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## REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE OIE TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL HEALTH STANDARDS COMMISSION

Paris, 12–23 February 2018

The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (the Code Commission) met at OIE Headquarters in Paris from 12–23 February 2018. The list of participants is attached as **Annex 1**.

The Code Commission thanked the following Member Countries for providing comments: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Fiji, Guatemala, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, USA, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas, the Member States of European Union (EU) and the African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) on behalf of African Member Countries of the OIE. Comments were also received from the European Serum Product Association (ESPA), Global Alliance of Pet Food Associations (GAPFA), the International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW) and International Egg Commission (IEC). The Code Commission referred comments regarding translation to the OIE Headquarters.

The Code Commission reviewed Member Country comments, which were submitted on time and supported by a rationale, and amended relevant chapters of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*) where appropriate. The amendments are presented in the usual manner by 'double underline' and 'striketrough' and the chapters are annexed to this report. In Annexes 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 33, 34, 37 and 38, amendments proposed at this meeting are highlighted with a coloured background to distinguish them from those proposed previously.

The Code Commission considered all Member Country comments supported by a rationale and documented its responses. However, because of the large volume of work, the Code Commission was not able to draft a detailed explanation of the reasons for accepting or not each of the comments received and focused its explanations on the major ones.

The Code Commission encourages Member Countries to refer to previous reports when preparing comments on longstanding issues. The Code Commission also draws the attention of Member Countries to those instances where the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (the Scientific Commission), the Biological Standards Commission, a Working Group or an *ad hoc* Group has addressed specific Member Countries comments or questions and proposed answers or amendments. In such cases the rationale is described in the Scientific Commission's, Biological Standards Commission's, Working Group's or *ad hoc* Group's reports and Member Countries are encouraged to review its report together with those of the Scientific Commission, Biological Standards Commission, Working Groups and *ad hoc* Groups. These reports are readily available on the [OIE website](#).

Member Countries should note that texts (including the questionnaires related to official recognition of disease status) in **Part A** of this report are proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018. Texts in **Part B** are submitted for comments. Comments on **Part B** of the report must reach OIE Headquarters **by 12 July 2018** for them to be considered at the September 2018 meeting of the Code Commission. Comments received after the due date will not be submitted to the Code Commission for its consideration. The reports of meetings of *ad hoc* Groups and other related documents are attached for information in **Part C**. Member Countries are invited to submit comments on the suggestions of the *ad hoc* Group on Avian Influenza, in particular the definition of *poultry* and the proposals relating to the structure of Chapter 10.4. These comments must reach OIE Headquarters by **10 May 2018**.

All comments and related documents should be sent by email to the OIE Standards Department at: [standards.dept@oie.int](mailto:standards.dept@oie.int).

The Code Commission again strongly encourages Member Countries to participate in the development of the OIE's international standards by submitting comments on this report, and prepare to participate in the process of adoption at the General Session. Comments should be submitted as Word files rather than pdf files because pdf files are difficult to incorporate into the working documents of the Code Commission. Comments should be submitted as specific proposed text changes, supported by a structured rationale or by published scientific references. Proposed deletions should be shown using '~~strike through~~' and additions using 'double underline'. Member Countries should not use the automatic 'track-changes' function provided by word processing software as such changes are lost in the process of collating Member Countries submissions into the Code Commission's working documents. Member Countries are also requested **not** to reproduce the full text of a chapter as this makes it easy to miss comments while preparing the working documents.

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## 1. Meeting with the Director General

The Code Commission met with Dr Monique Eloit, Director General, on 15 February 2018. Dr Eloit welcomed the Code Commission members and thanked them for their support and commitment to achieving OIE objectives.

The Director General noted the Council would consider the report of the Evaluation Committee on the assessment of applications for nomination for election to the OIE Specialist Commissions at the end of February 2018. The report contains the list of candidates found suitable for nomination for election to a Specialist Commission and the final list will be provided to OIE Delegates 60 days before the General Session. The Director General also noted the ongoing objective of the OIE to continue to improve the transparency of the standards setting process, in particular the technical item on 'Implementation of standards; state of play and capacity building' which would inform the ongoing development of the Observatory that would be discussed at the OIE General Session in May 2018. The Director General also noted that there would only be one technical item at the General Session to allow sufficient time for discussion on the Commissions and the elections.

## 2. Adoption of the agenda

The Agenda was adopted, with the addition of the item on veterinary paraprofessionals and also noting that the draft chapter on animal welfare and laying hen production systems (Chapter 7.Z.) had not been included, as due to the unavailability of several key members of the *ad hoc* Group, the meeting to consider Member Country comments could not be held until March 2018. The report of the *ad hoc* Group will be considered by the Code Commission in September 2018. The adopted agenda of the meeting is attached as [Annex 2](#).

## 3. Cooperation with other Specialist Commissions

### a) Meeting with the President of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission

The President of the Code Commission met with the President of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission (Aquatic Animals Commission). The Presidents discussed issues of mutual interest in the *Terrestrial* and *Aquatic Codes* to facilitate harmonisation of relevant chapters in the two *Codes* when under review by the respective Commissions. Notably: alignment of relevant revised text in the User's Guide and Chapter 5.3. of the *Aquatic Code* and the equivalent *Terrestrial Code* chapters and the development of a guidance document on the application of the criteria used by OIE for listing of diseases by the Aquatic Animals Commission.

The Code Commission agreed that these meetings are important to facilitate harmonisation of relevant horizontal chapters in the two *Codes*.

### b) Consultation with the President of the Biological Standards Commission and Scientific Commission

The meeting schedule did not allow for a meeting with the President of the Biological Standards Commission. However, there was consultation on several key items of work that was coordinated through the Secretariats.

The Biological Standards Commission provided advice to the Code Commission in response to Member Country comments and in response to specific questions.

The Code Commission and the Scientific Commission met on 16 February 2018 to discuss issues of mutual interest. The Scientific Commission also provided advice to the Code Commission in response to Member Country comments on several chapters under consideration at this meeting, including both horizontal and listed disease-specific chapters. It also provided suggestions for proposed amendments on its own initiative.

The report of the Joint Meeting with the Scientific Commission is attached as [Annex 3](#).

## 4. Texts proposed for adoption at the General Session in May 2018

### 4.1. User's Guide

Comments were received from Costa Rica, Guatemala, New Caledonia, Switzerland, USA, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission noted several comments in support of the proposed amendments were appreciated.

In response to Member Country comments, the Code Commission made minor editorial changes to include 'reptiles' in the list of animals included in point 2) of Section A, Introduction and to point 4 of Section C, for consistency by replacing 'pathogen' with 'pathogenic agent'.

In response to a Member Country comment concerning an apparent inconsistency between the *Terrestrial* and *Aquatic Codes* (Section B, point 4), the Code Commission considered that the term 'should' was appropriate when used in the context of this point, which is about guidance on conducting import risk analysis. An importing country conducting a risk analysis to justify measures that are more stringent than OIE standards should use the guidance in Section 2 to justify these measures i.e. the import risk analysis should be based on the guidance in Section 2. The Member Country made the same comment to the Aquatic Animals Commission which agreed with the Code Commission that the appropriate term is 'should' and not 'may' and it would amend its User's Guide accordingly.

In response to other Member Country comments on Section B, point 8), the Code Commission noted that the chapters in Section 6 specifically relate to preventive measures in animal production systems, which are not for trade *per se*. The second sentence of the paragraph is clear that the chapters in this section are intended to assist Member Countries in meeting their veterinary public health objectives. Furthermore, the Code Commission considered that the proposed amendments in Section C, relating to Chapter 6.4. adequately address the concern regarding the use of standards for trade. In response to a Member Country proposal to include an additional sentence in 6.4. to highlight that the chapters in this section are not intended as trade restrictive impediments the Code Commission considered this unnecessary. It understood the concerns being expressed but considered this was already adequately addressed.

Section C Specific Issues. Several Member Countries commented on the use of the word 'disease' in the User's Guide, and the relationship with the proposal to delete it from the Glossary. The Code Commission again reiterated its previous statements that the deletion of the definition of the term disease from the Glossary would not mean it would not be used elsewhere in the *Code*. It would only be a change in formatting, the term no longer appearing in italics throughout the *Code* except within the definitions of 'listed disease' and 'emerging disease'.

The revised User's Guide is attached as [Annex 4](#) and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

### 4.2. Glossary Part A

Comments were received from Argentina, Brazil, Australia, China, Guatemala, New Zealand, Switzerland, Thailand, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission noted comments in support of the revised definitions in the Glossary and made editorial changes in response to Member Country comments and to address consistency and clarity.

In response to a Member Country proposal to include definitions for 'embryo collection', 'oocyte collection' and 'semen collection', the Code Commission thanked the Member Country for raising this point and noted it would consider the need when revising both Chapters 4.6. and 4.7. and that this would be included in its work programme.

***ANIMAL WELFARE***

Comments were received from Australia, USA and EU.

The Code Commission noted Member Country comments in support of the proposed definition.

The Code Commission recalled that the purpose of modifying the definition of animal welfare is to provide a more concise definition in the Glossary and to leave the technical and descriptive text in Chapter 7.1., precisely in Article 7.1.1. General principles.

For purposes of consistency with the modifications made in Article 7.1.1. General principles, the Code Commission agreed with the proposal of some Member Countries to replace the word 'psychological' with 'mental', referring to the state of the animal in the definition of animal welfare.

***COMPARTMENTS***

In response to a Member Country comment proposing the inclusion of text referring to epidemiological separation, the Code Commission considered that the proposal was too detailed and could in fact lead to confusion, as the purpose of a compartment is to exclude a disease. In order to address the Member Country comment the Code Commission inserted the words 'separated from other populations by' to avoid confusion.

In response to another Member Country proposal to change 'control measures' to 'sanitary measures', the Code Commission noted the definitions of 'sanitary measure' and 'biosecurity' were both in the Glossary. The term 'sanitary measures' is more used in the context of the WTO SPS Agreement, and of countries and zones, and 'control measures' is more appropriate to be applied in the context of compartments.

***CONTAINMENT ZONE***

A Member Country highlighted an inconsistency between Article 4.3.7. and the definition proposed in the Code Commission's September 2017 report. The Code Commission agreed with the Member Country and proposed to include new text after 'that are epidemiologically linked' recalling that it may not always be possible to identify the definitive epidemiological link and that it should be the main criterion in defining the number of containment zones. It also reiterated its explanation (September 2017) that the design of the containment zone or zones depends on the Veterinary Services' strategy to manage outbreaks while facilitating safe trade. Furthermore, containment zones for diseases with OIE official status must be recognised by the Scientific Commission, and countries should provide the OIE with evidence to justify the establishment and the maintenance of the zone. For other diseases, countries should provide evidence to their trading partners.

In response to a Member Country proposal to include 'infested' in the definition, the Code Commission disagreed, as an 'infected zone' by definition includes 'infested' animals.

***DISEASE***

The Code Commission reiterated its explanation about the removal of the definition of 'disease' from the Glossary. Member Countries are reminded that they should consider the explanations and rationale included in the Code Commissions reports when preparing their comments. The dictionary definition is more appropriate and allows the continued use of the word 'disease' but without italics and there is no need for a specific OIE definition. The word 'disease' would only remain in the Glossary where it was part of another definition for example, 'emerging disease' and 'listed disease'. In response to other Member Country comments, the Code Commission also noted that it will use the word more consistently and will amend other chapters as relevant, specifically Chapter 1.3. once the proposal has been adopted.

***FREE ZONE***

The Code Commission noted comments received in support of the proposed definition.

***INFECTED ZONE***

In response to several Member Country comments, the Code Commission recalled it had previously discussed, with the Scientific Commission, the need for an additional definition for ‘infested zone’ but did not agree with the addition. The Code Commission reminded Member Countries that the current definition of ‘infected zone’ adequately covers both, infected or infested. In this regard, it clarified, for example, a country free from varroa; varroa is found in the country; a zone where bees are infested is established and it is the infected zone; the Code Commission would continue to use the term ‘infected zone’ for simplicity. It further noted that consequential amendments to listed disease-specific chapters would be considered on a case-by-case basis and as chapters are revised.

***PROTECTION ZONE***

The Code Commission noted that the replacement of ‘adjacent’ with ‘neighbouring’ is being systematically applied as chapters are revised.

***TRANSPARENCY***

The Code Commission noted comments received in support of the proposed deletion of the definition.

***VACCINATION***

Some Member Countries proposed to add the word ‘appropriate’ before ‘vaccine’ as the notion of the appropriateness of the vaccine with a view to the pathogenic agent against which an immune response is to be elicited seems to be missing from the definition. The Code Commission noted that in the definition of vaccination, the term ‘vaccine’ is used as defined in the *Terrestrial Manual* and as such covers the appropriateness to pathogenic agents.

***ZONE/~~REGION~~***

In response to a Member Country proposal to retain the wording ‘for the purpose of international trade...’ the Code Commission clarified that the word ‘zone’ when used in the Code is more generic than ‘free zone’; for example Article 4.3.1. clearly states that zoning is used either for international trade or disease control. For clarity the Code Commission reinstated the wording ‘for the purpose of international trade’ and added ‘or disease prevention and control’.

The revised definitions are attached in **Annex 5** and are proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

NB: With respect to new or revised definitions being proposed because of a new or revised chapter, these definitions will be included with the chapter in the relevant annex. This will assist Member Countries in their review of the chapters and preparation of their comments.

**4.3. Import risk analysis (Articles 2.1.1. and 2.1.3.)**

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, Switzerland, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission noted comments from Member Countries in support of the proposed amendments.

**Article 2.1.1.**

In response to a Member Country comment regarding the need to include a sentence defining transparency at the point in the article where the word first appears, the Code Commission agreed in principle and moved the wording from Article 2.1.3. point 4), to the second paragraph of this article, as it considered it was more appropriate.

In relation to another Member Country proposal to delete the last sentence of the second paragraph of the article, the Code Commission did not agree, as a risk analysis may lead to an importing country setting import conditions. Furthermore, it considered that the inclusion of the sentence on transparency addressed the Member Country's concern. However, to clarify that communication is not only with trading partners, it added 'and all interested parties' to the last sentence of the paragraph. In response to other Member Country comments on the same sentence it included 'communication' for further clarity.

The revised Articles 2.1.1. and 2.1.3. are attached in [Annex 6](#) and are proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.4. Criteria applied by the OIE for assessing the safety of commodities (Chapter 2.2.)**

Comments were received from Singapore, Switzerland and EU.

The Code Commission noted comments of several Member Countries in support of the proposed amendments.

In response to a comment from a Member Country, the Code Commission explained the current text 'is not present in the tissue ... in an amount able to cause infection' means that either the pathogenic agent is not present at all or if present, it is not in an amount able to cause infection. Thus, the Code Commission considered that the proposal to include 'or is in' did not improve the clarity of the sentence.

The revised Chapter 2.2. is attached as [Annex 7](#) and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.5. Zoning and compartmentalisation (Chapter 4.3.)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Chile, Chinese Taipei, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Japan, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission noted comments in support of the proposed revised chapter.

In response to the general comments from Member Countries, the Code Commission noted that international trade was adequately covered in the introduction and it was unnecessary to repeat this throughout the document. It also noted that the chapter is primarily for disease control and not just for trade. Concerning a proposal to include diagrams to illustrate the differences between the concepts of zoning and compartmentalisation the Scientific Commission and the Code Commission recalled that the decision had been made to remove all diagrams from the *Code*, as they may not be correctly interpreted.

In respect to other Member Countries suggesting that the chapter should refer to 'legal or administrative boundaries' as well, the Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission that zones should be controlled at all times, but this may not necessarily need to be based on legal boundaries. It further noted the concept was covered in point 1) of Article 4.3.3.

##### **Article 4.3.1.**

The Code Commission made editorial amendments to improve the clarity of the article in response to Member Country comments. In responding to comments related to 'epidemiologically linked' the Code Commission explained in relation to compartmentalisation that even if animals are in different locations and they have the same epidemiological situation, they are epidemiologically linked and share the same status. Moreover, if they are under the same biosecurity management, this allows the definition of a subpopulation and that is not always possible on a geographical basis.

In response to a question concerning compartmentalisation in relation to wild animals, the Code Commission noted that 'under common practices for biosecurity' would mean the animals are under permanent human supervision. This is incompatible with the definition of feral and wild animals. However, captive wild animals can be kept in a compartment.

### Article 4.3.2.

The Code Commission made minor editorial amendments in response to Member Country comments to improve the clarity of the article.

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include ‘where applicable’ after ‘animal traceability’ and the example given of bluetongue virus. If an unvaccinated animal comes into a free zone from an infected zone, there is a need to have animal identification in place, which is always dependent on national priorities and available resources.

The Code Commission thanked Member Countries for bringing to its attention that it had proposed to add ‘movement control’ in the first paragraph. On reflection, the Code Commission noted that movement control is not related to defining a compartment and that it was more appropriate to add it in paragraph 2.

In response to Member Country comments about replacing ‘disease’ with ‘epidemiology of the infection’, the Code Commission disagreed because in this case ‘disease’ was used in its generic meaning, while ‘infection’ was a defined term and that in the *Code* it would not use ‘epidemiology of infection’.

The Code Commission disagreed with the same Member Countries proposal to define a minimum size for a zone. The size of a zone depends on a number of factors: the presence of a vector; environmental factors; human factors; livestock density, etc. For this reason, zones are not all defined the same way; it is up to the Veterinary Services to define the best size according to these factors.

In response to a Member Country proposal for alternate wording for the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph specifically, to delete the reference to Chapter 3.2., the Code Commission explained that Chapter 3.1. is very general and Chapter 3.2. gives further important detail on the quality of Veterinary Services and the reference should be kept. The Code Commission amended the first sentence for clarity, noting that laboratories are sometimes not under the responsibility of the Veterinary Services.

