



Organisation
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OIE International Conference on Animal Identification and Traceability

Buenos Aires, 23-25 March, 2009

Recommendations

CONSIDERING THAT:

- economic and social development must be addressed in parallel with safe animal production and that a progressive implementation of the basic minimum standards established by the OIE and Codex Alimentarius, respecting the different social, cultural, economic and environmental situations of Members, provides benefits to the international community;
- animal identification and traceability are key components of economic development and rural development, in the field of the improvement of animal health, disease surveillance and reporting and animal production food safety;
- countries and regions using pastoral systems including transhumance and nomadism for animal production face particular challenges in the implementation of animal identification and traceability;
- one of the objectives of the OIE is to ensure safety of international trade in animals and animal products while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers;
- the OIE and Codex are the reference organisations recognised under the World Trade Agreement for the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the SPS Agreement) for ensuring the sanitary safety of international trade in animals and their products;
- the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*) has for several years included general principles for identification and traceability of animals and that a new chapter on the development and implementation of identification systems to achieve animal traceability was adopted by the OIE at the 76th General Session in 2008;
- the OIE continues to work in close collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius Commission on the development of standards to promote food safety worldwide, with the OIE focusing its efforts on standards at the farm level, while Codex standards are generally more applicable at the food processing level;
- compliance with the OIE and Codex standards can be achieved using various different systems using the WTO SPS Agreement principle of equivalence and the articles on equivalence in the OIE *Terrestrial Code*;



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- in some countries the livestock production sector fears that governments will use animal identification and traceability systems primarily as a means to collect or raise taxes;
- the costs related to animal identification and traceability programmes should be borne by all beneficiaries, not just livestock owners, as these programmes benefit society as a whole and are considered as a Global Public Good;
- OIE standards including those related to animal identification are democratically and transparently adopted and science based, bearing in mind the production systems and uses of animals of each Member Country or Territory and the relevant environmental, regional, geographic and socio- economic aspects;
- the role of the private sector and the increasing tendency of private standards to have a bearing on conditions of international trade in animal products;
- the need to continue to promote applied scientific research, capacity building, education and communication as relevant to animal health and food safety;
- the OIE's ongoing work in reinforcing the quality and the capacities of Veterinary Services, using the OIE *Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services (OIE PVS Tool)*, which has the OIE *Terrestrial Code* as its legal base and the full support of donors.
- the OIE, through its Regional Representations, helps Members to apply the OIE standards through capacity building activities aimed at strengthening the Veterinary Services, its partners, and the associated infrastructure, building upon collaboration between the various sectors, including animal health, public health, industry (production, transport and processing), academic and research sectors.

THE CONFERENCE RECOMMENDS THAT OIE MEMBERS:

- take steps to ensure that all parties in the food production chain are aware, as appropriate, of the OIE and Codex standards for identification and traceability of animals and animal products and to promote the implementation of these standards, in partnership with the private sector;
- establish a clear regulatory framework for animal identification and traceability, including requirements for enforcement; coordination; data management, ownership, confidentiality and access; technical and, at least initially, financial support;



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- address concerns that animal identification and traceability programmes may be used for the purpose of collecting or raising tax revenues, because this could discourage the national adoption of such programmes and jeopardise the global improvement of public and animal health;
- support the development of education and scientific research programmes relevant to animal identification and traceability. Education programmes should be directed to key players in the food production chain, particularly veterinarians, livestock owners and industry operators;
- nominate OIE animal production food safety national focal points, under the authority of the OIE Delegate and take steps to promote collaboration between the Veterinary Services and other governmental authorities (in countries where the responsibility for food safety lies outside the Veterinary Services) and with relevant private sector stakeholders;
- encourage the private sector to respect the official standards of the OIE and Codex Alimentarius Commission and not to promote private standards that could conflict with the official standards nor to impose unjustified requirements;

THE CONFERENCE RECOMMENDS THAT THE OIE:

- continue to recommend animal identification and traceability programmes that are compatible within a specific country for each animal species; based on a scientific assessment of animal and public health risks; take account of consumer requests and needs and the results of cost benefit assessment; and are simple, affordable, outcomes based, transparent, auditable and commensurate with the size and nature of the farming sector in each country;
- provide appropriate capacity building, in collaboration with key partners, such as FAO and regional organisations, to Members in the use of the OIE standards, including through the provision of inputs relevant to veterinary education on animal health and animal production food safety;
- continue to develop arguments convincing donors and international organisations that have a commitment to economic development to help Veterinary Services and their partners in developing countries to implement the OIE standards for the identification and traceability of animals and animal products;
- provide guidelines to Members on the evolving role and responsibility of the Veterinary Services, including their public and private components, in animal production food safety traceability activities;



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- influence those responsible for making decisions on applied scientific research to develop new programmes addressing identification and traceability priorities relevant to all animal species, that are affordable, reliable and as robust as practicable, including the use of new technologies;
- promote the development of OIE Collaborating Centres on animal identification and traceability that could build and manage a global database on different national approaches and provide advice to developing countries in the implementation of programmes;
- continue to work on standard setting activities for all species and sectors, following priorities established by the OIE International Committee; including providing guidance on evaluating animal identification and traceability systems to support decision making on equivalence;
- form partnerships, in collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius Commission, with organisations representing all relevant sectors of the production and distribution chain for animals and animal products to develop and promote the OIE and Codex standards as the key reference for national, regional and global trade and encourage the private sector not to use private standards that could conflict with the OIE and Codex standards nor to impose unjustified requirements;
- consult with the Codex Alimentarius Commission in order to maintain permanent linkages and to ensure that standards for animal identification and for product traceability are developed in a consistent manner;
- continues collaboration with Members at the regional level, using the OIE Regional and sub-regional Representations to support the development of strategies and capacity building programmes to address regional needs and priorities;
- promotes national or regional programmes to provide new mechanisms and research for technologies and systems that can be used to achieve animal identification and traceability in countries and regions that have populations practising pastoral systems such as transhumance and nomadism;
- strengthens the current OIE PVS Tool with additional specific competencies for identification and traceability;
- conveys to donors the countries' requests for evaluations of policies and the regulatory framework and studies on the feasibility of investments using the current OIE tools (such as PVS Gap Analysis) and mechanisms (such as the OIE World Fund for Animal Health and Welfare).