RECOMMENDATIONS

CONSIDERING:

1. The need to increase the capacity of all countries worldwide to create or maintain national animal health and veterinary public health systems that cover all national territories and are able to provide surveillance, and early detection of, and rapid response to any natural or intentional aquatic and terrestrial animal disease outbreak;

2. The emergence of new or re-emergence of existing animal diseases, the growing threat of transboundary animal diseases, the impact of environmental changes and the globalisation of commodities and movement of people, as well as the new societal demands in the field of food security, food safety, veterinary public health and animal welfare;

3. The need to train veterinarians to respond to new threats and to meet the new societal expectations at global, regional and national levels;

4. That the mandate of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) as an intergovernmental organisation is ‘to improve animal health and welfare worldwide’;

5. That initial and continuing veterinary education programmes should be revised, whenever necessary, in order to train veterinarians able to fulfil at least the basic missions recommended by the OIE in order to improve animal health and welfare worldwide;

6. That apart from the core veterinary education necessary to address the basic needs as recommended by the OIE, the different regions or countries have specific needs and requirements which must also be met;

7. That “core curriculum model” means the basic skills and knowledge allowing the veterinarians to have key competencies needed and recognised worldwide;

8. The importance and need for highly qualified veterinarians, as well as the fact that the OIE includes the issue of initial and continuing veterinary education as part of its commitment to encourage its Members to improve the quality of their national Veterinary Services;

9. That Veterinary Education Establishments (VEE) means in this document the veterinary education establishments involved in the training of veterinarians with a high level of quality. The establishments involved in the training of veterinary para-professionals are not covered by the present document;

10. The implementation of the global concept ‘One World-One Health’, which brings together animal health, public health and environmental health globally;

11. The existence of both similarities and wide disparities in educational contents and requirements and graduate competencies of VEE, even within the same country or region;

12. The continuing technological and pedagogical improvements in veterinary education delivery;

13. The need for additional knowledge and skills for veterinarians, such as skills in communication, management and leadership;

14. The need for countries and institutions to work together to address the high cost of veterinary education of adequate quality; for example the possibility to share human resources and available infrastructure for the initial and continuing education of veterinarians;
15. The OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services, in particular the provisions of chapter 3, section 2.12 of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* on Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSB);

16. The potential to apply existing education evaluation processes and/or methods to contribute to the establishment of quality standards in veterinary initial and continuing education as a component of the OIE tool for the evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services (OIE PVS tool);

17. The disparities between registration, accreditation and monitoring procedures for veterinarians, and the differences between applicable legislation for the constitution of VSB in the various regions/countries, as well as the current absence of formal VSB or equivalent institutions in some countries;

18. The increased regional integration and the subsequent transboundary mobility of veterinary professionals;

19. The sometimes insufficient participation of private veterinarians and their associations, and insufficient development of public–private veterinary partnerships in the overall prevention and control of OIE listed and emerging diseases.

**THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE ‘EVOLVING VETERINARY EDUCATION FOR A SAFER WORLD’ RECOMMEND:**

1. That the OIE develop recommendations for VEE on a core curriculum model that includes those key competencies of veterinarians that are required to perform the necessary OIE and public policies tasks including those defined in the OIE *Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes* and takes into account new threats, opportunities and societal expectations;

2. That national, regional and international professional veterinary bodies develop, using OIE guidelines, recommendations on minimum day-one competencies of a graduate veterinarian for effective performance within the context of national Veterinary Services;

3. That VEE, taking into account the recommendations of the OIE and specific/regional national needs/circumstances and recommendations, define and implement a core curriculum model that ensures graduate veterinarians to have the day-one competencies needed by a veterinarian to perform the required OIE tasks including delivery of national Veterinary Services. This includes knowledge on governance, veterinary legislation and basic management. These competencies should focus on capacity for analysis, and adaptation to complex situations rather than on encyclopaedic knowledge of specific issues;

4. That the World Veterinary Association (WVA) and other professional veterinary bodies examine, with the support of the OIE, how initial and continuing veterinary education curricula can best meet societal expectations for safeguards for public health, safe food, and prevention and mitigation of transboundary diseases complying with OIE recommendations at a global level;

5. That VEE strongly support initial and continuing veterinary education programmes in the fields of animal health, veterinary epidemiology, public health (zoonoses, food safety, food security), animal production, economics and trade, and social values, such as companion animal medicine, sports and recreation animals, animal welfare and the conservation of biodiversity, that provide positive socio-economic benefits to society;

6. That VEE maintain or develop relevant education in basic sciences to ensure that graduate veterinarians understand the scientific developments, global evolution and emerging needs;

7. That VEE incorporate education in the diseases of wildlife and aquatic animals that can impact on public health, food production, biodiversity or environmental health and the means to control these diseases, and to incorporate an understanding of animal taxonomy;
8. That VEE strengthen the education of veterinarians on the appropriate use of veterinary drugs and vaccines;