In response to Member Country comments that there are some difficulties in the understanding of, and translation of, the word ‘industry’ the Code Commission agreed and proposed to use the term ‘production sector’ which includes all those responsible for all or part of the animal and food chain, production of live animals and animal products as well as farmers, etc. The Code Commission noted that this would need to be considered in other chapters as they were revised and asked the OIE Headquarters to consider this in future.

### Article 4.3.3.

In regard to Member Countries requests for clarification of what is meant by ‘epidemiological separation’ in point 3), the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission clarified that the concept of ‘epidemiological separation’ should be understood as the contrary to ‘epidemiologically linked’. On the second part of their question on the partnership between Veterinary Services and production sectors (industry), the Code Commission proposed to amend the sentence to avoid any confusion that the Veterinary Services should document everything.

In point 4), in response to several Member Country comments, the Code Commission disagreed that animal identification was not valid for all species and clarified that an animal identification system did not imply ‘individual animal identification’. This was further clarified by the first sentence of this point and the terms that are clearly defined in the Glossary.

**ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION** means the combination of the identification and registration of an animal individually, with a unique identifier, or collectively by its epidemiological unit or group, with a unique group identifier.

**ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM** means the inclusion and linking of components such as identification of establishments or owners, the persons responsible for the animals, movements and other records with animal identification.

In response to another Member Country opposed to the replacement of ‘animal’ with ‘commodities,’ the Code Commission recalled that the Glossary definition of ‘commodity’ includes animals.

The Code Commission partially accepted the proposals of a Member Country and proposed amendments to point 7) for clarity. It did not accept the same Member Country proposal to include ‘with appropriate rectification as necessary and how the measures will be....’ but agreed with the inclusion of text to highlight the need for risks ‘to be adequately managed’.

In response to Member Countries proposal to include a new sentence, ‘The Veterinary Services should carry out documented periodic inspections and verification audits of facilities...’ the Code Commission considered this adequately covered in Article 4.3.2. General Considerations and it was unnecessary to repeat it.

#### **Article 4.3.4.**

In response to Member Country comments regarding the need for surveillance to cover the demographics of the animal population, the Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission that this is included in the concept of the epidemiological situation. The Code Commission further agreed with the proposal of the Scientific Commission to replace ‘pathogen-specific surveillance’ with ‘specific surveillance’ as the Glossary definition of ‘specific surveillance’ includes pathogen-specific surveillance. It did not agree with the proposal of another Member Country to delete reference to ‘and vector’.

In response to another Member Country proposal to reword the third paragraph, the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal noting that ‘one or more’ may include all susceptible species.

#### **Article 4.3.5.**

In response to Member Countries proposal to refer to both ‘infected and infested zone’, the Code Commission reiterated the term is adequately defined in the Glossary.

The Code Commission noted in regard to Member Country comments proposing to include reference to ‘disease-specific chapters’ to clarify the proposed changes it had made in September 2017, that it is clear that the definition of ‘infected zone’ would be included in the disease-specific chapters and this is why it had included ‘relevant’.

#### **Article 4.3.6.**

The Code Commission noted the number of comments opposed to the proposal to include new text on the concept of ‘temporary protection zone’, at the end of the article. The Member Country comments were discussed during the meeting with the Scientific Commission and both Commissions agreed that the concept of ‘temporary protection zone’ should not preclude this chapter from being presented for adoption.

The paragraphs relating to the concept were deleted from Article 4.3.6. for the time being, and the Specialist Commissions, together with relevant experts, will further discuss the issue in order to clarify how to manage this type of zone that had been proposed to address specific problems for specific parts of the world.

In respect of the first paragraph, the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to add a new sentence to provide clarity on the role of the protection zone noting this was covered in the first sentence and repeating the wording did not add clarity. It further clarified that a protection zone is to prevent the spread of disease not to reduce the probability of the pathogenic agent entering the country.

In response to the proposal of a Member Country to delete the reference to ‘and vehicles’ and replace ‘animal products’ with ‘commodities’ the Code Commission drew the attention of the Member Country to the rationale provided in its September 2017 report for these changes. The full report is available on the OIE website.

### Extract September 2017 TAHSC report

'The Code Commission considered the comments of Member Countries and clarified that because of an oversight there were two proposals of definition included in the Glossary in its February 2017 report and that the first proposal for the definition should not have been included. It disagreed with a comment stating that the establishment of a protection zone does not guarantee that the introduction of the pathogenic agent is prevented. In response to a request to delete the second 'vehicles' before 'for transportation' in point 4), the Code Commission noted that the definition of *vehicles/vessels* contained in the Glossary specifically referenced live animals and did not include commodities, and it amended the point to read 'used for transport' to clarify the intent of this point. The Code Commission further noted that any time the status of the protection zone changes, the status should be determined in accordance with the relevant listed disease-specific chapters.'

In point 4), the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission agreed with the proposal of Member Countries to insert 'and disinsection' as this would be relevant to vector-borne diseases.

In regard to the paragraph after point 6), the Code Commission disagreed with the amendments proposed by Member Countries as it considered the proposal changed the intent of the sentence however in order to address these concerns the sentence was reworded for clarity.

#### Article 4.3.7.

In response to a Member Country proposal to delete 'all' before 'outbreaks' in the first paragraph, the Code Commission proposed to retain 'all epidemiologically linked outbreaks' as it is evident that in some very rare cases a country could have cases not epidemiologically linked and would have more than one containment zone. Furthermore, it was not possible to cover all field circumstances in the *Code*.

In response to Member Country comments on the second sentence of the article, on the need to specify the objectives in the definition of containment zone, the Code Commission did not accept the proposal to include additional wording as it did not add clarity and was covered in the following points.

In point 1), the Code Commission disagreed with Member Countries proposal to add 'within the containment zone' as it considered that this part of the article is about what should be included in the contingency plan, and related to the suspicion of the specified disease before the establishment of the zone. In response to other Member Country comments on the same point, the Code Commission considered that the word 'appropriate' addressed their concerns.

In point 2), the Code Commission did not accept a Member Country proposal to include 'zones' to allow for multiple containment zones as it did not add clarity to the point.

Point 3), the Code Commission did not accept Member Countries proposals to include additional wording to highlight that the emergency control measures were applied within the containment zone as it did not consider it improved the clarity.

Point 6), in response to Member Countries proposal to include 'other' as biosecurity is also a sanitary measure, the Code Commission disagreed and recalled the definition of 'biosecurity' contained in the Glossary. It modified the point to include 'fomites' to address a Member Country proposal to include 'feed and fodder' in the list.

Point 6), in response to Member Country comments that the point was unclear, the Code Commission amended the point to address this concern noting that a containment zone is considered effectively established when the conditions in either point a) or point b) are met.

Point 6), in response to a general comment from Member Countries that this same provision may not be consistent in individual listed disease-specific chapters of the *Code*, the Code Commission requested that the OIE Headquarters look at this in order to harmonise the provisions as much as possible.

Point 6 b), in response to a Member Country's proposals to include reference to 'appropriate surveillance' outside the protection zone, the Code Commission disagreed as this was implicit.

The Code Commission and the Scientific Commission agreed with Member Countries proposals to include an additional sentence in order to state that should a case occur in the protection zone the whole country will lose its status and proposed the inclusion of a new sentence at the end of the article. The Scientific Commission further reiterated that should a case occur in an approved containment zone of option a) or in the protection zone of option b) of the draft article, the rest of the country should lose its status and would be considered infected.

In response to another Member Country proposal, on point b) of the same paragraph, the Code Commission disagreed, as the proposal did not add clarity.

In response to Member Countries proposals to mention the difference between disease with an official status granted by the OIE and other listed disease as regards recognition of containment zones in the second last paragraph, the Code Commission clarified that it should not be explicitly mentioned in this paragraph but in the listed disease-specific chapters.

#### **Article 4.3.8.**

In response to a Member Country proposal to align the text in the second paragraph with the WTO SPS Agreement, the Code Commission reiterated that it was not necessary to repeat the text of the SPS Agreement in the *Code*. The meaning of the paragraph is the same and it is clear as written.

The Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to include reference to being able to meet the importing country's requirements, as the article is only about bilateral recognition of country or zone status and is to encourage Member Countries to recognise zones. Other chapters cover conditions for trade. To clarify this, the Code Commission proposed to change the subtitle of the article to 'Bilateral recognition of country or zone status by trading countries'.

The revised draft Chapter 4.3. is attached as **Annex 8** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.6. Collection and processing of oocytes or *in vitro* produced embryos from livestock and horses (Chapter 4.8.)**

Comments were received from Australia, Chile, New Zealand, Switzerland, USA, EU and AU-IBAR.

Several Member Countries supported the proposed changes to this chapter.

In response to a Member Country comment that there was an issue of consistency between Article 4.8.4. and Chapter 4.6., as there are no listed diseases that donor animals must be tested for, the Code Commission agreed and reiterated the need for scientific advice. As soon as advice on specific testing regimes is provided new recommendations could be proposed for inclusion in the chapter.

#### **Article 4.8.1.**

The Code Commission reworded the article for improved clarity, in response to a Member Country comment, noting that morula or blastocysts are a stage and it is the 'morula' or 'blastocysts stage' that makes them ready for transfer, not the time.

#### **Article 4.8.2.**

The Code Commission clarified that the use of 'inspection' is correct in this context, the team has to be inspected not assessed, and regarding the responsibility of the Veterinary Authority or the Veterinary Services, it recognised that this was not always clear in countries but in the *Code*, it is necessary to distinguish between them and their roles and responsibilities.

**Article 4.8.3.**

The Code Commission proposed amendments for clarity and syntax including correcting the name of the IETS. It also agreed with the comment of a Member Country that a team can use more than one laboratory site however, it considered this was already covered in the first paragraph of the article.

**Article 4.8.4.**

In response to a Member Country comment requesting the inclusion of text to indicate that new sterile needles should be used for aspiration of oocytes for each donor, the Code Commission noted that this was not exactly what was recommended in the IETS Manual. As the paragraph already referenced the recommendations of the IETS Manual it is not necessary to include this as a recommendation.

The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country that the need to trace the embryos back to the donor was not clear and proposed to amend the paragraph for clarity.

In order to address the concerns of Member Countries regarding clarity in point 4), the Code Commission proposed an amendment to clarify that the slaughterhouse/abattoir should be officially approved and under the supervision of a veterinarian.

In response to a Member Country comment on points 1) to 4) and point 7), the Code Commission agreed with some of the proposed editorial changes for clarity. However, others were not considered necessary or even a possible source of confusion.

**Article 4.8.5.**

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to delete 'optional' from the subheading of the article for clarity. It did not agree with the proposal of another Member Country to include a cross-reference to Chapter 4.6. Collection and processing of bovine, small ruminant and porcine semen, as there is no specific chapter for semen from equids. The Code Commission added 'relevant to listed disease-specific chapters' as these chapters have specific requirements.

**Article 4.8.6.**

Despite the fact that the *Code* already references the IETS Manual, the Code Commission agreed with a proposal of a Member Country to insert a new point a), specifically referencing the need for oocytes and embryos to be washed between each stage of production (IETS Manual 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, pp 63), as it considered it was an important risk mitigation measure, as there were no tests available to be included in the chapter.

**Article 4.8.7.**

In response to a Member Country comment on points 2 c) and 3 c) the Code Commission agreed that sealing of the containers should be done prior to shipment from the exporting country and proposed to amend the text and the title of the article for clarity.

The revised draft Chapter 4.8. is attached as **Annex 9** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

**4.7. New chapter on vaccination (Chapter 4.X.)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Chinese Taipei, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Japan, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland, USA, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas and EU.

The Code Commission noted several Member Country comments in support of the draft chapter.

In response to one Member Country comment in relation to the term ‘disease’, it noted that the word ‘disease’ would not disappear from the *Code*. References to ‘disease-specific chapters’ would be replaced with ‘listed disease-specific chapters’ and the definitions of ‘notifiable disease’ and ‘emerging disease’ will remain. In response to proposals to include the term ‘infestation’ within the definition of ‘infection’, the Code Commission did not agree with the rationale provided as there are *Code* chapters that refer only to ‘infestation with’, and the distinction is still relevant.

It further thanked a Member Country for the advice that it was conducting a project in relation to vaccination against ticks in cattle and noted it would ask the OIE Headquarters to provide this information to the Biological Standards Commission.

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of Member Countries to replace ‘marketing authorisation’ with ‘relevant regulatory approvals’ throughout the chapter. The Code Commission recommended that the OIE Headquarters consider the use of the term ‘relevant regulatory approvals’ throughout the *Code* and the *Manual*.

#### **Article 4.X.1.**

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal to narrow the scope of the chapter. While the primary objective of the recommendations is to guide Veterinary Services, they may be used by all concerned sectors as appropriate. Member Countries are invited to refer to the Code Commission’s September 2017 report. The Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission to replace the term ‘Veterinary Authority’ with ‘Veterinary Services’ as it was the more appropriate term given the objective of the guidance.

In response to a proposal of several Member Countries to delete ‘successful’, the Code Commission agreed as it was implicit that guidance is provided to assist with successful implementation. The Code Commission disagreed with a proposal from the same Member Countries to add to point 4) ‘if applicable for the Member Country concerned’. However, the Code Commission clarified the point relates to vaccine-producing countries only.

#### **Article 4.X.2.**

In response to the proposal of two Member Countries to include a definition of ‘strategic vaccination,’ the Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission that the term ‘strategic vaccination’ is not used in the current chapter and vaccination strategies can be adapted to specific situations.

#### **Article 4.X.3.**

In response to a Member Country comment regarding the proposed deletion of the word ‘disease’ and its replacement with ‘infection’, the Code Commission agreed that in this case, the use of ‘disease’ was more appropriate than ‘infection’ as it was in the general context of the disease. This amendment also addressed a comment of another Member Country requesting the inclusion of ‘infestation’.

In response to Member Country comments regarding the liaison between the veterinary and public health authorities, the Code Commission added ‘implementation’ and ‘as relevant’ to highlight that cooperation between the two should not only be during the development phase of the campaign but may occur at different stages. Two Member Countries proposed the deletion of reference to ‘prevent the introduction of a pathogenic agent from an infected neighbouring country or zone’. The Code Commission agreed that vaccination does not prevent the entry of the pathogenic agent. In order to address this, it proposed to replace ‘pathogenic agent’ with ‘disease’ as in fact, some vaccination can actually prevent the transmission of infection and thus prevent the introduction of the disease.

#### **Article 4.X.4.**

In response to a request from Member Countries for the addition of a point regarding the existence of a vaccine, the Code Commission noted this was covered in point 8) the availability of vaccine.

Point 1), in response to a Member Country proposal to include ‘incidence and reproductive number’ when calculating the proportion of a population that needs to be vaccinated, the Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission that the inclusion was unnecessary as these concepts are included in the broad definition of epidemiology.

Point 2), the Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to delete this point. While point 1) relates to the general epidemiology and characteristics of the disease as can be found, for example, in OIE technical disease cards, point 2) relates to the epidemiological situation in the country. The Code Commission made minor modifications to clarify this.

Point 5), the Code Commission agreed to a Member Country proposal to add two new points on the health status of the animals and the possibility of differentiating vaccinated animals from infected animals. However, the Code Commission was of the view that these were already addressed in point 2) of Article 4.X.7. on target population and in point 2 b) of Article 4.X.6. on biological characteristics. The Code Commission made minor amends to point 2 b) of Article 4.X.6. and point 2) of Article 4.X.7., to clarify this point.

Point 7), the Code Commission agreed with the comments of several Member Countries that animal identification was not feasible in wild animals, and clarified that this section was in relation to the considerations when launching a vaccine programme. Furthermore, it was not considered necessary to amend the text but was taken into account in point 5) of Article 4.X.8. which deals with animal identification. The Code Commission further noted, in response to Member Country comments on the same point, on the possible interference of a vaccination programme with disease surveillance and the existence of a tool for post-vaccination monitoring, that all these issues were covered in point 2 b) of Article 4.X.6. on biological characteristics.

Point 9), the Code Commission agreed with a Member Country that the cost-benefit analysis should also consider the impact of the vaccination programme on public health and amended the point accordingly.

#### **Article 4.X.5.**

In response to a comment from a Member Country regarding the possible challenges of translating the word ‘blanket’ and proposing to use ‘mass’, the Code Commission asked the OIE Headquarters to ensure that the translation was appropriate to convey the meaning of this point and proposed no change to the English version.

#### **Article 4.X.6.**

In response to Member Countries proposals to include an additional sentence in this article on the need to balance the benefit with the risk posed by vaccination, when only one vaccine is available, the Code Commission considered it was a valid point and included a new sentence linking this to the factors in the previous article.

Point 1, in response to two Member Country comments, the Code Commission made an editorial amendment for consistency by replacing ‘including marketing authorisation’ with ‘relevant regulatory approvals’ throughout the rest of the chapter.

Point 2 b), for consistency with the *Manual* the Code Commission replaced ‘thermostability’ with ‘thermotolerance’ and for clarity added ‘unintentional’ to point c) transmission of live vaccine strains.

#### **Article 4.X.7.**

Point 1), in response to Member Country comments, the Code Commission reworded this point to make it clearer that compensation is not always compulsory. In response to a question regarding the need to have a legal basis in the country to compensate animal owners for adverse reactions, the Code Commission noted that this would indeed be an incentive to animal owners to vaccinate when there are known possible adverse reactions.

Point 2), the Code Commission agreed with a Member Country proposal to delete reference to the efficacy of the vaccine in the last sentence because it will be part of the design of the vaccination coverage and effective immunity is adequately covered in point 2 b) of Article 4.X.6.

Point 3), the Code Commission confirmed that the vaccination programme is carried out under the responsibility of the Veterinary Services.

#### **Article 4.X.8.**

The Code Commission made editorial amendments in response to Member Country comments for clarity and consistency including where appropriate changing ‘Veterinary Authority’ to ‘Veterinary Services’. In regards to point 5) on animal identification, it agreed to include ‘domestic’ before animals, as this addressed several Member Country comments including those made in point 7) of Article 4.X.4.. In response to Member Country comments on point 7), ‘biosecurity’ was included as it may be useful to consider when preparing to cease vaccination.

