Kiev (Ukraine) in March 2012. Dr Leboucq reported that, after discussing the Platform's objectives, activities and governance, an agreement on the main principles had been reached. It had also been decided to make the initiative a major project of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels in 2013, with expected financial support from the European Union.

Dr Leboucq explained that, in order to implement the Conference recommendations, it would be essential to strengthen national Veterinary Services in accordance with OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services. Dr Leboucq concluded by saying that the two recommendations would be submitted to the Assembly for endorsement during the week and that they would provide an important “roadmap 2013-2014” for the 53 OIE Members of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe.

12. Update on the OIE Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Eastern Europe

Dr Stanislav Ralchev, Technical Assistant at the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels, started his presentation by providing some relevant outcomes from the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe in Fleesensee (Germany) in September 2012. He focused especially on Technical Item II on “Regional steps towards a common animal welfare approach in Europe”, building on the outcomes of the OIE regional seminar for National Focal Points for animal welfare in Kiev (Ukraine) in March 2012.

Dr Ralchev explained that, following the recommendations and outcomes of both these fora, OIE Member Countries had recommended setting up an OIE Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe, to become a key activity of the Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels, which would house the Platform Secretariat.

He explained that the overall idea was to develop an “incremental two-step approach” to improve the implementation of animal welfare standards in Eastern Europe. That would be done through a selection of practical activities discussed on the Platform and subsequently bridging the interests of East and West European countries through sustainable long-term collaboration on animal welfare. Once operational, the Platform would explore the need for a regional strategy.

After explaining that the Platform's Steering Group, *modus operandi*, list of future activities and priority topics would be proposed for adoption by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe at the 81st OIE General Session in May 2013, Dr Ralchev described the Platform's governance, which would tentatively include representatives from: OIE Headquarters; three Eastern European countries; two European Economic Area countries; Directorate-General for Health and Consumers of the European Commission (DG SANCO⁶⁵); OIE Animal Welfare Collaborating Centre in the region; Regional

⁶⁵ DG SANCO: The Directorate General Health and Consumers

Representation for Eastern Europe; Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels; and one donor organisation.

He highlighted that the transport of animals (by land), stray dog population management and slaughter of animals (for consumption) as priorities for the Platform over the next three year period.

Dr Ralchev concluded by saying that the first meeting of the Steering Group would take place in the second half of 2013, where a concrete action plan would be discussed, adding that the European Union is expected to provide the Platform with appropriate financial support.

13. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS): Status of Notification by Members in Europe

Dr Simona Forcella, Chargée de mission at the OIE Animal Health Information Department, gave a brief update of the most relevant topics on animal disease reporting in Europe. She started by emphasising the importance of timely disease reporting through WAHIS by the countries, and of the provision of other epidemiological information on disease prevention and control, in order to maintain transparency, enhance trade and contribute to the global early warning system and to the dissemination of the sanitary information worldwide.

Then, she provided detailed regional information on the compliance with reporting for 2012, thus within Europe 39 (72%) countries provided on time complete annual report. Dr Forcella also showed the evolution of the submission time of six-monthly and annual reports from countries of Europe compared with the submission time of all the countries reporting to the OIE between 2009 and 2012; demonstrating an overall improvement in the reporting by reducing the reporting time particularly over the last three years.

Finally, Dr Forcella presented some of the improvements implemented in the new version of WAHIS allowing a better reporting for disease notification in wild species. Concerning the Wildlife Annual reports, Dr Forcella explained that 63 countries worldwide had provided their reports and that those interested countries that had not yet provided a report on the section dedicated to non-OIE listed diseases specific to wild animals, to do so at any time in the near future.

Following a question from Dr P. Naassens, OIE Delegate of Belgium, Dr Forcella clarified that, for OIE listed diseases, the reporting of wildlife diseases follows the usual mandatory 6 monthly reporting procedure, while for the other wildlife diseases, countries are encouraged to report voluntarily on an annual basis only, after transmission of the 2 semestrial reports, which are required for a given year.

14. On-going collaboration between the OIE and WHO/‘One Health’ activities

Dr Stéphane de La Rocque, OIE Project Officer for Veterinary Public Health, presented a briefing on good governance of human and animal health services within the framework of on-going collaboration between the OIE and the World Health Organization (WHO) (‘One Health’ activities).