9. That VEE incorporate training in communication, cross-discipline collaboration and team working as appropriate within the core curriculum model, notably to enable veterinarians to communicate the complexities of technical issues, including risk analysis, in lay language;

10. That VEE develop and implement as appropriate the use of new informatic technologies for distance learning during initial and continuing education;

11. That veterinary and other national, regional and local authorities support continuing access to live animals for use in research, testing and teaching, subject to appropriate management and veterinary oversight of the welfare of these animals in accordance with OIE standards and the ‘three Rs' principle;

12. That national, regional and local governments develop incentives for students to convince some of them to work in rural areas and in production animal veterinary practice, so that animal populations in all parts of the national territory are covered by veterinary surveillance networks; and that VEE ensure a cadre of veterinarians is educated, available and supported to work in rural environments in sufficient numbers;

13. That the VEE of the developed world recognise the importance of helping VEE in developing countries. Relevant organisations and donors should provide adequate resources for support programmes using the guidance of the OIE;

14. That the OIE, WVA and other national, regional and international veterinary associations examine how to improve the public perception of the importance of veterinary activities for society as a whole, and convince governments and/or international donors of the need to better finance initial and continuing veterinary education as a Global Public Good, and not only a commercial or agricultural good and is guided by ethical principles;

15. That the OIE extend the current concept for laboratory twinning and prepare recommendations for a pilot twinning programme between VEE, and/or other eligible organisations, of developed and developing countries;

16. That the responsible national, regional and local veterinary authorities support the development and implementation of programmes to evaluate the continuing education of veterinarians in their respective jurisdictions, taking into account OIE PVS tool criteria;

17. That national veterinary authorities of countries that have done a PVS evaluation, be urged to consider the findings of the evaluation and, where appropriate, apply the relevant post-PVS activities including a PVS Gap-analysis to address shortcomings, and a review of veterinary legislation, to support general compliance with OIE standards, including those developed for a core curriculum model covering competencies in public health, food safety, and transboundary diseases and other day-one requirements for effective performance within the context of national Veterinary Services;

18. That the OIE consider creation of a mechanism similar to the OIE PVS tool using relevant existing national and international veterinary education evaluation systems and methods and support the evaluation of the quality of national Veterinary Services personnel on the basis of their initial and continuing education, particularly where recognised evaluation systems currently do not apply;

19. That countries which have not yet done so, be urged to create a VSB complying with the OIE Code definition;
20. That VSB be urged to comply with the OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services, in particular the provisions of chapter 3, section 2.12 of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* on VSB;

21. That VSB, or equivalent body complying with the OIE *Code* definition, of countries/regions be entrusted with the assessment and evaluation of the VEE, except where an official national or regional accrediting agency, or where an internationally recognised body for evaluation of the higher education and research qualification would be able to proceed;

22. That VSB be encouraged to increase the quality of national Veterinary Services delivered by accredited veterinarians by accrediting only veterinarians who have graduated from high-quality educational programmes (e.g., those programmes accredited by a recognised educational accrediting body or complying with the core curriculum model recommended by the OIE);

23. That countries/regions encourage the collaboration between VSB, or equivalent body complying with the OIE *Code* definition, or official national or regional accrediting agencies in order to harmonise programme evaluations and facilitate regional integration of veterinary services and regional mobility of veterinary professionals;

24. That, when they do not already exist, the OIE encourage the creation of regional associations of VSB and/or other organisations with delegated educational accrediting authority in order to establish a list of VEE that are subject to regional accreditation after appropriate external audit preferably in accordance with the mechanism described in the recommendation n° 18 and whose graduates are eligible for registration or licensure, the criteria of which may be accepted throughout the region where transboundary mobility of veterinarians is possible;

25. That the OIE extend the current concept for laboratory twinning and prepare recommendations for a pilot twinning programme between VSB, or equivalent body complying with the OIE *Code* definition, of developed and developing countries;

26. That the OIE convene an expert group, with the participation of invited deans, respecting a geographical balance, to conduct an in depth global review, with a worldwide scope, of the current approaches to veterinary education taking into account current and future expectations of the day-one graduated veterinarians and examine whether approaches to, and structures for, veterinary education should be modified to produce better equipped profession. The expert group mentioned above will also be in charge of drafting guidelines listed in recommendations n° 1 and contribute to OIE support to recommendations n°3, 4, 14 and 16;

27. That VEE make provision for new graduates during their initial veterinary education and training to be in contact with experienced practitioners and practice management to get mentoring and support of colleagues for training in daily veterinary activities, including relationships with clients;

28. That the OIE encourage national veterinary authorities, VEE and other eligible groups in partnership with relevant donors to develop a recognised evidence based veterinary education and in particular to establish methodologies that help to identify and measure the veterinary contribution to society at a global level.

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The Conference noted that the next Conference will be organised in the framework of the 250th birthday of the veterinary profession in 2011.