

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND INTERNAL RULES OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS AND REGIONAL CONFERENCES

CHAPTER 1 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Regional Commissions are bodies of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) established by decision of the World Assembly of Delegates of the Organisation, hereinafter referred to as “the Assembly”, to further the objectives of the Organisation in each region of the world.¹

Their terms of reference are:

1. to hold Regional Conferences bringing together the OIE Member Countries of the Region, the OIE Regional Representative(s), the Director General of the OIE, the representatives of international and regional organisations and experts invited to:
 - a. examine within a regional framework issues relating to animal health, animal welfare and animal production food safety;
 - b. produce recommendations to be submitted for approval to the Assembly of the OIE and implemented, after adoption, by the Director-General and/or the Regional Representations;
2. to propose adaptations of OIE decisions, programmes, strategies, policies and activities to the conditions and needs of the Regions and, where appropriate, Sub-regions;
3. to contribute to strengthening the capacities of the Veterinary Services of the Member Countries of each Region;
4. to contribute to the harmonisation of sanitary regulations relating to trade in animals and animal products between the Member Countries of each Region;
5. to increase the contribution of livestock to national economies and participate in poverty alleviation through international trade;
6. to give an advisory opinion on the headquarters of the Regional Representation and, where appropriate, that of Sub-regional Representations, and on the work programmes of the Regional Representations and their sub-regional offices;
7. to examine applications from Member Countries of the Region relating to the creation of new OIE Reference Centres and report their findings to the Director General.

CHAPTER 2 – INTERNAL RULES

ARTICLE 1

Regional Commissions shall be constituted by decision of the Assembly following a proposal by Members of the Assembly or by the Council.

¹ At the time of adoption of these Terms of Reference there were five Regional Commissions (Africa; the Americas; Asia, the Far East and Oceania; Europe; and the Middle East).

ARTICLE 2

Except where otherwise provided for in these Internal Rules, the rules of the Assembly described in Article 2, two first paragraphs of Article 5, Article 6 and Article 40 to Article 58 of the General Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to meetings of the Regional Commissions.

ARTICLE 3

Member Countries whose territory is predominantly situated in a given Region delineated by the Organisation shall have an automatic right to membership of the corresponding Regional Commission. In certain cases, duly warranted by the presence within a Region of a geographical territory of a Member Country belonging to another Region, an OIE Member Country may be a member of two or more Regional Commissions, subject to its request being accepted by the Regional Commissions concerned, and then endorsed by the Assembly.

ARTICLE 4

Member Countries of the OIE that are not Member Countries of the Regional Commission may participate, with observer status and without the right to vote, in meetings of the Regional Commissions, subject to a joint decision by the Director General and the President of the Regional Commission.

ARTICLE 5

The Bureau of each Regional Commission shall be composed of a President, two Vice-Presidents and a Secretary General, elected by the Assembly from among the Delegates present at the General Session, on the proposal of Delegates who are Member Countries of the Regional Commission in question and taking into account the need for a geographically balanced representation.

ARTICLE 6

The members of the Bureaux of the Regional Commissions shall be elected, in an individual capacity, by the Assembly for a period of three years. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

In the event of elections to fill vacancies on the Bureaux of Regional Commissions, the Commissions may agree on a candidature from the region. The candidates proposed shall be chosen from among the Delegates of the Member Countries of the Regional Commission. The President of each of the Regional Commissions concerned or, in the absence of the President, one of the Vice-Presidents shall then inform the Assembly, during one of the administrative sessions of the annual General Session of the Assembly, of the proposition of the Commission. The Assembly shall then be invited to vote on the proposition.

ARTICLE 7

The Bureaux of the Regional Commissions may, in accordance with the sanitary priorities of their region, invite the Director General to convene *Ad hoc* Groups to analyse, discuss and develop proposals on their specific expertise. These proposals shall be submitted to the Bureaux of the Regional Commissions before being assessed by the relevant Specialist Commission(s).

ARTICLE 8

The Bureaux of the Regional Commissions shall meet at least once a year to discuss and decide upon the work programmes, strategies, policies, activities and recommendations of the Commission and the Resolutions of the Assembly. Such meetings shall be convened by the Director General in

consultation with the President of the Commission concerned and the Regional Representative concerned.