Dr de La Rocque said that the fact that more than 60% of animal diseases are transmissible to humans and 75% of recent emerging diseases are zoonotic called for strong human and animal health systems, working in close partnership, in order to jointly address common issues of early detection, assessment and response to events of potential international health concern. Dr de La Rocque pointed out that human and animal health services shared a need to enhance their surveillance, early detection, reporting and rapid response capacity, which was encompassed by the international standards developed by WHO, in its

International Health Regulations (IHR), and by the OIE, in its *Terrestrial and Aquatic Codes and Manuals*.

Dr de La Rocque explained that individual countries needed to be provided with appropriate material and guidance to: make an objective evaluation of their situation and compliance with international obligations; address deficiencies; and build capacity to improve their operational capability and comply with international requirements. He explained that the following specific tools had been developed in the human and animal sectors.

- By WHO: (i) a list of minimum core public health capacities to guide effective implementation of the IHR; (ii) a checklist and indicators for countries to assess their degree of compliance with the expected levels of capability described in the IHR;
- By the OIE: (i) the Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway, including in particular the OIE PVS Tool (qualitative assessment) and the PVS Gap Analysis Tool (qualitative and quantitative assessment) used by countries to objectively assess and address the main weaknesses in their Veterinary Services' compliance with OIE quality standards, and to determine the scope and costs of upgrading.

Those tools are continuously refined and updated to take recent developments into account, including the strengthening of cooperation with partners.

Dr de La Rocque said that the emergence of major zoonotic infectious diseases over the last decade had resulted in steadily increasing dialogue and joint initiatives among WHO, the OIE, FAO and the World Bank. In 2010, the tripartite WHO-OIE-FAO developed a joint Concept Note describing areas of common interest to share responsibilities and coordinating global activities to address health risks at the human-animal-ecosystems interfaces. He added that, since then, the three organisations had stepped up their collaboration to develop benchmarks for good governance across the animal and human health sectors.

Dr de La Rocque explained that a mapping exercise – based on a review of existing tools used for assessing national animal and human health systems, conducted using the OIE PVS Pathway (including a PVS 'One Health' pilot evaluation tool) and the IHR – had helped to identify existing initiatives and additional synergies to optimise and optimally address national cross-cutting human and animal health priorities. This had led to a proposed joint OIE-WHO programme of work focusing on strengthening existing tools to better address the human-animal interface and developing new tools where necessary. He said that the programme provided for concrete actions including but not limited to the: development of a Gap Analysis-compatible costing tool prototype for building required national capacity through the IHR; adjustment of the WHO/IHR assessment tool to better address the human-animal interface; and improvement of the WHO laboratory assessment tool in relation with developing the OIE PVS Pathway laboratory tool. Dr de La Rocque reported that the OIE and WHO, in partnership with the World Bank and using a European Union-funded mechanism, had agreed to jointly develop a methodological guide for countries that would gather together a collection of these tools and the results of all these adjustments. He added that these outputs would be instrumental for identifying the operational strategies and synergies upon which to base future global and national collaboration and actions for strengthening national human and animal health systems governance.

15. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Europe

Dr N. Leboucq, OIE sub-regional Representative based in Brussels, started her presentation by providing the Members of the Regional Commission with a brief overview of the state of play regarding the implementation of the different OIE PVS Pathway missions undertaken in the Region. As of May 2013, 16 OIE PVS evaluation missions - the last 2 OIE PVS evaluation missions in the region were recently carried out in Serbia (March 2013) and in Turkmenistan (April 2013) - and 6 PVS gap Analysis missions have been carried out in Europe. She indicated the countries that would be eligible for certain categories of PVS Pathway missions and invited them to officially request missions accordingly.

She then went on to provide the audience with an update on the specific tools used in the different missions. She explained that all the tools used in the PVS Pathway are regularly updated with experienced experts in order to ensure that they are in line with the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Regarding the PVS Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services, she indicated that starting this year, the OIE will give the opportunity to countries requesting a PVS Evaluation Follow-Up mission to evaluate upon request their capacity to implement the One Health concept. She explained that following the outcomes of pilot missions, the OIE identified 14 existing Critical Competencies for that purpose. She also informed the meeting participants of the development of the first edition of the PVS Tool-Aquatic, dedicated to evaluating the performance of the Aquatic Animal Health Services.