#### **Article 4.X.9.**

The Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission that, in response to a Member Country comment, the age of the animals should be considered as part of the evaluation and monitoring programme, but disagreed with the inclusion of vaccination strategy. The point was amended accordingly.

#### **Article 4.X.10.**

In response to Member Country comments, the Code Commission considered that the problem of vaccine availability is covered in point 4).

#### **Article 4.X.11.**

In response to Member Country comments noting that the first paragraph may not encourage countries to implement vaccination, the Code Commission amended the second paragraph to highlight that the *Code* provides additional recommendations on the management and trade of vaccinated animals and their products. In response to a Member Country comment that the last paragraph of the article contained information too specific for a general chapter, the Code Commission proposed amendments to the third paragraph.

A Member Country commented on the type of measures an importing country might take when an exporting country implements systematic vaccination or emergency vaccination. The Code Commission understood the concerns, clarified that the paragraph relates to a potential increased risk of introduction of a disease in a free country or zone, and proposed to replace ‘occurrence’ with ‘introduction’.

The revised draft Chapter 4.X. is attached as **Annex 10** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

### **4.8. The role of Veterinary Services in food safety systems (Chapter 6.1.)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Malaysia, New Caledonia, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission noted comments in support of the proposed changes to this chapter.

In relation to Member Country comments on the need to explain the context in which Veterinary Services contribute to food safety systems, the Code Commission clarified that this is not explained in this chapter but rather in Articles 3.2.9. and 3.4.12. It also mentioned that each country has its own administrative organisational structure, which means they may not always have the same entities dealing with food safety, which is why it is more appropriate to use ‘Competent Authority’. The Code Commission explained that this chapter is intended to assist Member Countries to understand the role of Veterinary Services in food safety.

**Article 6.1.1.**

The Code Commission did not agree with Member Country comments and reiterated the explanation given in its previous report that food safety encompasses foodborne zoonosis and food hygiene, the latter being related to food products. Veterinarians are trained in animal health, including foodborne zoonosis and food hygiene, which supports their role in food safety.

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to delete the unnecessary wording at the beginning of the first sentence to improve the readability and clarity.

**Article 6.1.3.**1. Food chain approach

The Code Commission did not agree with a Member Country suggestion to replace ‘hazards’ with ‘risk’ in the first paragraph, as a hazard is a factor to be detected on the food chain in order to reduce the risk.

The Code Commission did not agree with a Member Country suggestion to change ‘unwanted’ to ‘adverse’. The Code Commission explained that the difference between an ‘adverse’ and an ‘unwanted’ health effect was discussed over several meetings. A hazard may not have an adverse health effect but may still be unwanted. As ‘hazard’ is defined in the Glossary, as having the potential to cause an adverse health effect, the Code Commission considered the concern is already covered.

2. Risk-based food safety systems

The Code Commission did not agree with Member Countries proposal to change the example on the importance of monitoring food safety outcomes [...] system, to include a reference to ‘prevalence or occurrence of infections in the zone’, as this was covered in other chapters, for example, Article 6.12.4. Objectives of prevention and control measures.

The Code Commission did not agree with another Member Country proposal to delete the examples provided on monitoring food safety outcomes [...] system. Firstly, the Code Commission clarified that the OIE mandate includes animal production food safety. Furthermore, it noted the majority of foodborne zoonotic diseases are linked to the status of the herd rather than the zone of origin of the animals. The Code Commission further clarified that because of the OIE’s mandate it is relevant for the *Code*, rather than the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius, to address the status of animals before the slaughterhouse.

4. Responsibilities of the relevant Competent Authorities

In regard to a Member Country suggestion to delete ‘other responsible agencies,’ the Code Commission agreed that Competent Authorities are inclusive of ‘other responsible agencies’ and amended the sentence for clarity.

The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country proposal to delete ‘reassess’ in the point on ‘assessment of third party’, considering that where the Competent Authority delegates some control responsibilities to a third party, it should assess the third party regularly. This amendment also addressed the concerns of another Member Country.

**Article 6.1.4.**1. Roles and responsibilities of Veterinary Services in a food safety system

The Code Commission agreed with a proposal of a Member Country to re-order the sentence as it could be misinterpreted as currently written. In response to a Member Country comment that the notion of ‘a flexible approach’ was not clear, the Code Commission clarified that it means that Veterinary Services should be able to adapt to the situation depending on the risks and the type of production, etc. Such adaptability is needed for the Veterinary Services to be effective and efficient.

The Code Commission agreed in part with the proposal of a Member Country to amend the paragraph describing the contribution of Veterinary Services to other food safety activities. However, the Code Commission did not agree to include ‘active role’ as it considered this was already covered in education and training in the OIE Guidelines for Core Veterinary Curriculum.

## 2. Activities of Veterinary Services throughout the food chain

The Code Commission noted that a variety of terms are used to describe the activities of Veterinary Services throughout the food chain (i.e. from farm to harvest, farm to transformation, farm to fork etc.).

Regarding a Member Country proposal to reword the paragraph on primary production, the Code Commission did not agree as it changed the meaning of the sentence. Here the intended meaning is that Veterinary Services play a key role in biosecurity and in early detection, surveillance etc.

The Code Commission agreed with the comment of a Member Country to include ‘healthy’ in item a), as Veterinary Services play a key role in ensuring that animals are healthy, through their presence on farm and in collaboration with farmers. Some Member Countries did not appear to understand the text, so the Code Commission amended it to clearly state that biosecurity and early detection and surveillance are key roles of the Veterinary Services, replacing ‘and’ with ‘as well as’.

The Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to include ‘and/or additives’ and referred to the definition of ‘feed’ in the Glossary, which includes all feed ingredients, and additives are feed ingredients. The Code Commission deleted the word ‘animal’ as it was unnecessary considering the definition in the Glossary.

The Code Commission agreed with Member Countries proposals to delete the words ‘In regard to food safety’, as the chapter is about food safety, so it is implicit.

In response to a Member Country comment in relation to the role of the Veterinary Services in control and guidance, the Code Commission clarified that their role involves both. According to the dictionary definition, ‘guidance’ can be advice, or information or direction on how to do something. For clarity, the Code Commission changed the word ‘guidance’ to ‘direction’.

The Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to add ‘in particular’, as the Member Country considered the role of Veterinary Services could also extend to plant products. In general Veterinary Services are not involved in the investigation or response to foodborne illness outbreaks in humans that are not linked to animal products i.e. vegetables or other plant products.

The revised draft Chapter 6.1. is attached as **Annex 11** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

## **4.9. Harmonisation of national antimicrobial resistance surveillance and monitoring programmes (Chapter 6.7.) including consideration of the report of the *ad hoc* Group on Antimicrobial resistance (January 2018)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Japan, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission thanked the *ad hoc* Group for its work and noted that it had made proposals to harmonise text throughout Chapter 6.7., and to address Member Country comments. The Code Commission considered the revised draft chapter article by article taking into consideration the suggestions of the *ad hoc* Group and Member Country comments. Given the volume of comments on this chapter, Member Countries are requested to read the *ad hoc* Group report where more detailed rationales are provided.

The Code Commission and the *ad hoc* Group noted conflicting comments received from Member Countries on the importance of the environment and animal feed in surveillance of antimicrobial resistance and monitoring of the prevalence of resistance. It was noted in response to these comments that monitoring and surveillance will always be according to national priorities, and it was unnecessary to repeat this throughout the text. Furthermore, the *ad hoc* Group recognised that in addition to human, animal and food, the environment is also important for surveillance of AMR and should be identified as such in the chapter. Nevertheless, as some Member Countries have currently limited surveillance measures in place, it was of the opinion that environment should be part of the surveillance of AMR when it is possible and part of the national priorities. For example, some countries sample the animal-immediate-environment or wider environment as part of national priorities; the Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group on this point.

#### **Article 6.7.2.**

Points 3) and 4), the Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to replace ‘human’ with ‘public’, noting that the chapter is about monitoring and surveillance for both animal and human health, whereas veterinary public health is a broader term.

#### **Article 6.7.3.**

In response to Member Country comments, the Code Commission proposed to replace ‘animal feed’ with ‘feed’ as feed is always linked to the feeding of animals and is defined in the Glossary.

The Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group, not to accept a Member Country proposal to replace ‘should’ with ‘may’ in respect of considering feed and the environment and to add ‘dependent on scientific advice’ as it was unnecessary, since national priorities allow for risk assessment and new scientific inputs and a monitoring programme should be science-based anyway.

#### **Article 6.7.4.**

Point 1 a), the Code Commission did not accept a proposal of a Member Country to include ‘as outlined in the study design’ and to add a new bullet point on representativeness and appropriateness of the sample. The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group to amend bullet a) to include ‘and meets the objectives of surveillance’ to address the Member Country concerns.

Point 2), a Member Country proposed to add a new sentence to the third paragraph to clarify samples from which bacteria were not isolated cannot be used in the calculation of prevalence of the resistance phenotype, while agreeing with the Member Country’s rationale, the Code Commission disagreed with the proposed amendment. This is because the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph clarifies that both the expected prevalence of the bacteria in the sample type and the expected prevalence of the resistance phenotype are taken into account in deciding the sample size for the prevalence of the resistance phenotype.

Table 1, the *ad hoc* Group at first agreed with a proposal to update Table 1 for lower prevalence, ensuring consistency with the rest of the Table. However, the *ad hoc* Group noted that the figures in this table had been generated using a widely used software (Epi Info TM Version 7.2.2.6., freely available at <https://www.cdc.gov/epiinfo/index.html>). Furthermore, it noted that at low levels of expected prevalence, exact methods of sample size calculation would be preferred to the approximate methods used here; that the sample size estimates in the table should be considered as indicative only; and that a statistician should be consulted during the design of the surveillance programme to ensure the sample size, in particular for rare occurrences, is suitable for the national situation. In view of this comment from the *ad hoc* Group, the Code Commission proposed that Table 1 be deleted from the chapter and requested the OIE Headquarters to provide this information on the OIE website for Member Countries.

Point 3 a), the Code Commission disagreed with Member Countries proposals to replace ‘animal’ with ‘livestock’, noting the article is about food producing animals and the term livestock encompasses all food producing animals and its meaning is broader.

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of Member Countries to add ‘criteria such as’ to allow a more flexible approach to resource allocation in relation to categories of food producing animals.

Point 3 b), the Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group not to accept a Member Country proposal to include ‘taking a risk-based approach’ and ‘although the extent of this is still unknown’. The *ad hoc* Group noted that there is currently insufficient information available on risk-based approaches to AMR and that inclusion of this would be considered when more information becomes available. The Code Commission also disagreed with the second part of the proposal, as it did not add value to the paragraph.

Point 3 c), the Code Commission agreed with a Member Country that monitoring programmes on animal feed should be based on available resources, species and national priorities. However, as reference to national priorities is covered in Article 6.7.3. General aspects, there is no need to repeat it throughout the chapter.

Point 3 d), in response to Member Countries proposals to include the environment, the Code Commission agreed with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group to include a new point noting that national priorities are already covered.

Point 4), Member Countries proposed to delete ‘and should be linked to pathogen specific’, the Code Commission agreed that many countries do not routinely conduct pathogen surveillance of feedstuffs and amended the sentence for clarity.

The Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group and proposed to re-order the paragraphs for consistency but did not accept the editorial amendments as proposed by a Member Country, as it did not add to the clarity of the sentence.

Regarding Table 2, in response to Member Country comments the Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group proposal to include a new line to cover sampling of the animal-immediate or the wider environment (see also point 3 d) above) in the chapter.

The Code Commission and the *ad hoc* Group did not accept a Member Country proposal to insert ‘prior to any anti-microbial interventions’ as it considered this too detailed, given the more general nature of the other examples.

### **Article 6.7.5.**

Point 1 b), in response to a proposal of a Member Country to add ‘animal health concern’, the Code Commission disagreed as clinically ill animals recover and can still enter the food chain and emerging resistance would always be considered an animal health concern.

Point 1 c), the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to replace ‘should’ with ‘may’ but agreed with the proposal to add ‘one or more’, to indicate the importance of surveillance of animal bacterial pathogens and at the same time maintaining flexibility.

### **Table 3**

The Code Commission noted a Member Country proposal to include ‘meat’ with respect to where samples are collected for commensal *E. coli* and that the table should be expanded to include other categories including zoonotic bacteria and commensal bacteria. The *ad hoc* Group did not accept the proposal as it related to text already agreed during this round of revision to the chapter, but it will be considered in a future revision of the chapter. The Code Commission further noted that commensal bacteria are covered in point 3) of Article 6.7.5. and as Table 3 focuses on animal bacterial pathogens it is not appropriate to include commensals and zoonotic bacteria.

In response to Member Countries suggestions to include ‘aquatic animals,’ the Code Commission noted that this was within the mandate of the Aquatic Animals Commission and was covered in Section 6 of the *Aquatic Code*. The President raised this issue with the President of the Aquatic Animals Commission during their meeting on 14 February 2018. The Member Countries are encouraged to address these comments to the Aquatic Animals Commission.

## **Point 2**

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group and a Member Country to amend the text to allow flexibility for the design of epidemiology studies according to national priorities, as national priorities are already covered in the chapter and it would be unnecessarily repetitive. The Code Commission agreed with other editorial amendments that improved the clarity of this point.

The Code Commission rejected the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group to insert a new point to address sampling of the environment and amended the paragraph as proposed by the Member Countries.

In response to a Member Country proposal to include ‘phage-typed or genetic methods,’ the Code Commission recalled that the rationale for phage-typed methods being deleted was because they are not considered reliable by experts.

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group to insert ‘based on national priorities’ at the beginning of Article 6.7.5. in points b) and c) as it is included in Article 6.7.3. General aspects. However, the Code Commission proposed to change ‘and’ to ‘or’ to clarify that campylobacter should be isolated from food-producing animals or associated food products rather than always both.

Point 3), the Code Commission disagreed with the *ad hoc* Group decision not to consider a Member Country proposal to include ‘meat’ in the second paragraph. The Code Commission recalled the discussion from its last meeting that it was more appropriate to take the samples from feed at the feed mill; it does not mean you cannot take them at other points. The Code Commission proposed to amend the sentence to indicate that samples should preferably be taken from healthy animals and to improve syntax and readability.

## **Article 6.7.7.**

The *ad hoc* Group disagreed with a Member Country proposal to delete text in the second paragraph, explaining that not all surveillance systems can provide quantitative data at this point in time; not all audiences can correctly interpret qualitative data; and the quantitative data can be misinterpreted as being a completely accurate representation of what would happen in the body. Therefore it was necessary to maintain the emphasis on both qualitative and quantitative data. The Code Commission also recalled that ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ had been added previously to enhance Member Countries capabilities and to consider those countries that could not do quantitative analysis. It further noted that the technique has been included in the *Code* for a long time. In response to the second part of the same Member Countries proposal to delete ‘inhibition zone diameters’, the Code Commission agreed that there is a better technique but the *Code* has to be practical in order for all Member Countries to be able to implement it.

### Article 6.7.8.

In response to a Member Country proposal to include reference to ‘clinical breakpoints,’ the Code Commission noted the opinion of the *ad hoc* Group (see below) and agreed with its proposals for amending the text.

“The Group noted that there are not always clinical breakpoints available for all antimicrobial/bacterial species combinations and that clinical breakpoints might differ between countries. The Group noted that the microbiological breakpoints do not differ between the countries. Human AMR surveillance is based on the microbiological breakpoint and hence if a desire for the surveillance programme is to compare with human AMR, then the microbiological breakpoint would be preferable. The Group agreed that both types of breakpoints could provide useful information.

As a result of this discussion, the Group agreed to maintain the original text and add the concept of clinical breakpoints as a new sentence to maintain the original intent of the paragraph, yet add the new information. The new sentence at the end was added as follows: ‘Clinical breakpoints (where available) should also be reported.’ The group did not delete the last sentence of the paragraph because no rationale was provided by the Member Country for the deletion. The Group did not accept the change to ‘microbiological cut off’ because the standard terminology is ‘microbiological breakpoint’ or ‘epidemiological cut-off value’ based on EUCAST1 and CLSI2.”

A Member Country proposed to modify point 10), which addresses collecting data at the individual isolate level and including data on uses of antimicrobials. The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal to replace ‘along with’ with ‘may’ and proposed to add ‘where available’ which would allow for greater flexibility in reporting, as not all countries will be able to collect data on antimicrobial use or management practices.

The Code Commission noted that if the revised chapter was adopted by the General Session in 2018, it would not be included in its work programme for further revision until there is robust data from experts and discussion in other fora is complete (i.e. Codex).

The revised draft Chapter 6.7. is attached as **Annex 12** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.10. Monitoring of the quantities and usage patterns of antimicrobial agents used in food-producing animals (Articles 6.8.1. and 6.8.1.-bis) including consideration of the report of the *ad hoc* Group on Antimicrobial resistance (January 2018)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland, USA, EU and AU-IBAR.

### Article 6.8.1.

In response to Member Countries proposals to replace ‘therapeutic’ with ‘infectious disease-related’ the *ad hoc* Group proposed the inclusion of ‘infection or disease’. The Code Commission partly disagreed with the rationale provided by the *ad hoc* Group i.e. therapeutic is related to disease and nontherapeutic is related to production, but proposed to include ‘infectious disease’ for consistency with the *Code*.

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposed addition of ‘production’ in relation to nontherapeutic use, as there are other uses that are not related to production i.e. colouring of bones, research, etc. and it is unnecessary to include a list of examples. However, the Code Commission agreed it was appropriate to leave ‘including growth promotion’ as this was the major percentage of nontherapeutic use.

