INTERNATIONAL APPROACH FOR VETERINARY MEDICINAL PRODUCTS:
VICH

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VICH is a trilateral (EU-Japan-USA) programme aimed at harmonising technical requirements for veterinary product registration; additional countries are observers. Its full title is the International Cooperation on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Veterinary Medicinal Products. The founding of VICH was enabled by support of the OIE and was officially launched in April 1996.

The objectives of the VICH are similar to those of ICH (International Conference on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for the Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use), the equivalent initiative for human medicines.

VICH will:

- Establish and implement harmonized regulatory requirements for veterinary medicinal products in the VICH Regions, which meet high quality, safety and efficacy standards and minimize the use of test animals and costs of product development.

- Provide a basis for wider international harmonization of registration requirements.

- Monitor and maintain existing VICH guidelines, taking particular note of the ICH work program and, where necessary, update these VICH Guidelines.

- Ensure efficient processes for maintaining and monitoring consistent interpretation of data requirements following the implementation of VICH guidelines.

- By means of a constructive dialogue between regulatory authorities and industry provide technical guidance enabling response to significant emerging global issues and science that impact on regulatory requirements within the VICH regions.

The VICH initiative relates to harmonization of the technical requirements for the registration of veterinary medicinal products, resulting in wider acceptance of studies on these guidelines. However, VICH does not harmonise interpretation of study results.

Benefits of the initiative to countries that are neither observers of VICH nor participating countries is discussed, leading to mechanisms for better information to and input from countries currently not participating in VICH.