After offering background information regarding how the OIE was developing the tools used as “treatment” under the PVS Pathway, Dr. Leboucq gave details regarding the current and new “treatments” available to Members. She indicated that the OIE considered Twinning Projects between laboratories and the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme as well-established “treatments”. She further explained that new “treatments” were recently made available to Members, namely the PVS Pathway Laboratory missions, as well as the possibility to undertake a Veterinary Education Twinning Project and a Twinning Project between Veterinary Statutory Bodies. She also indicated that a new laboratory Twinning project was launched in April 2013 on Brucellosis between Kazakhstan (candidate) and USA / Italy (‘parents’).

Prior to concluding, she reminded the Regional Commission of the efforts made by the OIE to share the outcomes of the different missions undertaken through the PVS Pathway with donors and partners when requested by the countries. She indicated that the OIE was also giving countries the opportunity to share PVS Pathway mission reports with the relevant ministries that could be involved in supporting, at national level, the activities related to the strengthening of their Veterinary Services.

Dr. Leboucq concluded by reiterating that the OIE PVS Pathway was a continuous process aiming to sustainably improve the compliance of Veterinary Services with international standards. The OIE is continuously working to convince governments and donors to not only support the PVS Pathway itself, but also the implementation of its recommendations and outcomes. Finally, she stated that the improvement of the Veterinary Services could only occur with the strong commitment and ownership of the countries.

16. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE

- **European Commission (EC)**

Dr Bernard Van Goethem, Director for Veterinary and International Affairs, DG SANCO, European Commission, informed that on 6 May 2013, various measures strengthening the health and safety standards for the entire agri-food chain, had been adopted by the EC, providing a modernised and simplified, more risk-based approach

to the protection of health, and more efficient control tools to ensure the effective application of the rules guiding the operation of the food chain. These measures are also reported to include a new Animal Health Law, a single and clear legislation to regulate animal health in the EU, based on good governance and a principle according to which "prevention is better than cure". The speaker underlined that these measures, compliant with international standards (e.g. those of the OIE) and taking into account all relevant stakeholders, were aimed to improve standards and provide a common system to detect and control diseases better, in addition to tackling health, food and feed safety risks in a coordinated way, focusing on long-term preventative measures.

According to Dr Van Goethem, in order to reduce the risk of trade disruption, the Animal Health Law was aimed at guaranteeing an appropriate level of convergence with the international standards of the OIE regarding animal health conditions for international trade.

The presentation, in general, highlighted the new elements of the Animal Health Law, including prevention policies and tools, the categorisation and prioritisation of diseases and enhanced convergence with OIE standards and response to emerging diseases.

- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Dr Andriy Rozstalnyy, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, reported that FAO assistance to Veterinary Services in European and Central Asian countries focused on three strategic areas: (i) prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases, including zoonoses; (ii) good governance and capacity-building of Veterinary Services; and (iii) provision of animal disease and zoonosis information. The FAO representative explained that technical assistance and capacity-building of state Veterinary Services addressed issues of early detection and early response to priority diseases, such as: African swine fever, foot and mouth disease, brucellosis and peste des petits ruminants. The representative said that FAO had provided emergency assistance to Armenia and Georgia to assist with African swine fever outbreaks and to Bulgaria for investigating foot and mouth disease outbreaks.

Dr Andriy Rozstalnyy, added that FAO also contributed to good Veterinary Service governance and to fostering regional and cross-border cooperation between Veterinary Services, giving as an example the regional meeting entitled "Threat of African Swine fever spread in Eastern Europe: urgent need for international collaboration", which had been held by FAO Regional Office in December 2012. The FAO representative said that the meeting had discussed mechanisms for fostering regional cooperation between Veterinary Services and relevant international organisations. In addition, a set of recommendations for improving the prevention and control of African Swine fever had been agreed by the representatives of: 14 state Veterinary Services, FAO, OIE, European Commission, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), together with international and European Union/national reference laboratories and research institutions in Spain, Russia, Poland, Italy and France.

The FAO representative explained that FAO plans for 2013-2014 included two main events: (i) a summit entitled "Global Wellbeing – a Partnership of Animal and Human Health" at the Prague World Veterinary Congress, to be held in the Czech Republic in September 2013, in coordination with the World Veterinary Association, WHO and the OIE; and (ii) a regional meeting on rabies control strategies for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, to be held jointly with the OIE and WHO.