A Member Country proposed adding ‘according to a country’s resources and priorities’ to the second paragraph about ‘evaluating antimicrobial exposure in food-producing animals.’ The Code Commission agreed with the rationale of the *ad hoc* Group not accepting the addition as the implementation of OIE standards is always in accordance with a country’s resources and priorities.

#### **Article 6.8.1.-bis**

The Code Commission agreed with the suggestion of the *ad hoc* Group not to accept Member Countries proposals to amend the text to harmonise the G7 CVO Forum definitions and the OIE definitions. The rationale is provided below:

‘The Group noted that the G7 and the OIE processes are different and that the representation of the two groups is very different. As part of the review of the two sets of definitions, the Group recalled that at their previous meeting (and documented in the meeting report), that ‘control’ had the same meaning as ‘metaphylaxis’ and that ‘preventive’ had the same meaning as ‘prophylaxis’. The Code Commission took note of the Group’s meeting report and decided to adopt the most well understood terms of ‘control’ and ‘preventive use’ for inclusion in the chapter. The Group also noted that in human medicine, ‘metaphylaxis’ is not well understood worldwide and hence ‘metaphylaxis’ is not the preferred word for the OIE. With all this in mind, the Group recommended keeping the OIE definitions.’

Furthermore, the *ad hoc* Group considered that the question of whether the OIE guidelines would need to be amended to guide interpretation of the WHO guidelines on use of medically important antimicrobials in food-producing animals was outside its mandate and Terms of Reference. The Code Commission also noted that the prudent use of antimicrobials is covered in Chapter 6.9., whereas this chapter is meant to help members in monitoring the use.

Taking into consideration the proposals and rationale of the *ad hoc* Group and the discussion above, the Code Commission proposed the following amendments to the definitions.

#### **Therapeutic use**

The Code Commission included ‘infectious disease’, see rationale provided above.

The Code Commission disagreed with Member Countries proposals to include ‘dose and duration’ in the sub-points on both ‘treatment’ and ‘control’. The Code Commission proposed instead to delete the reference in the sub point ‘prevent’, as this also addressed other Member Country comments proposing its deletion, because dose and duration relates to the prudent use of antimicrobials, covered in Chapter 6.9. The Code Commission also agreed with the proposed deletion of ‘Using an appropriate dose and for a limited, defined duration’, because its policy is to have short descriptive, explanatory definitions and not to include recommendations within definitions.

Further in the proposed definition of ‘to prevent’ the Code Commission agreed with Member Countries proposals to replace ‘developing’ with ‘acquire’. The Code Commission clarified ‘infection’ is defined as the entry and development of a pathogenic agent, the ultimate goal being to prevent infectious disease.

#### **Nontherapeutic use**

The Code Commission proposed to replace ‘infection or disease’ with ‘infectious disease’ for consistency with the rest of the chapter, especially Article 6.8.1.

#### **Growth promotion**

The Code Commission accepted a Member Country proposal to delete ‘in their feed or water’, as the inclusion of the route of administration within the growth promotion definition is irrelevant and is confusing, as it can also apply to the definitions underneath therapeutic use.

The Code Commission disagreed to completely align the definition with that of the Codex Alimentarius, which dates years back, by adding *‘The term does NOT apply to the use of antimicrobials for the specific purpose of treating, controlling, or preventing infectious diseases, even when an incidental growth response may be obtained’*. The Code Commission considered there is no need to specify what is not growth promotion, since the other uses of antimicrobials are already defined above. However, for clarity, and to answer the concerns of the *ad hoc* Group of possible growth response side effect of therapeutic use, it added the word ‘only’ before ‘to increase their weight gain’.

In response to a Member Country comment that exclusions of some products within the definition should be considered, the Code Commission disagreed as the definition of ‘antimicrobial agents’ contained in the Glossary is clear.

The draft revised Article 6.8.1. and new Article 6.8.1.-bis (including the definitions) are attached at **Annex 13** and are proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.11. Prevention and control of *Salmonella* in commercial pig production systems (Articles 6.13.2., 6.13.3. and 6.13.16.)**

Comments were received from Switzerland, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission noted Member Countries support for the proposed amendments to the chapter and that it had responded to Member Country comments regarding the purpose of this chapter under Agenda Item 2 User’s Guide.

In examining Member Country comments on Article 6.13.2. the Code Commission noted its previous discussions on the definition of ‘commercial pig production systems’ and that the differences in countries understanding of trade as only being international trade, and others that did not distinguish between international and domestic trade. It further noted that ‘commercially placing on the market’ was also not clear and did not add clarity to the definition. The definition was amended to clarify that the chapter is applicable ‘for the production and sale of pigs or pig meat’.

##### **Article 6.13.3.**

In response to Member Country comments relating to outdoor pig production systems being by default commercial, the Code Commission noted that outdoor pig production systems are becoming more common so they should be mentioned.

##### **Article 6.13.16.**

The Code Commission partially agreed with a Member Country proposal to include ‘wild animals’ as well as ‘wild birds’ and replaced ‘wild birds’ with ‘wildlife’.

The revised Chapter 6.13. is attached as **Annex 14** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.12. New chapter on introduction to recommendations for veterinary public health (Chapter 6.X.)**

Comments were received from Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland and EU.

The Code Commission noted comments in support of the proposed new chapter.

##### **Article 6.X.1.**

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to replace ‘eating habits and their consequences such as’ with ‘changing food consumption patterns’ but kept ‘and their consequences such as’ to keep the link between the two.

The Code Commission disagreed with Member Countries proposals to include 'zoonotic' before 'emerging disease' as the paragraph was about the factors that influence the emergence of disease, only some of which are zoonotic. However, for clarity, it proposed amending the wording to include 'some of which are zoonotic' after 'emerging diseases'.

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include 'unregulated' before 'use', because any use, including misuse, can contribute to problems.

The Code Commission partially agreed with a Member Country proposal to amend the paragraph to include Veterinary Services role in the 'management of health risks...' but considering the rest of the paragraph was clear and needed no additional clarification.

The revised draft Chapter 6.X. is attached as **Annex 15** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.13. Introduction to the recommendations for animal welfare (Article 7.1.1.)**

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Malaysia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas, EU, AU-IBAR, and ICAFAW.

The Code Commission took note of the general comments of Member Countries and an organisation and reiterated the objective of the proposed modification to the OIE definition of animal welfare was to develop a concise text, harmonised with the approach taken in the Glossary of the *Code* while the details remain in the chapter.

The Code Commission agreed with Member Countries proposals to replace the word 'psychological' with 'mental' when referring to the state of the animal in relation to the condition in which it lives, as the term 'mental' is more commonly used for animals and easily understood and accepted by all Member Countries. This modification was also applied in the second paragraph of this article.

In response to a Member Country proposal to amend the last part of the first paragraph of the article, to replace the word 'dies' with 'death', the Code Commission did not agree with the suggestion as it did not add clarity to the text.

The Code Commission accepted a Member Country proposal to replace the word 'enjoy' with 'experience'. The Code Commission agreed that, although the intention was to use 'enjoy' in its legal sense, the term could easily be interpreted in its common meaning that is to 'feel pleasure'. The Code Commission noted and thanked some Member Countries for their comments on the third paragraph and reassured them that the OIE would continue promoting the basic concepts and guidelines mentioned throughout Chapter 7.1.

In response to a Member Country proposal to delete the third paragraph of the article, as it considered it was repetitive, the Code Commission did not agree as the first part refers to the condition of the animal's environment and the second part relates to the users, and how they should treat the animals.

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to add the word 'safe' as a condition of the need for a stimulating environment to achieve good animal welfare. In the same paragraph, the Code Commission did not agree with the suggestion of an organisation to include the word 'secure' as another necessary condition, because it considered the previous modification covered it, and the two words have similar meanings.

The Code Commission did not agree with the suggestions of some Member Countries to modify the last sentence of the third paragraph of the article. Nevertheless, it made some modifications to improve readability.

The revised definition of animal welfare proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018 under Agenda Item 2 Glossary Part A.

The revised Article 7.1.1. is attached as **Annex 16** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.14. New article on guiding principles for the use of measures to assess animal welfare (Article 7.1.X.)**

Comments were received from Canada, New Zealand, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission took note of the general comments of Member Countries regarding the suggestion to review the chapter to ensure that newer production system practices are well covered in the *Code*. The Code Commission indicated that for recently developed chapters and ones under development, Article 7.1.2. on guiding principles for animal welfare and Article 7.1.3. on scientific basis for recommendations are also applicable.

In examining Member Country comments on point 1), the Code Commission agreed to replace the word 'enjoyment' with 'experience', for consistency with Article 7.1.1.

The Code Commission did not agree with a Member Country proposal to delete the last part of the first sentence of point 1), as OIE animal welfare standards are applicable globally and some specific conditions should be considered, as is the case with outdoor systems.

Some Member Countries commented on a preference to use the concept of the 'five domains' instead of 'five freedoms' referring to favourable outcomes for animal welfare. The Code Commission noted that the latter is still part of the guiding principles for animal welfare and are mentioned in Article 7.1.2. but agreed this could be considered in a future revision of the chapter.

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of some Member Countries on point 3), to replace the word 'standards' with 'recommendations'. Nevertheless, the Code Commission agreed to keep the word 'standard' in point 1) of this article, as in this case, it refers to the general concept of animal welfare and not to a specific recommendation in the chapter.

On the same point, the Code Commission agreed with the suggestion of a Member Country to delete the reference to 'other relevant bodies' participation in the collection of data. The Code Commission modified the text to emphasise that data used to establish relevant target values could have different origins.

The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country comment on point 4) to reword the sentence to clarify that resource-based measures and management-based measures could also be used if they are linked to an animal welfare outcome.

Regarding the same point, the Code Commission agreed with a Member Country comment on the need to clarify the concepts of animal-based measures, resource-based measures, and management-based measures. Therefore, the Code Commission recommend that the OIE Headquarters include a brief explanation of these concepts on the [animal welfare portal](#) on its website.

The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country proposal to delete the words 'or conditions', referring to the selection of appropriate animal-based measures, as its meaning is not well understood. However, the Code Commission added the word 'environment', to highlight the need to consider this aspect as its relationship could be fundamental to the animal welfare outcomes expected.

The Code Commission proposed to place this new article after Article 7.1.3. scientific basis for recommendations, as these are the basis for developing animal welfare recommendations and will apply to other chapters on animal welfare in the *Code*.

The new Article 7.1.X. is attached as **Annex 17** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.15. Animal welfare and pig production systems (Chapter 7.X.) including consideration of the *ad hoc* Group report (January 2018)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Malaysia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas, EU, AU-IBAR and ICFAW.

The Code Commission thanked the *ad hoc* Group for its work and noted that it had made proposals to harmonise text throughout the chapter and to address Member Country comments. The Code Commission considered the revised draft chapter article by article taking into consideration the suggestions of the *ad hoc* Group and Member Country comments. However, given the volume of comments on this chapter, only the comments and amendments made by the Code Commission that differ from the suggestions of the *ad hoc* Group are included in this report. Member Countries are requested to read this report jointly with the report of the *ad hoc* Group.

The Code Commission took into consideration the proposed modifications to Chapter 7.1. in reviewing this chapter.

**Article 7.X.1.**

The Code Commission aligned the definition of 'commercial pig production systems' with Chapter 6.13. Prevention and control of *Salmonella*.

**Article 7.X.3.**

Point 2), the Code Commission considered it more appropriate to use 'kept' in paddocks instead of 'housed' and agreed to use the word 'mantenidos' in the Spanish version of the *Code*.

**Article 7.X.4.**

In the first paragraph regarding the examples of indicators based on criteria (or measurables) for the welfare of pigs, the Code Commission changed 'hybrid' to 'crossbreed', as hybrid could refer to an interspecies crossing.

The Code Commission recommended harmonising the terminology in all the animal welfare chapters such as the use of the expression 'animal-based criteria' after the adoption of Articles 7.1.1. and 7.1.3.-bis to improve consistency among chapters.

Point 1), the Code Commission partially agreed with the amendment proposed by the *ad hoc* Group in response to a Member Country proposal to add a new paragraph on behaviours as indicators of good animal welfare and health in pigs. However, it did not consider it was relevant to include examples related to vocalisation.

Point 1), the Code Commission replaced 'freezing' with 'sudden immobility' to improve clarity and facilitate translation.

Point 9), the Code Commission proposed new wording in response to Member Country comments, which proposed the use of 'on' rather than 'in' when referring to painful or potentially painful procedures performed on pigs.

**Article 7.X.7.**

The Code Commission amended the paragraph proposed by the *ad hoc* Group, for clarity and consistency.

The Code Commission did not agree with the modifications proposed by the *ad hoc* Group on the fourth paragraph regarding the timely manner in which to provide treatment for sick or injured pigs. The Code Commission considered it more appropriate to use 'as soon as possible' rather than 'without delay'.

**Article 7.X.8.**

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group as it considered that the Member Country proposal gave greater clarity and amended the paragraph accordingly.

The Code Commission did not agree with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group to add 'or both' when referring to the use of 'analgesia or anaesthesia', as in English 'or' is not exclusive unless preceded by 'either'.

The Code Commission did not agree with the suggestion of the *ad hoc* Group to remove the reference to the quality of the water (drinkable) to be offered to the pigs and retained the original wording for consistency with other chapters of the *Code*.

**Article 7.X.10.**

The Code Commission amended the examples proposed by the *ad hoc* Group ‘of fostered normal behaviours’ with ‘environmental enrichment’ for clarity.

**Article 7.X.16.**

The Code Commission reworded the sentence proposed by the *ad hoc* Group taking into account a Member Country comment about the effect of the temperature in relation to the weight of pigs.

**Article 7.X.20.**

The Code Commission disagreed with the comment of the *ad hoc* Group not to accept a Member Country proposal on monitoring newly weaned pigs. The Code Commission proposed to add ‘carefully’ to highlight the need to monitor newly weaned pigs for any signs of ill health or abnormal stress.

**Article 7.X.22.**

The Code Commission disagreed with the modifications to the second paragraph proposed by the *ad hoc* Group and reformulated the sentence according to the suggestion of a Member Country.

**Article 7.X.26.**

A Member Country proposed to include reference to the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) of FAO. The Code Commission did not agree as links to the LEGS website and the LEGS guidelines are included in the OIE webpage ([Developments in animal welfare.](#))

The Draft Chapter 7.X. is attached as **Annex 18** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018. The report of the *ad hoc* Group is attached as **Annex 43** for Member Countries information.

**4.16. Infection with bluetongue virus (Chapter 8.3.)**

Comments were received from Australia, China, Chinese Taipei, New Zealand, Switzerland, USA, EU and AU-IBAR.

In response to a general comment of a Member Country regarding consistency in Article 8.3.6. to Article 8.3.10. and proposing to align them with other chapters such as Chapter 8.8. Foot and mouth disease, the Code Commission noted that this chapter was currently under revision and recalled it had explained in its February 2016 report the approach it would be taking to naming of diseases in the *Code* in the future.

**TAHSC 2016 February Report****‘c) Convention for naming diseases in the Code**

In response to a Member Country’s comment, the Code Commission clarified that the new convention for naming a disease is to use the wording ‘infection with [pathogenic agent]’. It noted that if the vernacular disease name differs from this format, the Code Commission will decide whether to include the vernacular name in brackets in the title only, e.g. Infection with *Chlamydophila abortus* (Enzootic abortion of ewes, ovine chlamydiosis). The Code Commission noted that this convention will be implemented with all new chapters and for existing chapters as they come up for review.

The Code Commission also noted that for describing the disease status of a country or zone, if the disease is named after the pathogenic agent name, then the country or zone status will be described as ‘free from infection with [pathogenic agent]’, e.g. free from infection with *Chlamydophila abortus*, or free from infection with *Brucella* spp. However, if the pathogenic agent is named after the vernacular name of the disease, the country or zone status will be described as ‘free from [disease]’, e.g. free from foot and mouth disease or free from rabies.

The Code Commission noted that it will continue to discuss this naming convention with the Biological Standards Commission to ensure appropriate harmonisation of disease chapter titles in the *Code* and the *Manual*.’

Responding to a proposal from a Member Country, the Code Commission noted that there was a need for expert opinion on timeframes and durations for the collection of semen and embryos. The Code Commission has requested OIE Headquarters to obtain this advice. With respect to the proposal to define ‘embryo collection’, ‘oocyte collection’ and ‘semen collection’, the Code Commission included this in its earlier discussion on the Glossary.

#### **Article 8.3.4.**

Member Country comments on seasonally free status were forwarded to OIE Headquarters for expert advice.

In response to a Member Country proposal the Code Commission did not agree to include reference to Articles 8.3.14. to 8.3.17. because the reference to ‘the surveillance’ in accordance with these articles is covered in point 1) of this article.

#### **Article 8.3.6.**

Some Member Countries consider there is a contradiction between different options in this article. The Code Commission amended point 5 a) for clarity.

#### **Article 8.3.7.**

In response to a Member Country proposal on points 3) and 4) for consistency and clarity, the Code Commission simplified the two points by deleting ‘in the zone’ rather than adding extra words.

#### **Article 8.3.8.**

The Code Commission agreed with a proposal of a Member Country to replace ‘dispatch’ with ‘shipment’ to add clarity to the article.

#### **Article 8.3.9.**

The Code Commission did not accept the rationale, which a Member Country provided in support of its proposal to make a major change to add a waiting period after the collection of the embryos. Indeed the incubation period should not be considered because there is only a risk when the animal shows clinical signs of the disease during collection.

#### **Article 8.3.11.**

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include ‘the semen used to fertilise the oocytes complied with Article 8.3.9. or Article 8.3.10’ as semen can be used from a country or zone different from the one where the embryos are produced.

#### **Article 8.3.16.**

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to replace ‘types’ with ‘serotypes’ for clarity.

The revised draft Chapter 8.3. is attached as **Annex 19** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

**4.17. Infection with *Brucella abortus*, *B. melitensis* and *B. suis* (Article 8.4.10.)**

Comments were received from New Zealand, Switzerland, USA and EU.

