



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION
AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS**

Twenty-first Session

Brisbane, Australia, 13 - 17 October 2014

ACTIVITIES OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF CCFICS

OIE Contribution to the 21st Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems

1. The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) thanks the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) for the opportunity to contribute to its standards development process.
2. A collaborative approach by OIE and CAC to standard-setting on certain key topics is strongly recommended to ensure appropriate harmonisation of standards and recommendations while avoiding duplication of effort, overlap and gaps in standard setting work.
3. The OIE was pleased that the Codex Alimentarius Commission at their 37th session endorsed the guidance to promote collaboration between Codex and OIE as proposed by CCGP28.

General information

4. As part of the OIE global initiative for Good Governance of National Veterinary Services, and at the specific request of an OIE Member Country, the OIE conducts assessments of the quality of Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services using the OIE PVS Tool. Subsequent steps in the PVS Pathway include PVS Gap Analysis, specific capacity building projects and programmes for veterinary legislation, laboratories, education, etc. and PVS follow up missions, to help improve compliance of the Veterinary Services with the OIE standards set out in the Terrestrial and Aquatic Codes.
5. The PVS Tool involves the assessment of 47 Critical Competencies, and specifically addresses food safety under the critical competencies for establishments that produce, process and distribute food of animal origin; ante- and post mortem inspection; food processing premises and the certification of animal products for trade.
6. In the most recent edition of the OIE Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services (2013) the critical competency on food safety was expanded to include points that address the standards of food producing premises. The first edition of the PVS Tool: Aquatic specifically for the evaluation of Aquatic Animal Health Services was also published in 2013, and again includes a critical competency on food safety.
7. To date the OIE has received 129 national requests and 117 missions have been completed for the evaluation of Veterinary Services performance in the terrestrial sector. Relevant information may be found at: <http://www.oie.int/en/support-to-oie-members/pvs-evaluations/status-of-missions/>

Discussion papers on Principles and guidelines for the elaboration and management of questionnaires directed at exporting countries and Principles and guidelines for monitoring regulatory performance of national food control systems

8. Given the strong support of OIE Member Countries for the OIE PVS Pathway to strengthen national infrastructures, the OIE has appreciated the positive response of CCFICS in taking account of this initiative in the development of the Principles and Guidelines for National Food Control Systems.
9. The OIE has been following the CCFICS Regional Workshops on Burden of Multiple Questionnaires Directed at Exporting Countries for Initiating Market Access and Monitoring Regulatory Performance of National Food Control Systems and was represented at the Regional workshop for Europe held in February 2014.

10. Should the CCFICS propose new work on these topics the OIE will continue to collaborate and would request that CCFICS take account of the OIE PVS Pathway in the development of new Guidelines.

WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

11. Despite the failure of the WTO to adopt their protocol on the Trade Facilitation Agreement on July 31, the negotiations on this topic over the past year have clearly focused attention on the performance of border agencies, including those responsible for assessing adequacy of SPS certificates and documentation accompanying traded animal products.

12. OIE is well aware of examples that illustrate room for performance improvement in this area, and we therefore expect to see further attention to measurement of consignment compliance with certification requirements, and efficiency of resolution of non-compliances by the relevant authorities. We also recognise that effective prevention of fraud associated with trade in animal products, bioterrorism, and smuggling endangered species all depend on strong collaboration between the government agencies responsible for effective and efficient certification of traded animals and animal products.

13. OIE is initiating discussions with relevant counterpart organisations to explore options for improving performance in this area, and will welcome suggestions from CCFICS.

Background

14. The OIE and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) are two of the three international standard setting organizations recognised under the World Trade Organization (WTO) SPS Agreement. In this context, the OIE is responsible for setting standards on animal health (including zoonotic diseases) and the CAC on food safety. For food products of animal origin, hazards to human health may arise at the farm or at any subsequent stage in the food production continuum. Since 2001, at the request of its Members, the OIE mandate has included setting standards for animal production food safety, i.e. the management of risks arising from the level of the farm to primary processing.

15. In 2002, the OIE established a Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety with the view to improving the coordination and harmonisation of standard setting activities of OIE and CAC. The Secretary of Codex and, on an observer basis, the Chair of Codex, regularly attend the annual meeting of the Working Group. Through this mechanism and through participation in each other's standard setting procedures, the OIE and CAC collaborate closely in the development of standards relevant to the whole food production continuum, taking care to avoid gaps, duplications and contradictions in the SPS standards of these two WTO reference organisations.

16. The OIE will continue to address food safety-related issues as a high priority in its standard-setting work and will work closely with CAC and its Committees, and with other international bodies in promoting safe international trade in animals and animal products.