17. Other matters

Dr N. Galon, OIE Delegate of Israel, raised the issue of lumpy skin disease in the region and requested that the OIE and FAO provide guidance and knowledge to countries to best prevent and control the disease.

Dr M. Taitubayev, OIE Delegate of Kazakhstan, enquired about the possible ranking of countries within a sub-region using the results of the PVS Evaluations. Dr M. Eloit, OIE Deputy Director General, stated that it is not the aim of the PVS Evaluation for countries to compare themselves to other countries, but rather to help them to sustainably reinforce their own capacities in line with OIE standards. However, the OIE has conducted sub-regional PVS studies in Northern Africa and Western Africa, for example, and such regional studies could be relevant in the context of Central Asia or the Customs Union in order to support a sub-region in its efforts to harmonise the quality of their Veterinary Services. Dr Belev concluded the discussion on the topic by reemphasising the need for countries to become fully compliant with OIE standards, using the PVS Pathway.

The meeting officially ended at 6:00 p.m.

.../Appendix

**MEETING OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

Paris, 27 May 2013

Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda (Dr Ago Pärtel, Delegate of Estonia and President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe)
2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE (Dr Ago Pärtel)
3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (Dr Ago Pärtel)
4. Report on the activities of the OIE Regional Representation for Eastern Europe including Focal Point Seminars (Prof. Nikola T. Belev, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe)
5. Report on the activities and work programme of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation in Brussels including an update on the GF-TADs mechanism (Dr Nadège Leboucq, OIE Sub Regional Representative in Brussels)
6. Update on the OIE Representation in Moscow (Dr Kazimieras Lukauskas)
7. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015 (Dr Ago Pärtel)
8. Confirmation of the date and venue of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (Dr Hans Wyss, Delegate of Switzerland)
9. Selection of a Technical Item I (with questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 26th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to be held in September 2014 (Dr Ago Pärtel)
10. Proposal for designation of a new Collaborating Centre (Dr Romano Marabelli, Delegate of Italy)
11. Recommendations of the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe held in Fleesensee, Germany, from 17 to 21 September 2012 (Dr Nadège Leboucq)
12. Update regarding the OIE Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for the Eastern Europe (Dr Stanislav Ralchev, Technical Assistant, OIE Sub Regional Representation in Brussels)
13. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) – Status of notifications by Members in Europe (Dr Simona Forcella, OIE Animal Health Inf. Dept)
14. On-going collaboration between OIE and WHO/‘One Health’ activities (Dr Stéphane de la Rocque, OIE Project Officer for Veterinary Public Health, OIE Sub Regional Representation in Brussels)
15. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in Europe (Dr Nadège Leboucq)
16. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE
 - European Commission (EC)
 - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
17. Other matters

**REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST
Paris, 27 May 2013**

The OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East met on 27 May 2013 at the Maison de la Chimie, Paris at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was attended by 46 participants, including Delegates and observers from 16 Members of the Commission and representatives from 3 international or regional organisations:

Members of the Commission: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Observer countries/territories: France, Palestine and United Kingdom.

International/regional organisations: FAO, FEI, WSPA

The meeting was chaired by Dr Kassem Al-Qahtani (Qatar), President of the Commission, assisted by Dr Ali Abdullah Al-Sahmi (Oman), Vice-President.

The President welcomed the Delegates, observers and representatives of international organisations.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda, described in the Appendix, was unanimously adopted. The agenda and the annexes related to agenda items were circulated.

2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE

The President of the Regional Commission reported that outstanding contributions from a number of countries were a matter of concern and urged Members to promptly settle their arrears if they had any. The President added that the funding of the Regional Representation for the Middle East relied on an annual voluntary contribution from the Lebanese Government and a little bit less than 10% share of the annual contribution by regional Members to the OIE. However, as several Members of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East belonged to and contributed to other Regional Commissions and most of the Members contributing to the Middle East Region were in the lowest contribution category (6 or 5), the share of the regional Members' contribution was insufficient to defray the annual budget required by the Regional Representation to implement its programme of activities.

Dr Al-Qahtani thus encouraged Members of the Regional Commission for the Middle East to upgrade their level of statutory contributions to the OIE in compliance with their national economic level in order to better support the activities of the Regional Commission and Regional Representation, adding that other efforts should also be engaged towards finding new sources of funding for their activities.