The Code Commission noted several Member Country comments in support of the revised article.

The Code Commission recalled that the changes to this article had been proposed to address the concerns of a Member Country.

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to insert ‘intact’ and delete ‘except castrated males’ as it did not consider ‘intact’ added clarity, it inserted ‘and spayed females’ as it should be explicit these animals should not be tested. The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of the same Member Country to change the interval of more than ‘6’ to ‘9’ months as this was not supported by a rationale and no value was added by including ‘after the first test’.

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include ‘castrated males or spayed females’ in order to be consistent with the change proposed above.

The Code Commission further explained that the rationale for the proposed changes to this article was to clarify that castrated males and spayed females are not considered sexually mature.

The revised draft Article 8.4.10. is attached as **Annex 20** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

**4.18. Infection with rinderpest virus (Article 8.16.2.)**

Comments were received from Switzerland and EU.

In answer to comments of several Member Countries, and from the Biological Standards Commission and the Scientific Commission and after having thoroughly discussed with the OIE Headquarters, the Code Commission proposed to delete the word ‘pathological’ and reinsert the words ‘from animals known or suspected to be infected’ since the definition of ‘pathological material’ in the Glossary seemed to be confusing in the context of the chapter. However, the Code Commission noted that the definition of RPV containing material only applies to material already stored, and is used for the annual reporting of Member Countries that may still be holding such material in their laboratories (national, academia or other facilities). It is linked to Article 8.16.9. only (2017 edition of the *Code* online) and does not apply to the case definition of rinderpest in Article 8.16.5. Contrary to the Member Country comments, it will not have an effect on notification. In that respect, any suspected case should be investigated and eventually confirmed or not, thus there will be no remaining material of ‘suspected case’. Furthermore, limiting the definition of RPV containing material to pathological material only from proven infected animals might lead either to the keeping of material that could be containing RPV, or to laboratories doing confirmation tests where they have no capacity to do so and eventually to unnecessary risk.

In response to a question from the OIE Headquarters, the Code Commission clarified that ‘laboratory generated material’ would include diagnostic kits produced by pharmaceutical companies.

The revised draft Article 8.16.2. is attached as **Annex 21** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

**4.19. Infection with lumpy skin disease virus (Articles 11.9.4., 11.9.5., 11.9.6. and 11.9.15.)**

Comments were received from New Zealand, Switzerland and EU.

The Code Commission noted a number of Member Country comments in support of the revised chapter. One Member Country proposed the inclusion of lactose as a safe commodity. The Code Commission requested the OIE Headquarters review previous scientific advice on the safety of lactose in relation to this disease and provide it for the September 2018 meeting of the Code Commission.

The revised Articles 11.9.4., 11.9.5., 11.9.6. and 11.9.15. are attached as **Annex 22** and are proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.20. Infection with *Burkholderia mallei* (Glanders) (Chapter 12.10.)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Mexico, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Switzerland, USA, OIE Members of the Region of the Americas and EU.

A Member Country urged the OIE to harmonise diagnostic tests, especially given that the specificity of complement fixation testing has been questioned. The Code Commission and the Scientific Commission agreed with the Member Country and requested the OIE, Member Countries and other stakeholders to improve efforts to produce more data to support surveillance recommendations<sup>1</sup>. However, the Code Commission considered that this should not preclude the adoption of the revised *Code* chapter as the revised Chapter 2.5.11. of the *Terrestrial Manual* was adopted in May 2015.

##### **Article 12.10.1.**

In response to the comment of a Member Country on whether glanders is a rare or significant disease, the Code Commission proposed to amend the wording to read ‘glanders, in humans, is a rare but potentially fatal disease’.

In response to Member Country comments concerning the Glossary definition of ‘outbreak’, which refers to ‘epidemiological unit’ (i.e. a group of animals), the Code Commission agreed with the rationale and amended the article as proposed using the term ‘case’ instead of ‘outbreak’ in points 2) and 3). Further in regards to the proposal of the same Member Countries on the need to update the Glossary definition of ‘epidemiological unit’ to include the possibility that it can consist of just one animal, the Code Commission agreed and noted that it would work with the Scientific Commission to amend the definition and would include this in its work programme.

For editorial consistency, the Code Commission replaced ‘glanders’ with ‘infection with *B.mallei*’ in points 2) and 3).

##### **Article 12.10.2.**

In response to a Member Country proposal to include ‘which is not historically free according’ in the first paragraph for consistency, the Code Commission noted this was not consistent with other chapters and did not add clarity as point 1 a) of Article 1.4.6. only refers to historical freedom.

In response to several Member Country comments, the Code Commission clarified that glanders could potentially be missed in surveillance, supporting the requirements for 3 years without a case and 12 months of active surveillance. Furthermore, the Code Commission verified that the *Manual* chapter includes a table, which lists complement fixation as a suitable method for active serological surveillance in support of free status.

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<sup>1</sup> Further validation of new diagnostic assays is the subject of research developed under the collaboration between the OIE and the International Horse Sports Confederation, and by other researchers. Dossiers are in preparation for submission to the Biological Standards Commission.

**Article 12.10.3.**

The Code Commission agreed with Member Countries that tracing is only one element of any epidemiological investigation and to improve the clarity of the point added ‘including’ and removed the parenthesis around trace-back and trace-forward.

In response to a Member Country proposal to include ‘cleansing’ with ‘and disinfection’, the Code Commission recalled that the Glossary definition of disinfection includes cleansing and for this reason when the word ‘*disinfection*’ is used in the *Code* it is taken to include cleansing.

**Disinfection** means the application, **after thorough cleansing**, of procedures intended to destroy the infectious or parasitic agents of animal *diseases*, including zoonoses; this applies to premises, *vehicles* and different objects that may have been directly or indirectly contaminated.

**Article 12.10.5.**

The Code Commission modified the text in point 3), taking into account Member Country comments in respect of the problems of taking samples within 10 days of shipment and to clarify that it was only necessary to ensure that the two samples should be taken within the imposed isolation period and at a minimum interval. The text was modified to read ‘were isolated for at least 30 days prior to shipment, and during that time was subjected to test for *infection* with *B. mallei*; with negative results carried out on two samples taken 21 to 30 days apart’. This takes into account the fact that the animals are isolated until the time of shipment and that in some regions it is not possible to obtain the results of tests within such a short period.

**Articles 12.10.6. and 12.10.7.**

A Member Country reiterated its previous comments requesting the Code Commission to reinstate the requirements for testing of semen, the Code Commission disagreed noting it had explained in previous reports how this risk was managed through the inclusion of the measures in both points 1) and 2).

The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country comment on the need to include lesions on the rest of the horse’s body, noting that the risk of contamination of the semen is from lesions in the sexual organs of the animal. However, it is possible that lesions on the body could also indicate lesions elsewhere that could be missed during an inspection of the horse. The Code Commission expanded the point to include the need to examine the body as well.

In response to comments from two Member Countries with regards to the deletion of points i) and ii), the Code Commission recalled that it had provided the rationale in its report in September 2015, including scientific references. It again reminded Member Countries when preparing their written comments, it was important to look at the history of the development of the chapter, to avoid revisiting arguments that had previously been addressed, unless of course there was new scientific evidence to support their position.

**TAHSC September 2015 Report**

‘The Code Commission reviewed the literature on the risk of transmission of *B. mallei* via semen and embryos and concluded that most of the sanitary measures proposed for Articles 12.10.6. and 12.10.7. should be deleted based on the following rationale:

Most of the sanitary measures recommended in Article 12.10.6., and Article 12.10.7., should be deleted, as there is insufficient scientific basis to require such restrictions on either embryos or semen. The *ad hoc* Group report that supports the inclusion of these articles in the *Code* cites a single publication to justify the application of these measures, namely Khan *et al.* (2013). Glanders in animals: A review on epidemiology, clinical presentation, diagnosis, and countermeasures. *Transboundary and Emerging Diseases*, 60, 204–221. The *ad hoc* Group report summarises this review as stating that a large percentage of infected equines had orchitis and therefore concluded that “it cannot be stated with any certainty that semen cannot transmit *B. mallei* infection”, and this same argument (orchitis) is used to justify the imposition of measures for the international trade in equine embryos.

The epidemiology section of the Khan *et al.* review paper cited makes no reference to the transmission of *B. mallei* through equine germplasm although it does cite Saqib (2009) as describing 31/69 horses with glanders as having orchitis. Saqib (2009) is a Ph.D. thesis from the University of Faisalabad, Pakistan. The literature review of that thesis describes the transmission of *B. mallei* by ingestion or inhalation but makes no reference to venereal transmission (pp 20–21). Although the thesis does describe orchitis in a number of horses with glanders, the section of the thesis (pp 93–94) suggests that this is actually the cutaneous form of glanders and is associated with contaminated bedding.’

#### **Article 12.10.8.**

In response to a Member Country proposal that all susceptible species relevant to the epidemiology should be considered in surveillance, the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal as the significantly relevant species are equids as defined in Article 12.10.1.

In response to several proposals from Member Countries, the Code Commission made editorial amendments to the Article to ensure consistency and correct syntax, and improve clarity and readability.

In response to a proposal from Member Countries to delete the last paragraph related to surveillance, the Code Commission did not agree that it was redundant and moved it to the beginning of the article to improve clarity.

#### **Article 12.10.9.**

In response to a Member Country proposal to replace ‘equids’ with ‘susceptible species,’ the Code Commission disagreed as the only species relevant to the epidemiology are equids.

In response to the same Member Country comment regarding the prevalence of the disease being taken into account when designing sampling strategies, the Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission and modified the sentence for clarity.

In response to Member Country comments in relation to prescribing testing for agent identification, the Code Commission noted that if the animal shows both clinical signs and serological positive results there is no need for further testing, as it is considered a case as defined in Article 12.10.1. However, it modified the sentence for clarity.

Member Countries proposed to add ‘where possible’ at the beginning of the second sentence, as agent identification may not be possible in all countries. The Code Commission noted that there are other options to prove freedom or confirm a case, including sending samples to laboratories in other countries.

After its last meeting, the Code Commission had requested the OIE Headquarters to ask the Biological Standards Commission to consider recommending a single antigen only in the *Manual*, as this would assist Member Countries to avoid trade disputes over test results. In response, the Biological Standards Commission noted it supported the proposal in principle, but could not recommend any currently available commercial antigens as their performance varies from laboratory to laboratory.

The revised Chapter 12.10. is attached as **Annex 23** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### **4.21. Procedures for self-declaration and for official recognition by the OIE (Chapter 1.6.) including questionnaires**

The OIE Headquarters advised the Code Commission that the revision of the questionnaires had been completed with the assistance of Professor MacDiarmid. Separate chapters had been prepared for each disease as requested. The text of the proposed new chapters had been aligned, where relevant and the readability had been significantly improved.

Chapter 1.6. had also been revised to include reference to the proposed new chapters and was presented for consideration of the Code Commission.

The Code Commission thanked the OIE Headquarters for its work and noted that this was a significant task that had taken a lot of resources. The result of this work was that, in its view, the proposed new chapters (questionnaires) were now, easier to read, much better aligned, consistent with terminology used throughout the *Code*, and this would greatly assist Member Countries in compiling their dossiers. The Code Commission also noted that the proposed new chapters took into account Member Country comments provided after the February 2017 meeting, as well as input from the Scientific Commission.

The Code Commission considered that in the future, these questionnaires could be taken out of the *Code* to facilitate their revision. The Code Commission recalled that in the report of its September 2017 meeting it had foreshadowed that it would circulate the proposed new chapters after its February 2018 meeting in anticipation of proposing them for adoption in May 2018.

The Code Commission noted the revised Chapter 1.6. contained editorial amendments and had been prepared with a view to the adoption of the proposed new chapters (questionnaires), this revision shows the deletion of the references to Articles 1.6.5. to 1.6.13. replaced by references to the proposed draft new Chapters 1.7. to 1.12.

The new chapters will be referenced as follows:

- a) Application for official recognition by the OIE of free status for African horse sickness (Chapter 1.7.)
- b) Application for official recognition by the OIE of risk status for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (Chapter 1.8.)
- c) Application for official recognition by the OIE of free status for classical swine fever (Chapter 1.9.)
- d) Application for official recognition by the OIE of free status for contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (Chapter 1.10.)
- e) Application for official recognition by the OIE of free status for foot and mouth disease (Chapter 1.11.)
- f) Application for official recognition by the OIE of free status for peste des petits ruminants (Chapter 1.12.)

The Code Commission also noted that a more detailed revision of Chapter 1.6. was being undertaken by the OIE Headquarters (see **Agenda Item 6.1.**).

The revised Chapter 1.6. and proposed new chapters 1.7., 1.8., 1.9., 1.10., 1.11. and 1.12. are attached as **Annexes 24 to 30** and are proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

#### 4.22. Diseases, infections and infestations listed by the OIE (Articles 1.3.1., 1.3.2. and 1.3.5.)

Comments were received from EU.

The Code Commission noted with the adoption of new and revised chapters of the *Code* and the naming disease-specific chapters as ‘infection with ...’ there was inconsistency between these chapters and Chapter 1.3. The Code Commission proposed editorial amendments to the relevant articles to address this inconsistency.

The revised Articles 1.3.1., 1.3.2. and 1.3.5. are attached as **Annex 31** and are proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

### 5. Texts circulated for Member Country comments at the September 2017 Code Commission meeting

#### 5.1. Animal health surveillance (Chapter 1.4.)

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, Japan, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Switzerland, USA and EU.

The Code Commission considered general comments of Member Countries including a proposal to restructure the chapter.

##### Article 1.4.1.

In response to a Member Country comment the use of the terms ‘infection and infestation’ and ‘disease’, the Code Commission explained that when the Code uses either of these terms ‘infection’ or ‘infestation’ are more specific, but as noted previously, while ‘disease’ appears in the *Code* in a more general sense. The *Code* recommendations are about the absence, presence or distribution of an infection; and about the control, emergence, epidemiology or impact of a disease. The Code Commission amended the article to reflect this more clearly. The Code Commission and the OIE Headquarters will work on reflecting this more accurately in the User’s Guide to assist Member Countries in the interpretation of the *Code*. The Code Commission considered the addition of a reference to Chapter 3.4. in point 3) to include the components of organisation, staff, communication and legislation.

##### Article 1.4.2.

The Code Commission disagreed with Member Countries proposals to include ‘or infested’ and ‘or uninfested’ in the definitions for ‘sensitivity’ and ‘specificity’. It considered the addition would result in the unnecessary repetition of words and drew the attention of Member Countries to the definition of ‘infected zone’ that includes both infection and infestation.

The Code Commission did not accept the proposal of a Member Country to amend the definition of ‘test’ as it did not consider it required further clarity and was consistent with terms used in the Glossary of the *Manual*.

After reviewing the Member Country comments and reviewing the report of the 2017 *ad hoc* Group the Code Commission identified some confusion arising from the use of the word ‘random’. The *ad hoc* Group discussed the following terminology: ‘random sampling’ versus ‘probability sampling’ and ‘non-random sampling’ versus ‘non-probability sampling’. The *ad hoc* Group concluded that they were synonyms and for the sake of consistency with the definitions provided in Article 1.4.2., as well as for consistency throughout the chapter, the Group proposed to adopt the terminology ‘probability sampling’ and ‘non-probability sampling’. For consistency with the view of the *ad hoc* Group the Code Commission modified the definitions for ‘probability sampling’ and ‘sampling unit’ to for clarity.

##### Article 1.4.3.

Point 1 a), the Code Commission replaced ‘infection and infestation’ with ‘disease’ for consistency as noted above. The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include reference to the subpopulation and target population at the end of the point, for clarity.

The Code Commission did not agree to Member Countries proposal to include ‘listed disease-specific’ before ‘chapters’ in the second paragraph and in point c), because the word ‘relevant’ is sufficient here and there is no need to include specific references.

In response to a Member Country proposal to move point 2 a) i) diagnostic tests, to the section on design as a new point 1 b), the Code Commission agreed that these elements should be considered during the design of the surveillance system. However, it considered it more logical to insert it as a new point e) and amended the text for clarity, accepting only some of the Member Countries proposed wording changes.

In response to a proposal to add ‘and biology’ after ‘epidemiology’ in the second dash of point b), the Code Commission agreed with the Member Countries noting that it should read ‘epidemiology and biology’. A Member Country proposed several additions to the list in this point, the Scientific Commission and the Code Commission agreed that the additions were valid, but did not add them, as the list is not meant to be exhaustive. The Code Commission proposed the inclusion of ‘pathogenesis’ in the examples of epidemiology and a new point ‘risk of introduction and spread’ as it considered this phrase useful.

Point f), the Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to indicate that sophisticated mathematical or statistical analysis ‘may be’ justified. However, the President of the Code Commission informed the members that the *ad hoc* Group had specifically included the phrase ‘should only be carried out when justified...’ as sophisticated mathematical or statistical analysis can be misused and the intent was indeed to discourage the use of these types of methods if not backed by solid data and capacities.

The Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission not to accept the proposal of Member Country to include a new point j), resources (e.g. personnel, time, funding, laboratory capacity, etc.), as these resources are already considered as part of the quality Veterinary Services in the first paragraph of the article.

Point 2 a), the Code Commission agreed with the proposal of Member Countries to avoid incorrect references in the future by deleting the reference to the specific chapter of the *Manual*.

Point 3, in response to a proposal of a Member Country to amend the title of the sub-section, the Code Commission disagreed as the alternate proposal does not accurately reflect the meaning of the paragraph and the rationale given was not persuasive.

#### **Article 1.4.4.**

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to change the title of this section to ‘Surveillance activities and methodology’ as the article describes different methods, which includes various activities.

