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## A LABORATORY NETWORK FOR DIAGNOSIS OF DISEASES OF CAMELIDS

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Considering the importance of camelids and the lack of knowledge of camelid pathology, in 2008 the OIE set up an *ad hoc* Group to improve diagnostic capacity and to elucidate the role of some pathogens in the epidemiology and pathogenesis of diseases of camelids. The *ad hoc* Group compiled a list of those reported pathologies as significant diseases and of diseases for which camelids are only potential carriers. Diagnosis and prevention of each disease have been reported and the available antigen-detection methods and serological tests described. The Group recommended that more investigations be made into camelid susceptibility to some pathogens, validation of diagnostic techniques for diseases of camelids, and that vaccination protocols be defined.

To set up a laboratory network for diseases of camelids, the *ad hoc* Group has identified leading regional laboratories for camel disease diagnosis in camelid-rearing countries. Laboratories are encouraged to collect specimens to send to the OIE Reference Laboratory with the aim of developing specific diagnostic kits and reagents for camelid diseases and diagnostic test validation. National laboratories and surveillance teams are encouraged to facilitate data collection and to increase sample flow.

Recommendations were also made for technology transfer between laboratories and the organisation of proficiency testing among diagnostic laboratories within the region for diseases of priority. The network will encourage investigations on veterinary drugs and vaccines to be adapted and developed to camelids (define specific prescriptions, dosage, protocol, safety and activity control, field efficacy, etc.).



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