3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East

Dr Al-Qahtani, President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East, reminded the meeting of the main objectives of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East, which were to: tackle specific issues relating to the region's animal health situation; and establish cooperation at regional level in order to improve the quality of Veterinary Services, in compliance with OIE standards, through active and efficient collaboration.

He said that regular seminars for OIE National Focal Points in the various fields of activity were a vital part of the process of strengthening Veterinary Services in the region.

Dr Al-Qahtani added that seminars on aquatic animal and wildlife diseases were scheduled for 2013 and that the seminar on animal production food safety would be held in early 2014.

He explained that the Regional Commission would meet twice in 2013 to propose the timetable for a work plan and to prepare the 12th Regional Conference to be held in Amman (Jordan) from 23 to 26 September 2013.

Referring to Regional Commission support to the Regional Representation, Dr Al-Qahtani reported that the Regional Commission Bureau had met in Dubai in April 2012 to discuss a request for sponsorship and financial contributions from specific regional donors. He said that suggestions favoured approaching the main financial sources in the region, including: IsDB⁶⁶, OPEC⁶⁷, AGFUND⁶⁸ and Qatar Foundation.

Dr Al-Qahtani concluded by urging Bureau members to lobby authorities in the region to give high priority to financially supporting regional activities.

Dr Yehia and Dr Al-Qatani highlighted the need for Delegates and National Focal Points attending seminars and workshops to inform decision makers in their countries of the outcomes of these activities, in order to build awareness on the importance of supporting their Veterinary Services and the role of the OIE in building capacity.

4. Report on the activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for the Middle East including Focal Point seminars

Dr Ghazi Yehia, OIE Regional Representative for the Middle East, presented the main objectives of the activities implemented by the Regional Representation during the previous 12 months.

Dr Yehia explained that one of the main objectives of the Regional Representation for the Middle East was to build the capacity of Veterinary Services and contribute to the prevention and control of animal diseases in this region. He reminded participants that the activities of the Regional Representation for the Middle East involved: improving animal disease notification; strengthening collaboration with regional and international organisations, especially FAO, WHO and AU-IBAR; holding conferences and seminars to help target specific animal and public health-related issues; promoting the establishment of regional OIE Reference Laboratories; and coordinating these laboratories' activities to ensure they meet regional needs.

⁶⁶ IsDB: Islamic Development Bank

⁶⁷ OPEC: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

⁶⁸ AGFUND: Arab Gulf Program for Development

He reported on work to organise the 12th Regional Conference for the Middle East, to be held in Amman (Jordan) on 23-26 September 2013.

Dr Yehia described the main outcomes of the information seminar for recently appointed Delegates and of the seminars for OIE National Focal Points held during the past year, and provided details of the assistance given to countries wishing to take part in Laboratory Twinning projects. He also presented the conclusions of the: OIE inter-regional conference on Rift Valley fever in Mombasa (Kenya); sub-regional workshop on lumpy skin disease and other vector-borne diseases in Larnaca (Cyprus); and two meetings on the FAO Progressive Control Pathway for Foot and Mouth Disease (PCP-FMD) in Beirut (Lebanon) and Dubai (United Arab Emirates).

He described the technical assistance provided on: surveillance of peste des petits ruminants and brucellosis; collaboration of the OIE Reference Laboratory for bluetongue; distribution of the questionnaire for official recognition of historical freedom from African horse sickness; and reviewing the glanders chapter in the *Terrestrial Code*.

He reported on the positive outcomes of a meeting held in Saudi Arabia between the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the OIE Director General during which it has been proposed that experts from both organisations meet in order to propose a cooperation Memorandum of Understanding for supporting Member Countries of the Region.

The Regional Representative also confirmed the OIE efforts towards the establishment of a sub-regional FMD coordination office in a GCC country.

Dr Yehia outlined the activities programmed for the upcoming year, including the regional conference on peste des petits ruminants to review a common strategy for the region. He said that this activity was yet to be confirmed. He reported on work to: build the technical capacity of Veterinary Services using the OIE PVS Pathway; implement laboratory twinning projects; and continue seminars every two years for OIE National Focal Points for animal welfare, animal production food safety, aquatic animal diseases, veterinary products, wildlife diseases, animal disease notification to the OIE, communication, and laboratory. He also indicated that the OIE was currently working on the preparation of the first Veterinary Education Twinning project in the Region. This project, still to be confirmed, would most likely involve Jordan and United Kingdom.