Point 1), paragraph 2, the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to replace ‘reporting’ with ‘notification’ as notification has a specific meaning in the *Code* and would always be within the mandate of the Veterinary Authority. The Code Commission did not accept the proposal of the same Member Country to add ‘ensuring reporting of animal health related events to the Veterinary Authority’, as it considered this is adequately covered by effective communication and data sharing. Furthermore, it is implicit that effective communication is needed to ensure these links are established. The Code Commission made a minor modification for clarity on this point.

Point 2), the Member Country that proposed restructuring this section did not provide any rationale for deleting text. Therefore the Code Commission agreed only to move the existing text without making any changes.

Point 3,) in response to a Member Country proposal to include the concept of risk-based surveillance as described by Hoinville *et al.* (2013)<sup>2</sup>, the Code Commission agreed with the comment but was not prepared, at this time, to make substantial modifications proposed. It did, however, modify the text to add clarity to the point.

Point 4 c), the Code Commission agreed with a Member Country comment that the point did not take into account the different systems for oversight of inspection procedures, which influence the quality of surveillance information collected at slaughterhouses and abattoirs. It proposed to amend the point to emphasise the different situations and the extent to which the Competent Authority is involved in the supervision of ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection, including reporting systems.

The Code Commission disagreed with the same Member Country proposal to delete point e) independence of the inspection staff, as it is not ambiguous. Furthermore this point is very important for some other regions and countries.

The Code Commission did not accept the comment of Member Countries to reference a variety of other systems in this paragraph. While the Code Commission understood the intent, no text was proposed for inclusion and so it was difficult to address the comment.

Points 5) and 6), the Code Commission accepted the proposal of a Member Country to move the points to point 10 'Other data sources'.

Point 7), the Code Commission accepted the proposal of a Member Country to amend the title of this point to 'Surveillance of sentinel units'.

Point 8), the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to move to point 10) Other data sources, as clinical observations relate to clinical surveillance and the collection of clinical data.

Point 9), the Code Commission accepted the proposal of a Member Country to amend the title to 'Syndromic surveillance'.

Point 10, Other data sources - in response to a Member Country proposal to restructure the chapter, the point is now point 7 and appears as follows:

New point 7 a) (former point 2) data generated by control programmes and health schemes

New point 7 b) (former point 5) laboratory investigation records

New point 7 c) (former point 6) biological specimen banks.

The Code Commission agreed there was logic in the proposal of a Member Country to move Article 1.4.9. and include it at the end of this Article 1.4.4. as a new point 9), Combination and interpretation of surveillance results.

The Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to add a reference to 'expert opinion elicitation data' to the list under d) in Point 10), as it is not sufficiently important or relevant to be included in the current chapter.

#### **Article 1.4.5. (New point 2 under Article 1.4.4.)**

Point 1), a Member Country commented that probability-based sampling had been introduced previously in the document and should be offered as an option in the sampling section and that disease freedom fits under Article 1.4.6. point 1). The Code Commission agreed documenting freedom from infection or infestation is not the sole reason for carrying out surveys. However, because there was also some inconsistency, as point 1) is about the types of surveys. The Code Commission proposed deleting the second paragraph as it would not cause any deficiency in the chapter. The Code Commission did, however, retain the second part of the paragraph and inserted it as point 2) b) i).

Point 3 a), the Code Commission did not accept the proposal of a Member Country to include 'sub-populations' after 'population' as it was unnecessary. However, it accepted the same Member Country's editorial proposal to include 'should be' for clarity in the second paragraph.

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<sup>2</sup> Citation: Hoinville.L, Alban, L., Gibbens, J., Gustafson, L., Hasler, B., Saegerman, C., Salman, M., Stark K. 2013. Proposed terms and concepts for describing and evaluating animal-health surveillance systems. Preventive Veterinary Medicine 112, 1-12.

In response to a Member Country proposal to include ‘risk-based sampling’, the Code Commission reiterated the comment it made on Article 1.4.2. However, it agreed in principle with the rationale provided and proposed the inclusion of text to address the concerns expressed by the Member Country.

Point 3 b), the Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to include ‘clustering, (multi vs, single stage sampling). However, it proposed to include ‘possible clustering’ after ‘expected prevalence’, for clarity.

Point 3 c) i), the Code Commission did not agree with the comment of a Member Country, that risk-based sampling is not considered as a probability-based sampling method. It noted that a surveillance system can be designed based on risk and when conducting risk-based surveillance either probability or non-probability based sampling can be used. The Code Commission explained that cluster-based sampling would be probability-based and is included in the risk-based methods. It further noted that the term ‘risk-based surveillance’ is not used in the chapter. The Code Commission noted the above rationale and addressed the proposal of another Member Country to insert ‘risk-based sampling’ in the list at this point.

The Code Commission agreed to the proposal to move this article to become a new point 2) under Article 1.4.4.

#### **Article 1.4.6.**

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to merge Articles 1.4.6., 1.4.7. and 1.4.8. as this would not improve the consistency with Chapter 4.3. and would lead to significant challenges when cross-referencing this chapter. The Code Commission amended the title of the article for clarity and proposed to delete the chapeau as it considered it to be unnecessary.

Point 1), in response to Member Country comments that the second paragraph was unclear, the Code Commission proposed to delete ‘the pathogenic agent’ and replace it with ‘infection or infestation in an animal population’, in order to address the concerns. In response to another Member Country comment that the paragraph did not allow for historical freedom, the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission agreed and proposed to amend the second sentence for clarity.

The Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to delete ‘however’ at the beginning of the third paragraph, as this would change the intent of the paragraph.

In response to the proposal of a Member Country to include the recommendations regarding early warning system (Article 1.4.8.) in this article, the Code Commission noted that in fact, it should be placed earlier in the chapter, before Article 1.4.6. (See below.)

The Code Commission proposed amendments to the fourth paragraph as the former wording lacked clarity and did not accept a proposal to include ‘all relevant species’ as this would narrow the scope.

Point 2), the Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to add, to point iv), text regarding the possibility of distinguishing vaccinated animals. However, the Code Commission noted that the current text forbidding vaccination was inconsistent with the proposed draft Chapter 4.X. on vaccination, especially Article 4.X.11. The Code Commission thus proposed to delete that condition as a prerequisite for freedom. In response to the same Member Country proposal to delete point v), the Code Commission did not agree, as the rationale did not support its deletion. Concerning the same Member Country proposal to include a new point vi), the Code Commission considered this should be included in the article on the early warning system.

Point 2), the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of another Member Country to add two new points vi) and vii). On the first point, it considered the competence and effectiveness of Veterinary Services were covered in point 1). On the second point, the Code Commission considered that it was not related to the prerequisite, but to the situation of the disease, which is covered in points b) and c) of the same article.

The Code Commission accepted other editorial proposals from a Member Country to improve the clarity of point b) iii). It did not accept a proposal of a Member Country to replace '25' with '10' in the same point. The Code Commission clarified that where a list does not specify 'or', all the points should be complied with. This longstanding convention is used throughout the *Code*.

Point c), the Code Commission agreed to a proposal from Member Countries to replace 'achieved' with 'demonstrated', for accuracy.

Point c) i), the Code Commission did not agree with the proposal of Member Countries to include a time requirement of ten years as a default, as the situation would be different depending on the disease and the specific country situation and no fit-for-all prescriptive time period could be defined. In response to another Member Country proposal on this point, the Code Commission agreed to add the phrase 'for at least as long as the surveillance has been in place'. It considered that this addition also addressed the concerns of other Member Countries.

Point c) ii), the Code Commission did not agree with the proposal of Member Countries to include a default time period that surveillance has been applied as this was already described in point 1 b) of Article 1.4.3.

Point 3 a), the Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include text to clarify a starting point and duration for this point. In response to the same Member Country comment on point b), proposing to delete 'ongoing', the Code Commission noted that, by default there should always be some level of surveillance in order to maintain the compartment and surveillance should be ongoing and adapted to the level of risk. It also referred to Chapter 4.4. on Application of compartmentalisation, especially Article 4.4.5.

Point 4), the Code Commission agreed with a Member Country proposal to include 'or compartment' for clarity and consistency with the definition in the Glossary.

Point 4 e), the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to add a new point to clarify that naturally infected animals can be distinguished diagnostically from vaccinated animals. It noted that vaccination does sometimes allow for shedding of viable organisms.

Point 4 f), in response to a Member Country proposal to include recommendations for the maintenance of compartment freedom from infection or infestation, the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission disagreed, because point 3) already describes the need for 'ongoing' surveillance in compartments, and maintenance of compartments is already described in detail in Chapter 4.4. The same rationale applies to the proposal of another Member Country to include 'for countries or zones'.

In response to a Member Country comment relating to self-declaration and official recognition, the Code Commission noted that these are part of the procedures described in Chapter 1.6., which is also under revision.

#### **Article 1.4.8.**

In response to a Member Country concern on the inclusion of the defined components of an early warning system in the chapter rather than in the Glossary, the Code Commission noted that it did not consider it appropriate to include such details in the Glossary. The Glossary should only contain short and clear definitions of terms used with a specific meaning in the *Code*.

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include 'under the control of the Veterinary Authority' in the first paragraph, as it agreed it is a fundamental component of a country's surveillance system.

In response to various Member Country comments on this article, the Code Commission proposed to include new text under point 5) and a new point 5)-bis. The new text proposed is text deleted from Article 4.Y.4. on disease control programmes, as it more logically fits in this chapter on surveillance.

The Code Commission did not consider it necessary to add ‘private veterinarians’ to ‘relevant stakeholders’ as it considers there could be a broad range of stakeholders which would include private veterinarian, private laboratories, village leaders, etc.

In line with its agreement to a Member Country proposal to restructure the chapter, the Code Commission moved this article to become Article 1.4.5.

### **Glossary definition of early warning system**

The Code Commission considered Member Country comments on the proposed definition. It noted that ‘characterisation’ is included in ‘identification’, and that the definition is not about the identification of a pathogenic agent. For clarity, it proposed to delete the word ‘identification’ and to add ‘communication’. It finally noted that the use of the word ‘disease’ in the definition was appropriate.

The Code Commission noted the large number of Member Country comments received on this chapter and agreed with the OIE Headquarters that the next round of comments on the chapter could be reviewed by experts before the Commission September meeting.

The draft revised Chapter 1.4. and draft revised definition of ‘early warning system’ are attached as **Annex 33** in clean and tracked versions and are proposed for Member Country comments.

## **5.2. New chapter on official control of listed and emerging diseases (previous title - Management of outbreaks of listed diseases) (Chapter 4.Y.)**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Guatemala, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Thailand, USA and EU.

The Code Commission noted the general comments of Member Countries would be addressed in the specific articles and thanked those that supported the proposed draft chapter.

### **Title**

The Code Commission proposed to amend the title to read ‘Official control of listed and emerging disease’ in response to a Member Country comment. However, it did not agree with the proposal to include ‘programme’ as it was covered in the chapter.

For consistency within the chapter, the Code Commission amended ‘emerging and listed disease’ to ‘listed and emerging disease’ throughout.

The Code Commission took note of Member Country comments and the apparent misunderstanding of the purpose and scope of the draft chapter and clarified that the purpose of the chapter is to provide recommendations to Member Countries on the development of control programmes in response to outbreaks of animal diseases, to avoid their spread or achieve their eradication.

### **Article 4.Y.1.**

The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country proposal to include the words ‘including a zoonosis’ in the first line of the article but did not consider it was necessary to repeat this throughout the chapter. Furthermore, it proposed amending the same phrase in the second paragraph and replace it with ‘for listed and emerging disease, including zoonosis’. In response to the same Member Country proposal relating to the use of ‘disease’ or ‘infection’, the Code Commission noted this should not be done systematically but should be assessed on a case by case basis depending on the context of the sentence. In this particular context, the word ‘disease’ was appropriate.

The Code Commission proposed to delete ‘hazard’ and replace it with ‘disease’ for clarity and accuracy.

The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country proposal to include ‘where possible’ after ‘cost-benefit analysis’ as it agreed that such analysis might not always be possible.

Paragraph 5, the Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to replace ‘infection or infestation’ with ‘disease’ as it is the infection or infestation that is eradicated.

Paragraph 6, was amended for consistency to clarify the purpose of the chapter and the phrase ‘management of outbreaks’ was deleted. In response to a Member Country proposal to include ‘methods’ and adapting ‘new technologies’ the Code Commission partially accepted the rationale provided and proposed other amendments for clarity.

In response to other Member Country comments that an exit strategy may not always be necessary or appropriate to have beforehand, and to consider mentioning the experience of other Veterinary Services in cross-border simulation exercises for transboundary animal diseases, the Code Commission noted that no proposal for text was provided. Nevertheless, the Code Commission proposed amendments to the paragraph to take this comment into account, noting that cross-border simulation exercises are covered elsewhere in the chapter.

#### **Article 4.Y.2.**

The Code Commission made editorial amendments for consistency. It did not accept Member Countries proposals to include ‘products of animal origin’ before ‘property’ as it considers ‘property’ would include the products. However, it agreed to include ‘or losses incurred due to movement restrictions’ in the sub-bullet on sources of finance and compensation as it agreed this was an important consideration.

Point 3), the Code Commission did not accept the proposal of a Member Country to delete reference to ‘risk analysis to identify and prioritise potential disease risks’ as risk analysis is an essential part of the decision-making process. In response to another Member Country proposal to include a new bullet point to separate definitions and procedures for listed disease and emerging disease, the Code Commission disagreed, as it did not add clarity. In response to another Member Country proposal to include two additional bullet points on procedures for delimiting surveillance, and for tracking and tracing animals, the Code Commission partially disagreed as it considered animal identification and surveillance were already covered in the existing bullets. However, even though it considered the tracking and tracing of animals from infected properties could be managed under the *animal identification system*, to capture this more clearly it proposed to add a new point on procedures for epidemiological investigations of cases including tracing of animals and animal products.

In response to other Member Country comments that restrictions on movements should include equipment and vehicles, the Code Commission proposed to include fomites, to address this comment. In response to the same Member Countries proposal to include a new bullet to cover procedures for the destruction of products and materials (animal feed, farm equipment, vehicles, etc.), the Code Commission agreed that feed and bedding were missing from this point and the others being covered in the point on disinfection and disinsection. In order to address this gap, the Code Commission proposed to separate the procedures for destruction or slaughter from the procedures for the destruction and safe disposal or processing, including materials such as fodder and bedding.

Finally, the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission partially agreed with a Member Country proposal to include three new bullet points to address procedures for: collection, recording, storage and analysis of data; surveillance to map the prevalence and distribution of the incursion and for proof of freedom; and recovery of affected industries and communities. The Code Commission proposed to include a new bullet to address this comment. However, it noted that the recovery of affected industries and communities was beyond the scope of the *Code* and may not be under the responsibility of the Veterinary Authority.

### **Article 4.Y.3.**

Point 1), the Code Commission amended this point to clarify that the risk analysis to identify and prioritise should determine a list of notifiable diseases that require preparedness planning.

The Code Commission examined Member Country comments on this article and accepted a number of editorial amendments. In response to a Member Country proposal to add a new paragraph on communication of risks, the Code Commission disagreed and noted there is a specific article on communication, Article 4.Y.11.

Point 2), in response to a Member Country proposal to include a fifth type of plan, i.e. ‘prevention plan’, the Code Commission noted that the chapter was about ‘control’ and the article is about ‘preparedness’ not about prevention or mitigation. Many countries do not consider prevention or mitigation as part of preparedness that is dealt with in other parts of the *Code*. In response to the same Member Country proposal to replace ‘notifiable disease’ with ‘listed disease’, the Code Commission disagreed as the use of ‘notifiable disease’ was intentional to take into account the need for a risk analysis as described in point 1).

In response to another Member Country proposal to add ‘standard operating procedures’ and ‘critical’ to point c), the Code Commission disagreed as this did not significantly improve the point.

The Code Commission considered a proposal of the Scientific Commission addressing the concerns of a Member Country on Article 4.Y.7. and included ‘food supply’ in point d) of this point.

Point 3), in response to Member Country comments on Article 4.Y.1., the Code Commission proposed to insert a new sentence on simulation exercises between neighbouring countries.

### **Article 4.Y.4.**

In response to Member Countries proposals to replace ‘or’ with ‘and’ in the first sentence, the Code Commission agreed, as Chapter 1.4. always applies.

In answer to a Member Country requesting reinstatement of points 2) to 6) in this article, the Code Commission noted that this text was included in the new draft of revised Chapter 1.4. It further noted that it decided to keep in this article the part of point 5) relating to the management of outbreaks rather than surveillance.

### **Article 4.Y.5.**

The Code Commission agreed with an editorial amendment proposed by a Member Country and noted it had previously responded to the point on ‘listed disease’. The Code Commission did not agree to a Member Country proposal to include in a new point 1), reference to measures described in the publication ‘Good Emergency Management Practice: The essentials (GEMP)’ Manual published by the FAO in 2011. The Code Commission pointed out that this was already covered in Article 4.Y.4.

Point 1), the Code Commission agreed to a Member Country proposal to include ‘as appropriate’ because current text is too prescriptive and because it suggests that killing and slaughter must always be used in all outbreak management.

Point 2), the Code Commission considered a comment from Member Countries highlighting that the objective of the control strategy (e.g. complete eradication or not) was not covered in this point. Noting that no text was proposed to address this concern, the Code Commission proposed to modify the paragraph and include a new sentence ‘The strategies chosen will, in turn, influence the final objective of the control programme.’

The Code Commission agreed in principle with a Member Country proposal to include reference to the legal framework for compensation and proposed to amend the second last paragraph using language consistent with the chapter.

**Article 4.Y.6.**

The Code Commission noted the request of Member Countries to give a definition of animal products. The Code Commission invited those Member Countries to propose a suitable definition, consistent with other *Code* terminology for its consideration.

In response to Member Country comments on the title of this article, the Code Commission proposed to delete ‘killing’ because in English, culling means both killing and slaughter.

The Code Commission disagreed with the proposal of a Member Country to include a new sentence taken directly from the GEMP Manual, as it did not improve the clarity of the paragraph. In response to other Member Countries proposal to include ‘as well as vaccination,’ the Code Commission disagreed, as this was not relevant to this article.