The Regional Commissions shall meet during the annual session of the Assembly on the basis of an agenda prepared by their respective Bureaux, with the support of the Regional Representative concerned and in accordance with the Director General.

ARTICLE 9

Each Regional Commission shall hold, under the conditions stipulated in Article 2, every two years and on each occasion in the territory of a different Member, with the approval of the Assembly or, in an emergency, with the agreement of the Director General, a Regional Conference to examine animal health, animal welfare and animal food production safety issues within the Region in question and elaborate recommendations and reports.

ARTICLE 10

Regional Conferences shall be convened by the Director General and organised by the Regional Commissions and the OIE Headquarters staff in liaison with the corresponding Regional Representation, after they have ensured that the Host Member Country is willing to grant all the Delegates, rapporteurs and observers and the members of the OIE secretariat participating in the Conference the immunities they need in order to carry out in total independence the duties that they are required to perform, and to grant all material facilities for holding the Regional Conference. The Host Member Country shall make the necessary arrangements to ensure that any entry visas and stay permits that may be required by the Delegations of OIE Member Countries are issued in a timely manner.

ARTICLE 11

The programme for Regional Conferences shall be approved by the Director General and the President of the Regional Commission in liaison with the corresponding Regional Representation. Invitations to the Member Countries concerned to take part in a Regional Conference shall be sent by the Director General to the Delegates of these Member Countries. Other invitations shall be issued with the agreement of the Director General, the Delegate of the Host Member Country and the President of the Regional Commission, by the Director General.

ARTICLE 12

The OIE Headquarters staff and the relevant Regional Representation shall assist the General Rapporteur with the preparation of meeting reports, in particular by providing secretarial staff to coordinate and support the activities of the secretariat provided by the Host Member Country for the Conference.

The Regional Representation shall provide such other support as necessary, including logistical support.

ARTICLE 13

For Regional Conferences, the Director General and/or the Regional Representation, if the Host Member Country so requests, shall be responsible for:

- defraying the travelling expenses and per diem allowance of speakers, members of the Bureau of the Regional Commission and members of the Headquarters staff and the corresponding Regional Representation;

- defraying the travelling expenses and fees of interpreters (if appropriate);
- printing the preparatory documents for the Conference, subject to their being received at least one month before the Conference;
- an official dinner for the participants.

ARTICLE 14

For the Regional Conferences, the Host Member Country shall, on the basis of a list of requirements provided by the Director General, be responsible for:

- reserving hotel accommodation and sending participants practical details about hotels and visas and any other useful information;
- contributing where possible to the cost of hotel accommodation and catering for representatives of Member Countries, by a decision of the Host Member Country or local authorities;
- providing of the conference hall and additional rooms, including for the secretariat, and installation of a simultaneous interpretation system;
- printing documents other than those referred to in Article 12;
- secretarial support (personnel and equipment);
- coffee breaks and refreshments during the conference;
- a professional or cultural visit;
- local transport to the conference venue;
- an official dinner for the participants.

ARTICLE 15

Financing of the Conferences of the Regional Commissions, except for items defrayed by the Host Government under the terms of Article 14, shall be covered by the OIE Regular Budget and, if necessary, by the eligible special accounts, including those of the OIE Regional Representations.

ARTICLE 16

Representatives of national, regional or international organisations and staff of OIE Reference Centres designated by the Director General may participate in the Conferences of the Regional Commissions and speak on topics within their field of competence. These representatives do not have the right to vote.

ARTICLE 17

The date, venue and choice of technical items for the following Conference may be established either during the precedent Regional Conference or at a following session of the Assembly, on a proposal by the President of the Regional Commission in question.

ARTICLE 18

A draft report of the Regional Conference shall be presented on the last day of the Conference. The comments of participants will be recorded for inclusion in the final report, which will be prepared and distributed by the Director General.

ARTICLE 19

During the annual session of the Assembly, the President, Vice-President or Secretary General of each Regional Commission shall present the activity report of the Commission, and the recommendations and conclusions of the Regional Conferences held since the previous annual session. All these recommendations shall be submitted to the Assembly for approval.