Dr Yehia acknowledged the support of Professor Vincenzo Caporale as Special Advisor to the Regional Representation for the Middle East and Dr Joseph Domenech for his work in preparing key activities in the region.

Dr Yehia concluded by saying that the Regional Representation for the Middle East would continue to work towards building the technical capacity of the Members' Veterinary Services of the region.

5. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the Agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015

The Regional Commission proposed the following technical item (including a questionnaire to Members) to be included in the agenda of the 83rd General Session:

- “Harmonising National Legislation on Food Safety”

6. Selection of Technical Item II (without questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 12th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East

The following technical item (without questionnaire) was adopted for the 12th Regional Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East:

- “Proper application of Halal slaughter”

7. Organisation of the 12th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East, to be held in Amman (Jordan), from 23 to 26 September 2013

Dr Monther Al-Rifai, Delegate of Jordan to the OIE, described the arrangements being made by the authorities of his country to host the 12th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East, to be held from 23 to 26 September 2013.

8. Candidate for the OIE Council

All countries of the Regional Commission for the Middle East decided by consensus to propose Dr Ali Abdullah Al-Sahmi, Delegate of Oman to the OIE and currently Vice-President of the Regional Commission, as the new Member representing the Middle East at the OIE Council.

In addition, Dr Osama Mahmoud Ahmed Slim, Delegate of Egypt, was unanimously elected by the Commission as Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East to replace Dr Al Sahmi.

9. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS): status of notification by Members in Middle East

Dr Karim Ben Jebara, Head of the OIE Animal Health Information Department, provided a brief update of the most relevant topics on animal disease reporting in the Middle East. He began by emphasising the importance of timely disease reporting through WAHIS by the countries/territories, and of the provision of other epidemiological information on disease prevention and control, in order to maintain transparency, enhance trade, and contribute to the global early warning system and to the worldwide distribution of knowledge on disease/health.

Dr Ben Jebara then provided detailed regional information on the compliance with reporting for 2012; within the Middle East region, 16 countries (76%) provided complete annual reports on time. He also showed the evolution of the submission time of six-monthly and annual reports from countries of the Middle East compared with the submission time of all the countries reporting to the OIE between 2009 and 2012. This analysis illustrated a mild improvement in the reporting of the second six-monthly reports (by reducing the reporting time), but little improvement (and even a reduction) in the submission of the first six-monthly and annual reports.

Finally, Dr Ben Jebara presented some of the improvements implemented in the new version of WAHIS, which allow for better reporting for disease notification in wild species. Concerning the Wildlife Annual reports, Dr Ben Jebara explained that 63 countries worldwide had provided their reports; interested countries that had not yet provided a report on the section dedicated to non-OIE listed diseases specific to wild animals could do so at any time in the near future.

10. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in the Middle East

Dr Ghazi Yehia, Regional Representative for the Middle East, started his presentation by providing the Members of the Regional Commission with a brief overview of the state of play regarding the implementation of the different OIE PVS Pathway missions undertaken in the Region. He indicated the countries that would be eligible for certain categories of PVS Pathway missions and invited them to officially request missions accordingly.

He then went on to provide the audience with an update on the specific tools used in the different missions. He explained that all the tools used in the PVS Pathway are regularly updated with experienced experts in order to ensure that they are in line with the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*. Regarding the PVS Tool for Evaluation of the Performance of Veterinary Services, he indicated that starting this year, the OIE will give the opportunity to countries requesting a PVS Evaluation Follow-Up mission to evaluate, upon request, their capacity to implement the One Health concept. He explained that following the outcomes of pilot missions, the OIE identified 14 existing Critical Competencies for that purpose. He also informed the meeting participants of the development of the first edition of the PVS Tool – Aquatic, dedicated to evaluating the performance of Aquatic Animal Health Services.

After offering background information regarding how the OIE was developing the tools used as “treatment” under the PVS Pathway, Dr Yehia gave details regarding the current and new “treatments” available to Members. He indicated that the OIE considered Twinning Projects between laboratories and the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme as well-established “treatments”. He further explained that new “treatments” were recently made available to Members, namely the PVS Pathway Laboratory missions, as well as the possibility to undertake a Veterinary Education Twinning Project and Twinning Project between Veterinary Statutory Bodies.