In response to a Member Country proposal to replace the last sentence of the paragraph ‘Killing should preferably be performed on site...’, the Code Commission disagreed, as the sentence proposed would change the meaning of the paragraph. The current sentence addresses the risk of spread by moving live infected animals to another site for killing. In response to other Member Country comments on the same paragraph, the Code Commission considered that the method of disposal was covered in Chapter 4.12. and proposed a minor editorial amendment so that the order of the methods of disposal did not reflect any hierarchy.

The Code Commission did not accept a Member Country comment on the separation of animals, as the text is clear as written. The Code Commission did not agree with another comment from the same Member Country regarding processing and inactivation, as the proposal did not improve clarity.

The Code Commission noted a comment from Member Countries on the need to harmonise the timing of the different elements of the stamping-out policy (killing - disposal - cleaning) and the opinion of the Scientific Commission that this should be addressed in the listed disease-specific chapters.

**Article 4.Y.7.**

The Code Commission disagreed with a Member Country proposal to include a reference to Development of Secure Food Supply Plans, considering it too detailed and not relevant to all Member Countries. It also noted that ‘food supply’ had been added to Article 4.Y.3. to address this point.

The Code Commission proposed amendments to the last paragraph in response to Member Countries and to improve the clarity, noting that ‘communication media’ would likely not be a ‘relevant authority’ and further noted that it was incumbent on Veterinary Authorities to share information on disease outbreaks, especially when they occur close to national borders.

**Article 4.Y.8.**

The Code Commission made minor editorial amendments to improve the clarity of this article. In response to Member Country comments, it noted that birds are included in the defined term ‘wildlife’.

**Article 4.Y.9.**

In response to Member Country comment noting an inconsistency between the title of the article that included treatment while the text of the article dealt with vaccination only, the Code Commission agreed and deleted ‘treatment’ from the title. It also noted that it would work further on this article and invited the Member Countries to propose specific text regarding treatment. The Code Commission disagreed with editorial comments from the same Member Countries, as the word ‘produced’ was appropriate in both instances.

In response to a Member Country proposal on the last paragraph, the Code Commission agreed with the rationale and proposed amendments for improved clarity and consistency with the *Code* and to address the proposal.

**Article 4.Y.10.**

The Code Commission agreed with a proposal of Member Countries to include ‘eradication’ and agreed with a proposal to reorder ‘containment zone and protection zone’ for clarity and consistency with the *Code*. Regarding a further comment of Member Countries that it was important to mention that the zoning used for outbreak control and eradication needs to be adapted and updated periodically, the Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission that this was already covered and there was no need for additional text.

**Article 4.Y.11.**

The Code Commission agreed with the proposal of Member Countries to include reference to the media in this article. It further noted, in response to a comment from a Member Country under Article 4.Y.3. on the need for the chapter to mention risk communication strategies in the framework of risk analysis, that Chapter 3.3. deals with communication.

The revised new Chapter 4.Y. is attached as **Annex 34** for Member Country comments.

**5.3. New introductory chapter for Section 4: Chapter 4.Z. on Introduction to recommendations for disease prevention and control**

Comments were received from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, USA and EU.

In response to Member Countries proposals to replace ‘contagious’ with ‘infectious’ the Code Commission agreed and proposed similar amendments to other paragraphs for consistency with this proposed change.

In response to Member Countries proposals on paragraph 3, the Code Commission clarified the text to align it with the User’s Guide and noted that the chapters in this section contain recommendations that should be implemented for disease prevention and control.

In response to Member Country comments on paragraph 4, the Code Commission proposed editorial amendments to improve readability and consistency. It did not agree with the proposal of another Member Country to change ‘impact’ to ‘effects’ as impact is more appropriate in this context. The Code Commission agreed with a Member Country proposal to include ‘animal welfare’ as this was also an important consideration in the context of disease control.

In response to a Member Country proposal to include ‘economic impact on economy’ in addition to trade, public health, animal welfare and environment, the Code Commission did not accept the proposal noting this is not an exhaustive list.

In response to Member Country proposals to amend paragraph 5, the Code Commission made only minor amendments, as many of the proposals did not improve the clarity of the text or were already implicit in the paragraph as presented.

The Code Commission noted, on the one hand, a Member Country comment suggesting deleting paragraph 6 as it was not appropriate to include this prescriptive and limiting text in the *Code*, and on the other hand other Member Countries strong support for its inclusion as it provided important guidance to allow flexible adaptation at the national level. The Code Commission explained that the sentence was to encourage Member Countries to consider their national context and ensure that any prevention and control programmes are proportionate to the risk, and are based on risk analysis.

In response to Member Country comments proposing the inclusion in the User’s Guide of clarification that these recommendations are not necessarily relevant or applicable to international trade, the Code Commission noted that once the chapter is adopted, the User’s Guide may be revised.

The Code Commission noted, in respect to another Member Country proposal to include ‘science-based’ in this paragraph, that risk analysis is science-based, and the *Code* should be science-based so it was not necessary to add the proposed words.

The Code Commission disagreed with the Member Countries proposal to include ‘one health approach’ to the prerequisites, as it was too specific for a general chapter. It agreed to expand the point on ‘effective awareness of private stakeholders’ to include ‘and active cooperation with’. The Code Commission also disagreed with a proposal to include ‘clear objectives and measurable targets’, as these are an essential part of the programme. It disagreed with a proposal to include ‘adequate and committed funding’ as a separate bullet but proposed to add it to the point on quality veterinary services.

The draft new Chapter 4.Z. is attached at [Annex 35](#) for Member Country comments.

#### **5.4. New chapter on the killing of reptiles for their skins, meat and other products (Chapter 7.Y.) including consideration of the report of the *ad hoc* Group (January 2018)**

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Switzerland, USA and ICFAW.

The Code Commission commended the work of the *ad hoc* Group. Noting that the *ad hoc* Group had given robust justifications for the amendments proposed, for this reason, this report gives only the proposals made by the Code Commission that differed from the proposals of the *ad hoc* Group. Consequently, the Code Commission strongly recommends reading this report jointly with the report of the *ad hoc* Group.

The Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group proposal to include new text throughout the chapter to highlight the anatomical and physiological difference between reptiles and other animals covered by the OIE Glossary definition.

##### **Article 7.Y.3.**

Point 1), the Code Commission partially agreed with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group in response to an organisation comment, to add a sentence connecting the animal welfare plan in the killing establishment to the recommendations of this chapter. The Code Commission reworded the sentence proposed by the *ad hoc* Group to improve clarity.

Point 2), the Code Commission agreed with the changes proposed by the *ad hoc* Group in answering a Member Country suggestion to highlight the importance of the competencies of the animal handlers in monitoring the effectiveness of the stunning and killing process.

Point 3), a Member Country proposed adding a reference to the relevant chapters covering transport. The Code Commission agreed with the opinion of the *ad hoc* Group not to accept the proposal, as the scope of the chapters on transport by land, sea and air do not include reptiles. The Code Commission modified the wording for clarity.

On the same point, the Code Commission did not agree with the *ad hoc* Group in respect to a Member Country suggestion to add ‘biosecurity’ as a factor to be considered when the reptiles are captured in the wild and transported to a slaughterhouse. ‘Biosecurity’ as defined in the *Code* is not relevant in the context of the paragraph.

Point 4), in response to a Member Country proposal to improve the readability, the Code Commission partially agreed with the proposal of the *ad hoc* Group and reworded the paragraph to improve clarity.

##### **Article 7.Y.4.**

The Code Commission agreed with the opinion of the *ad hoc* Group, on a suggestion of a Member Country not to add a new bullet point in this article to highlight the importance of shortening the time between the stunning of the reptile and the killing process. Nevertheless, the *ad hoc* Group and the Code Commission reworded the sentence for consistency with the terminology used in this chapter.

**Article 7.Y.6.**

The Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group's response to a Member Country proposal to add a phrase emphasising that some methods of restraint must not be used and reworded the sentences to improve its readability.

The Code Commission did not agree with the *ad hoc* Group's proposal to add 'includes' throughout the chapter when referring to the examples of animal-based criteria (or measurables) because the lists are not exhaustive and for consistency with other animal welfare chapters.

**Article 7.Y.7.**

The Code Commission did not agree with the *ad hoc* Group suggestion to use of the word 'immediately' in relation to the interval between the stunning and killing of reptiles, because 'immediately' is not precise and because the death of the animal should occur while the animal is unconscious.

The Code Commission edited the references in the penultimate paragraph of the article to improve its readability, and for consistency with other chapters.

An organisation proposed to replace 'type' of an animal with 'species' throughout the chapter when referring to the selection of equipment to be used. The Code Commission recommended adding the word 'species' while keeping 'type', as they do not mean the same thing and should be both used for clarity. The Code Commission recommended this change be repeated throughout the chapter.

**Article 7.Y.10.**

The Code Commission did not agree with the *ad hoc* Group suggestion to replace 'should' with 'must' as proposed by a Member Country, as except in Chapter 1.1. on Member Countries obligations to notify, and in very rare other occasions, the word 'must' is not used in the *Code* recommendations.

**Article 7.Y.13.**

The Code Commission agreed partially with the proposal of an organisation on the need to include the objective of the method, to harmonise with other articles in this chapter. The Code Commission did not agree with the amendment proposed by the *ad hoc* Group in response to a Member Country suggestion on the appropriate use of the rod or probe in the pithing of the brain. The Code Commission changed the wording of the sentence to a 'minimum of four times' to better clarify the procedure.

**Article 7.Y.14.**

The Code Commission modified the text proposed by the *ad hoc* Group to improve its clarity. The Code Commission deleted the word 'method', as decapitation is not an appropriate method of killing reptiles because it does not produce unconsciousness or death within an acceptable period.

**Article 7.Y.15.**

The Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group suggestion on the comment of a Member Country, in that the effect of chemical agents on reptiles could be affected by the animal's temperature variations. However, the Code Commission reworded the sentence proposed by the *ad hoc* Group to improve readability.

**Article 7.Y.16.**

Based on the suggestion of the *ad hoc* Group, the Code Commission modified the text on methods that are unacceptable for the stunning and killing of reptiles to improve its clarity.

The new Chapter 7.Y. is attached as **Annex 36** for Member Country comments. The report of the *ad hoc* Group is attached as **Annex 44** for Member Countries information.

### 5.5. New chapter on animal welfare and laying hen production systems (Chapter 7.X.)

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Japan, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, EU, AU-IBAR, ICAFAW and IEC.

The OIE Headquarters reminded the Code Commission that, at its February 2017 meeting, it had reviewed the report of the *ad hoc* Group that met in Paris in November 2016. The Code Commission had requested that the draft chapter proposed by the *ad hoc* Group be restructured specifically to arrange the articles and bullets in a logical order for consistency with the *Code*. The OIE Headquarters had undertaken the restructuring of the document and conducted further electronic consultations with members of the *ad hoc* Group and the Code Commission to refine the text. At its September 2017 meeting, the Code Commission reviewed the restructured draft chapter and modified it accordingly for accuracy, clarity, and consistency and circulated it for Member Country comments. OIE Headquarters advised the Code Commission that due to time constraints and the lack of availability of the members of the *ad hoc* Group it had not been possible to arrange a meeting of the *ad hoc* Group in time to prepare a new draft for the Code Commission's February 2018 meeting. The *ad hoc* Group will meet in March 2018 to review the Member Country comments received in January 2018. The report of the *ad hoc* Group and the revised chapter will be considered by the Code Commission in September 2018.

### 5.6. New Chapter on infection with *Trypanosoma evansi* (non-equine surra) (Chapter 8.X.) and Draft revised Chapter on infection with *Trypanozoon* in equids (Chapter 12.3.)

Comments were received from Australia, China, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, USA, EU and AU-IBAR.

The Code Commission recalled that the draft new and revised chapters had been sent for Member Country comments in September 2017. After discussion with the Scientific Commission, it was agreed to put these two chapters on hold until after the *ad hoc* Group on animal African trypanosomoses meets in March 2018. The draft chapters and Member Country comments will be reconsidered in September 2018 together with the report of the *ad hoc* Group.

### 5.7. Draft revised Chapter on Infection with *Theileria annulata*, *T. orientalis* and *T. parva* (bovidae) (Chapter 11.12.) and New Chapter 14.X. Infection with *Theileria lestoquardi*, *T. luwenshuni* and *T. uilenbergi* (small ruminants)

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China, New Caledonia, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, EU and AU-IBAR.

Member Countries rationale for proposing that the two chapters be merged was not accepted by the Code Commission as it considers that, after careful consideration of the host specificity of the different *Theileria* species, separate chapters would make their management, including surveillance easier for Member Countries.

The general comments of two Member Countries opposed to the ongoing development of these two chapters were discussed by the Presidents of the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission. It was noted that the comments of these two Member Countries added to the original scientific evidence provided by one of them to support the original request for an *ad hoc* Group to revise the current chapter to consider the inclusion of *T. orientalis*. The *ad hoc* Group considered the scientific literature available and their own experience to assess the *Theileria* spp. against the listing criteria of Chapter 1.2. It concluded that *T. annulata*, *T. parva*, *T. orientalis* Ikeda and *T. orientalis* Chitose met the listing criteria and proposed including them in the *Terrestrial Code*. This decision was supported by the Code Commission and the Scientific Commission.

However, the Code Commission requested the OIE Headquarters to seek further expert advice about the listing of these diseases (see **Item 7.3. Other Business**) and agreed with the Scientific Commission to put these two chapters on hold pending the expert advice. The specific questions to be answered by the experts are as follows:

- a) Review all the pathogenic agent species listed in the chapters and assess their compliance with the criteria in Chapter 1.2.;
- b) Assess their host-specificity and provide guidance to the OIE on whether these can be included in a single multi-species chapter including all causative agents, or whether there is a need for separate chapters for bovines and for small ruminants.

## 5.8 Infection with African swine fever virus (Articles 15.1.1.-bis - 15.1.2., 15.1.3. and 15.1.22.)

Comments were received from China, Japan, Korea, Switzerland, Thailand and EU.

The Code Commission recalled that at the General Session in 2017 two Member Countries voted against the adoption of the chapter and that during its September 2017 meeting it had proposed the deletion of the general statement on the importation of commodities and proposed the introduction of a new article on safe commodities to address their concerns. The proposals were circulated for Member Country comments in September 2017.

In response to concerns raised by several Member Countries to include canned meat and gelatine as safe commodities in the proposed new article, the Code Commission amended the article for clarity (meat in a hermetically sealed container with Fo value of 3.00 or more) to make it clear, the intention was to include 'sterilised canned meat', as defined in the Codex Recommended Code of Hygienic Practice for Low and Acidified Low Acid Canned Foods (CAC/RCP 23-1979).

In regard to the inclusion of gelatine as a safe commodity, the Code Commission, after reviewing the literature relating to the normal industrial manufacturing processes, reconfirmed that regardless of the raw material used, it is subjected to extremes of pH and high temperatures sufficient to inactivate all known viruses and bacteria. Thus, gelatine meets the provisions of Article 2.2.1. and can be considered a safe commodity with respect to ASF.

References <http://www.gelatine.org/gelatine/manufacturing.html>; Prions in Humans and Animals Beat Hörnlimann, Hans A. Kretzschmar and Detlev Reisner ISBN:9783110200171 3110200171

In response to a request of several Member Countries to reinstate the deleted text in Article 15.1.2., the Code Commission agreed in principle with the need to add clarity to assist Member Countries in the implementation and correct application of the provisions of this chapter but did not agree to leave this sentence in Article 15.1.2. It proposed to insert in Article 15.1.1.- bis, text relating to the import or transit of other commodities from pigs, which includes reference to the relevant articles of the chapter and is consistent with other listed disease chapters.

In addition, the Code Commission proposed a sentence at the end of Article 15.1.3. Country or zone free from ASF, to address issues related to bans on trade in commodities from countries that are free from ASF in domestic and captive wild pigs while notifying infection in wild or feral pigs.

The Code Commission agreed with the comments of Member Countries that there was an inconsistency in Article 15.1.3. and amended point 1) (historical freedom) to align it with points 2) and 3) and clarify that 'pigs and pig commodities are imported in accordance with Articles 15.1.7. to 15.1.20.'.

In response to several Member Country comments proposing the inclusion of a new article on 'A country or zone infected with ASFV', the Code Commission did not agree, because, for this disease that has always been absent from many regions, it could indirectly lead to underreporting and to unjustified barriers to trade.

Because of the possible misinterpretation of the chapter, the Code Commission modified points 1) to 3) of Article 15.1.3. to clarify that all commodities of domestic and wild pigs should be imported from those countries in accordance with the same articles.

The same Member Countries requested the inclusion of several additional cross-references in Article 15.1.3. to add clarity and assist with interpretation of the chapter. The Code Commission did not consider it was necessary to add a large number of additional cross-references.

### **Article 15.1.18.**

A Member Country requested further detailed information on inactivation of ASFV in swill feed, the Code Commission recalled that this article was built upon long-standing practice and field experience that showed the inactivation of virus in swill, and was used to successfully control the disease. It further noted that point 3) allows for use of alternative treatments that can be demonstrated to inactivate ASFV.

### **Article 15.1.22.**

In response to a Member Country comment on the need for the requirement for treatment of dry-cured pig meat to be described more specifically (e.g. as it is in Article 8.8.31.), the Code Commission noted that this article also was related to historical experience with manufacturing and processing and had been simplified to make it useable for veterinary certification. However, the point was noted and was referred to OIE Headquarters to gather more detailed information on the different processes used to dry and cure meat.

The Code Commission considered, as there had been several significant changes to Article 15.1.1.-bis and 15.1.2., as well as new proposals for Article 15.1.3. that these should be circulated for further consideration by the Member Countries and did not propose them for adoption in May 2018.

The revised Articles 15.1.1.-bis., 15.1.2., 15.1.3. and 15.1.22. are attached as **Annex 37** for Member Country comments.

