Recommendation No. 2

Innovative strategies for strengthening regional animal health networks

CONSIDERING THAT

1. Transboundary animal diseases have a great impact on animal and public health, on the economy of countries and on the societies in general;

2. The globalisation of trade, the intensification of animal and human movements, the environmental and climatic changes as well as many other socioeconomic factors greatly influence the spread of pathogens and vectors;

3. Surveillance and control of animal diseases, and especially transboundary diseases, must be a priority objective for any country and region;

4. There is a need to strengthen epidemiological surveillance systems and disseminate precise animal health data and scientific information on animal diseases and zoonoses, including their occurrence for any country and region;

5. The quality of the Veterinary Services is a critical factor to improve animal health and welfare, protect public health and contribute to food safety and food security through the implementation of OIE standards;

6. The OIE mandate includes collection and dissemination of information on the occurrence of animal diseases and on disease control measures, and adoption and publication of animal health and animal welfare standards worldwide;

7. The research and capacity building activities developed in tight interaction within regional networks in the field of animal health and veterinary public health represent an efficient mean to develop synergies and to share regional resources to reach common objectives;

8. The diversity and uniqueness of some countries can represent challenges to the implementation of regional animal health networks;

9. The management and conduct of efficient coordinated activities at regional or sub-regional level can represent a way to compensate for the lack of human and financial resources at national level;

10. CaribVET represents an interesting example of collaborative network bringing together Veterinary Services, academic institutions, regional and international organisations, diagnostic laboratories and research institutes (including OIE Reference Laboratories), providing technical support to improve animal health and veterinary public health in the Caribbean;

11. CaribVET has been officially recognised as the animal health network of the Caribbean since 2006 by the countries of the Caribbean region and by CARICOM, and has developed a letter of understanding with the OIE as well as a charter that has been adopted by all members; and

12. Animal Health is a key component of animal welfare.
THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. The strengthening of existing regional animal health networks, the development of new networks when relevant, and assisting countries in such an objective be promoted;

2. The members of regional animal health networks fulfil their commitment to share resources for the development of joint regional activities;

3. Multi-national animal health and veterinary public health programmes/projects conducted in a region or a sub-region be nested, when relevant, in a regional animal health network or that the said network be involved in their general coordination, for better relevance, efficiency and cost effectiveness of the activities concerned;

4. The involvement of universities, research institutes, OIE Reference Centres, interested stakeholders, and other relevant entities in regional animal health networks be encouraged so to enable the development of technical and scientific activities closely linked to the animal health and veterinary public health priorities of the region, where relevant;

5. Cooperation agreements and collaborations between the OIE and regional animal health networks be developed with a view to their sustainability, including activities such as joint training initiatives, scientific meetings, laboratory support, and raising awareness of OIE standards and guidelines;

6. The development of an economic cost-benefit analysis framework of regional or sub-regional animal health networks be encouraged in order to help in convincing politicians and other decision makers of the value of such networks;

7. Regional animal health networks consider the development of a charter and seek political endorsement by regional political organisations with a view to sustainability;

8. The development of an OIE process for the evaluation and recognition of regional animal health networks having appropriate legal basis, along the lines of that already existing for OIE Reference Centres, be envisaged and that tools for evaluating such networks be developed in cooperation with existing experienced regional networks, such as CaribVET;

9. International donors take into account of the efforts being undertaken to develop regional animal health network and consider the provisions of support to such networks; and

10. The OIE Members of the Region of the Americas contribute to the sustainability of regional animal health network by sharing best practices, information, knowledge, and resources.

(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas on 29 November 2012 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 30 May 2013)