Prior to concluding, Dr Yehia reminded the Regional Commission of the efforts made by the OIE to share the outcomes of the different missions undertaken through the PVS Pathway with donors and partners when requested by the countries. He indicated that the OIE was also giving countries the opportunity to share PVS Pathway mission reports with the relevant ministries that could be involved in supporting, at national level, the activities related to the strengthening of their Veterinary Services.

Dr Yehia concluded by reiterating that the OIE PVS Pathway was a continuous process aiming to sustainably improve the compliance of Veterinary Services with international standards. The OIE is continuously working to convince governments and donors to not only support the PVS Pathway itself, but also the implementation of its recommendations and outcomes. Finally, he stated that the improvement of Veterinary Services could only occur with the strong commitment and ownership of the countries.

11. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE

- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Dr Markos Tibbo, FAO Livestock Officer, reported that technical assistance of his organisation had focused on: building capacity to improve animal productivity; prevention and control of animal, zoonotic and food-borne diseases; and sustainable use of natural resources, including animal genetic resources.

He described technical assistance provided in the region, notably on: early detection and response to priority diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease; prevention and management of brucellosis, peste des petits ruminants and Rift Valley fever; the regional foot and mouth disease control strategy; drafting a peste des petits ruminants roadmap; and emergency assistance for animal disease outbreaks.

Dr Tibbo outlined current challenges in the region, including: the rapid spread of lumpy skin disease in some countries of the region; fears aroused by avian influenza A (H7N9) outbreaks in China; and disruption to Syria's Veterinary Services.

In conclusion, the FAO representative reported that FAO collaborates with the OIE in implementing: PVS Pathway missions; the Progressive Control Pathway for Foot and Mouth Disease; animal quarantine systems; and import risk analysis.

12. Other matters

Dr Yehia presented the conclusions resulting from the following seminars and workshops: Rift Valley Fever (Mombasa), animal welfare (Beirut), foot-and-mouth disease (Beirut and Dubai), and lumpy skin disease (Lanarca). The conclusions of these meetings were endorsed by the Regional Commission.

Dr Yehia communicated the composition of the working group for the implementation of the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy for the Middle East. He asked participants to propose members from the private sector that could contribute to the working group. The Regional Commission requested the Coordinator of the working group, Dr Hassan Aidaros, and Dr Yehia to identify the appropriate persons or agencies.

Lastly, Dr Yehia notified participants of the Equine Diseases Training on the diagnosis of African Horse Sickness, dourine, glanders, equine infectious anaemia, and equine virus arteritis, which will be organised by the Istituto zooprofilattico in Palermo. He requested the Member countries that have not yet done so to nominate a participant to attend the meeting, as well as to confirm that they would cover the selected participant's transport and accommodation costs for this training.

Dr Al-Qatani thanked the participants for their contributions and concluded the meeting.

The meeting ended at 5: 00 p.m.

.../Appendix

**MEETING OF THE
OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST
Paris, 27 May 2013**

Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda (Dr Kassem Al-Qahtani, Delegate of Qatar, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Middle East)
2. Financial contributions of Members to the OIE (Dr Kassem Al-Qahtani)
3. Report of the President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East (Dr Kassem AlQahtani)
4. Report on the activities and work programme of the OIE Regional Representation for the Middle East including Focal Point Seminars (Dr Ghazi Yehia, OIE Regional Representative for the Middle East)
5. Selection of a Technical Item (with questionnaire) to be proposed for inclusion in the Agenda of the 83rd General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates to be held in May 2015 (Dr Ghazi Yehia)
6. Selection of the Technical Item II (without questionnaire) to be included in the agenda of the 12th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East (Dr Ghazi Yehia)
7. Organisation of the 12th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East to be held in Amman (Jordan) from 23 to 26 September 2013 (Dr Monther Al-Rifai, Delegate of Jordan)
8. Candidate for the OIE Council (Dr Kassem Al-Qahtani)
9. World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS): status of notification by Members in Middle East (Dr Karim Ben Jebara, OIE Animal Health Inf. Dept)
10. Implementation of the OIE PVS Pathway in the Middle East (Dr Ghazi Yehia)
11. Presentations from Organisations that have concluded an official agreement with the OIE
 - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
12. Other matters