## **5.9. Glossary Part B**

Comments were received from New Caledonia, New Zealand and EU.

### ***EARLY WARNING SYSTEM***

The Code Commission considered Member Country comments on the proposed definition, it noted that characterisation is included in identification, the definition is not talking about the identification of a pathogenic agent, for clarity it proposed to delete the word ‘identification’ and added ‘communication’ for clarity. It also noted that the use of the word ‘disease’ in the definition was appropriate.

### ***SANITARY MEASURE***

In commenting on the definition of compartment, some Member Countries proposed replacing ‘control’ with ‘sanitary’ for consistency with the definition of containment zone. The Code Commission noted that the two words were used appropriately in the respective definitions. The Code Commission did however propose a minor amendment to the definition of sanitary measure for clarity.

The revised definitions are attached as **Annex 38** for Member Country comments.

## **6. Amendments or draft new chapters proposed to the *Terrestrial Code***

### **6.1. Procedures for self-declaration and for official recognition by the OIE (Articles 1.6.1. to 1.6.4.)**

The Code Commission considered draft revised articles proposed by the OIE Headquarters to include references to the procedures for the publication of a self-declaration of disease freedom by the OIE. The proposed revisions included a change to the title of the chapter for clarity and amendments to the articles to outline the procedures to be followed by Member Countries in applying for publication of a self-declaration of disease freedom, recognition of official disease status, or endorsement of official control programmes by the OIE.

The Code Commission and the Scientific Commission reviewed the revised articles and thanked the OIE Headquarters for its work, agreeing that the structure and text would provide much better guidance to Member Countries.

The revised Chapter 6.1. is attached as **Annex 39 a) and 39 b) in clean and tracked versions** for Member Country comments.

## **6.2. Welfare of working equids (Article 7.12.7. and Article 7.12.12.)**

Comments were received from the EU.

The Code Commission agreed with Member Countries proposal to add ‘excessive sweating’ as a new example of behaviour which indicates heat stress, in Article 7.12.7.

Regarding concerns expressed by Member Countries, at the 85<sup>th</sup> OIE General Session, on Article 7.12.12. ‘Appropriate workloads’ and the recommendation for a maximum of working hours to which working equids should be subject, the Code Commission noted that the Region concerned had not provided the supporting information promised, despite OIE Headquarters follow-up.

The revised Article 7.12.7. Welfare of working equids is attached as **Annex 32** and is proposed for adoption at the 86<sup>th</sup> General Session in May 2018.

## **6.3. Infection with rabies virus (Chapter 8.14.) including consideration of the *ad hoc* Group report (November 2017)**

The Code Commission reviewed the report of an *ad hoc* Group on Rabies that met at the OIE Headquarters in Paris from 21 to 23 November 2017. It congratulated the *ad hoc* Group on its work and for the report that provided clear and detailed rationales for its suggestions.

The Code Commission requested the OIE Headquarters ensure new or revised chapters prepared by *ad hoc* Groups use the definitions listed in the Glossary, are aligned with other similar chapters, are drafted in a way that is consistent with *Code* conventions, and avoid the use of ambiguous terminology.

The Code Commission reviewed the revised chapter and modified it for consistency with the *Code*, for clarity and to improve grammar and readability.

The revised draft Chapter 8.14. is attached as **Annex 40** for Member Country comments.

## **6.4. Infection with avian influenza viruses (Chapter 10.4.) including review of the report of the *ad hoc* Group on Avian influenza (December 2017)**

The Code Commission highlighted the usefulness of the preparatory work of the OIE Headquarters that included a discussion paper, defining the issues and questions to be addressed by the *ad hoc* Group. The membership of the group was well balanced and included experts with a broad range of expertise. The President of the Code Commission advised the members that the report would be used to guide it in its discussion on the revision of the chapter.

### **Definition of avian influenza**

The Code Commission supported the suggestion of the *ad hoc* Group that the third option of making a clear distinction between HPAI and LPAI in the same chapter and creating separate articles was the most practical and suitable option and that it could assist in better addressing the problems associated with the current definition of avian influenza. This should be included in the Terms of Reference of the next *ad hoc* Group to revise Article 10.4.1. and the relevant articles on status, trade, and surveillance.

### Definition of poultry

The Code Commission considered the *ad hoc* Group proposed a revised definition of *poultry*. It noted that the definition had been revised to take into account those categories of birds that could have a significant epidemiological role in the spread of the disease. It further noted the difficulty of understanding the term ‘backyard’, which might cover different production systems and could not be uniformly applied to all situations. The Code Commission had some difficulty in understanding the meaning of the term ‘self-consumption’ but agreed with the definition proposed by the *ad hoc* Group.

### Safe commodities

In respect to the recommendations on transmission pathways and safe commodities, the Code Commission noted the results of these recommendations were very important for resolving the issues in international trade.

### Vaccination

The Code Commission noted the suggestions of the *ad hoc* Group and agreed that these issues would be considered further during the revision of the chapter. The Code Commission noted that any future *ad hoc* Group should include specific expertise in vaccination to better inform the revision of the chapter and that there is a need to gather more information on the possible positive or negative impacts of vaccination. The Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group that the revised chapter should include risk management measures for trade in commodities from vaccinated poultry, surveillance requirements when vaccination is used etc.

### Surveillance

The Code Commission noted the *ad hoc* Group suggestion to revise Article 10.4.1. addressing the need to provide an incentive for Member Countries to carry out intense surveillance for AI viruses and that detection of low pathogenicity viruses and AI in wild birds would not lead to unjustified barriers to trade. The *ad hoc* Group suggested this was already partially addressed by point 8) but additional amendments should be proposed to clearly articulate the differences in managing risks and making notifications. The Code Commission noted this should be included in the Terms of Reference of the next *ad hoc* Group and relevant expertise should be included in the membership.

### Communication

The Code Commission noted the actions proposed under Part B of the Terms of Reference and welcomed the initiative of the *ad hoc* Group to prepare technical papers and to enhance other communication activities associated with improving Member Countries understanding of the disease.

The Code Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group suggestions and proposed that the following proposals be circulated for Member Country comments:

- a) Option 3) recommended by the *ad hoc* Group, making a clear distinction between HPAI and LPAI in the same chapter. Defining AI as HPAI in Article 10.4.1. and having a separate article or articles highlighting the need for LPAI surveillance, the possibility of mutation to HPAI, potential public health consequences, inclusion in six-monthly and annual reports and the application of appropriate sanitary measures in order to manage the risk while avoiding unjustified barriers to trade.
- b) Proposed definition of poultry
- c) Invite Member Countries to provide scientific data or references to assist in the revision of the chapter or in resolving the issues highlighted in the *ad hoc* Group report.

The Code Commission invited Member Countries to react to these proposals before the General Session (**10 May 2018**) to inform the OIE Headquarters and assist them in drafting Terms of Reference of the next *ad hoc* Group, which was planned to be held in June or July 2018, so that the outcomes would be available for the September meeting of the Code Commission.

The Code Commission will consider the Member Country comments and the outputs of the *ad hoc* Group (if there is a need) at its September 2018 meeting.

The proposals of the *ad hoc* Group are attached at **Annex 41** for Member Country comments. The report of the *ad hoc* Group is attached for Member Country information.

## 7. Other Issues

### 7.1. General comments of Member Countries on the texts circulated after the Code Commission's September 2017 meeting

Member Country comments were received from Fiji and EU.

The Code Commission noted the comments of Member Countries on the absence of Annex 1 and *ad hoc* Group reports from its September 2017 report. The Code Commission noted that OIE Headquarters had informed it that these were on the website, and the *ad hoc* Group reports were contained in Part C. The Code Commission further invited Member Countries to contact the OIE Headquarters if they found that documents appeared to be missing from its reports.

On the same Member Country comments regarding the Code Commission's practice of only including modified articles in the annex to its reports when a whole chapter was not for revision, the Code Commission noted that this had been done for clarity and to improve the level of response from Member Countries. Indeed, the size of the reports and lengthy annexes could make them difficult to analyse and created difficulties for OIE Headquarters in preparing working documents for the Code Commission's meetings.

### 7.2. Update of the Code Commission's work programme

Comments were received from Australia, China, EU, European Serum Product Association (ESPA) and Global Alliance of Pet Food Associations (GAPFA).

The OIE Headquarters noted that some comments of one Member Country regarding the adverse impact on its own ongoing work and the difficulty to keep up with the pace of standards development did not relate specifically to the work programme of the Code Commission and these would be addressed by the OIE Headquarters rather than the Code Commission.

In response to additional comments and questions from Member Countries pertaining to the Code Commission's work programme, the Code Commission offered the following responses:

Listing of Porcine epidemic diarrhoea virus (PEDV) - the Code Commission noted this would be included in its work programme and the disease would be assessed against the criteria by experts, the comments of the Member Country would be provided to the experts (**see Agenda Item 7.3.**).

Member Countries proposals concerning the need to update Chapter 1.3. was taken into consideration (**see Agenda Item 4.22.**).

The Code Commission noted the update provided by the Scientific Commission and the OIE Headquarters on the progress of the review of Chapter 11.4. on Bovine spongiform encephalopathy and welcomed the confirmation that plans for the *ad hoc* Group meetings are underway and are dependent on the resources and capacity of the OIE Headquarters.

In response to Member Country comments in relation to the volume of the work programme of the Code Commission and noted that work should stop on disease-specific chapters on pathogenic agents that are not OIE listed, the Code Commission noted this comment was taken into account.

Some Member Countries requested the Code Commission clarify if their comments on the PRRS chapter, more specifically regarding the recommendations on semen, submitted in writing prior to and referred to orally during the OIE General Session of May 2017 will be addressed. The Code Commission noted that the chapter had only recently been adopted (May 2017) and its revision should be supported by new scientific evidence or trade problems. However, it would place the revision of the chapter on its work programme but with a relatively low priority.

Other comments from the same Member Countries on the work programme were addressed in other parts of this report under the specific agenda items. The Code Commission further noted the comment regarding Chapter 5.8. had been referred to the Biological Standards Commission for its consideration.

In response to Member Countries proposals to include a definition of ‘animal products’ in the Glossary, the Code Commission considered that the appropriate way to address this question would be to identify where the term appears in the *Code* and identify if there is any ambiguity with regards to its meaning. It will continue to identify and clarify any ambiguous terms such as ‘animal products’ and solve the problem by using already defined terms or dictionary terms.

#### **Chapter 3.4. Veterinary legislation**

The OIE Headquarters advised the Code Commission that an *ad hoc* Group on Veterinary Legislation met at the OIE Headquarters from 23 to 25 January 2018. The OIE Headquarters noted that the *ad hoc* Group had undertaken a broad review of Chapter 3.4. Veterinary legislation and due to the timing of the meeting and the already heavy work programme of the Code Commission the report would be forwarded for its consideration in September 2018.

#### **Chapter 8.8. Infection with foot and mouth disease virus**

At its September 2017 meeting, the Code Commission noted that the comments from Member Countries had been reviewed by the Scientific Commission. However, considering the proposed changes to Chapter 4.3. on Zoning and compartmentalisation and specifically with regards to the concept of a temporary protection zone, the Code Commission decided it would wait until its February 2018 meeting to review this chapter, with the possibility of including the concept of temporary protection zone to address problems in maintaining FMD free status, and its implications for international trade. In view of the lack of consensus on the inclusion of this new concept in Chapter 4.3. The Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission to put this chapter on hold pending further discussion of this and other issues.

#### **Chapter 15.2. Infection with classical swine fever virus**

The Code Commission agreed with the Scientific Commission to await their further advice about the revision of the procedures for recognition of official status before proceeding with any further review of this chapter.

#### **Request for international trade standards for animal serum products used in cell culture media**

The OIE Headquarters informed the Code Commission it had received a request from the European Serum Product Association (ESPA) requesting the OIE consider developing specific international trade standards for a new category of products ‘animal serum used in culture media’. The Code Commission noted it was on the agenda Biological Standards Commission and would discuss it with that Commission in September 2018. The Code Commission requests Member Countries to inform it of any problems in the trade of these products.

### **Update on request to restart work on a standard for pet food – proposal from Global Alliance of Pet Food Associations (GAPFA)**

At its September 2018 meeting, the Code Commission considered a request from GAPFA, to restart work on the development of an international standard for pet food. The organisation expressed its continued interest in facilitating the development of consensus-based guidance for the global pet food industry, to better support the health and welfare of pets and to help the elimination of disease from foodborne pathogens.

The OIE Headquarters informed the Code Commission that GAPFA had responded positively to the proposal to develop a model certificate and confirmed its commitment to supporting the development of such a certificate, including by providing scientific evidence on pathogenic inactivation. The Code Commission reiterated that while the work was on its work programme it remained a relatively low priority until such scientific evidence and draft certificate is provided.

#### **Work programme specific amendments**

The Code Commission noted the following:

- a) that revision of the User's Guide was ongoing in light of Member Country comments and the development of new chapters; specifically in response to a Member Country comment relating to the need to address 'precedence of chapters', the Code Commission disagreed as it considers that all the chapters have the same level of importance, if a difference in scope;
- b) that revision to the Glossary are consequential to work on the chapters of the *Code* and can be considered as an ongoing part of its work programme.

The Code Commission updated its work programme, revising priorities considering the advice from OIE Headquarters, the work of other Specialist Commissions and Member Country comments.

The updated work programme is attached as **Annex 42** for Member Countries information and comments.

### **7.3. Diseases, infections and infestations listed by the OIE (Chapter 1.3.)**

The Code Commission noted that there were several diseases that required assessment against the criteria for listing in Chapter 1.2. It requested the OIE Headquarters to consider convening an *ad hoc* Group (with specific terms of reference) to review the following diseases or pathogenic agents against the criteria for listing:

- Porcine epidemic diarrhoea,
- West Nile fever,
- Chronic wasting disease,
- *Theileria* spp.,
- *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*,
- *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis*.

The Code Commission and the Scientific Commission noted that the experts chosen to do this work need not be specialists in the specific diseases but rather epidemiology specialists and should be capable of conducting critical literature reviews in preparation for the assessment (see also **Agenda Item 5.7.**).

#### 7.4. Infection with *Trichinella* spp. (Chapter 8.17.)

Comments were received from the USA.

The Code Commission considered a Member Country proposal that ‘negligible risk’ should be consistently defined between the OIE and Codex documents on *Trichinella*. For negligible risk, the Codex Guidance (CAC/GL 86-2015) clearly sets the prevalence of infection as not exceeding one infected carcass per 1,000,000 pigs slaughtered with at least 95% confidence. The Code Commission recalled the progression of the OIE chapter and the Codex guidelines, which were not developed in parallel and had not the same scope, and that the prevalence level in Codex is based on monitoring of country slaughtered pigs only. The Code Commission did not accept the proposal to engage in a revision of the current Chapter 8.17., as no new scientific evidence or trade issue was raised by the Member Country and, because, realistically, it would be extremely difficult for Member Countries to produce a statistically valid estimate of less than 1/1,000,000 with 95% confidence for such a parasitic infection, and negligible risk should be applied to compartments under appropriate biosecurity and with historical data of absence.

#### 7.5. Proposed list of main focus areas and specialities for OIE Collaborating Centres

The Code Commission noted the work undertaken by the OIE and the Biological Standards Commission on the proposed list of main focus areas and specialties for OIE Collaborating Centres. It noted that the Biological Standards Commission would finalise the list and the guidelines for applicants, consider designation and maintenance procedures, performance criteria and networks, and propose them for consideration of the General Session in May 2018.

#### 7.6. Veterinary paraprofessionals

Comments were received from Australia, Japan, Singapore and EU.

The OIE *ad hoc* Group on Veterinary paraprofessionals met from 12 to 14 February 2018 at the OIE Headquarters in Paris, France.

OIE Headquarters described the progress of the work of the *ad hoc* Group, as well as relevant events since the last Code Commission meeting in September 2017, including the OIE Regional Conference on Veterinary Paraprofessionals (VPPs) held in Asia in December 2017. The role of the *ad hoc* Group was to consider comments and feedback from Member Countries and other relevant experts, and the relevant recommendations from the Regional Conference concerning the draft Competency Document that had been circulated as an annex to the September 2017 report of the Code Commission.

OIE Headquarters explained that while the number of replying Member Countries was limited, they covered the OIE regions well, except the Middle East, and that all replies expressed appreciation of the work as useful even if it may not directly help improve some national Veterinary Services due to the absence of relevant VPPs in certain countries. OIE Headquarters provided a revised version of the Competency Document, which it aims to publish as OIE guidelines in the near future, and noted that changes were made in general for clarifications, addition of missing elements and facilitating the use.

OIE Headquarters also reported that ambiguities in the *Code* definition of *veterinary statutory body* had been noted, by members of the *ad hoc* Group as well as by participants in the OIE Regional Conference on Veterinary Paraprofessionals in Asia. Feedback suggested that it was not clear from the current wording if the intention was for a single *veterinary statutory body* to be responsible for regulation of both veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals.

The Code Commission thanked the OIE for the update and expressed appreciation for the *ad hoc* Group's work, which it considers will assist many Member Countries to improve Veterinary Services where VPPs play an important role. The Code Commission also expressed its expectation for the ongoing work of the *ad hoc* Group to develop the core curricula guidelines based on the Competency Document.

The report of the *ad hoc* Group and the revised Competency Document are attached as **Annex 46** for Member Countries information.

#### **7.7. Date of next meetings**

The Code Commission was informed that the dates for the next meetings would be decided by the OIE Headquarters pending the election of new members of the four Specialist Commissions. Members elected to the Specialist Commissions in May 2018 will be advised in writing of the dates once they are confirmed. However, tentative dates being considered for the Code Commission are **11 to 20 September 2018**, noting this would only allow for an 8-day meeting, but facilitate orientation for new members of the four Specialist Commissions and a specific training for the Presidents to be held on **8 September 2018**.

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.../Annexes