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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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**OIE CONTRIBUTION TO THE 33RD SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS
COMMISSION¹**

1. The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) thanks the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for the ongoing invitation to participate in meetings of its Commission, Committees and expert groups. OIE Members consider that this collaboration is very valuable.
2. Since July 2009, representatives of the OIE have participated in the following Codex meetings:
 - the 32nd Session of the CAC (July 2009);
 - the Codex Physical Working Group on the proposed draft Guidelines for the control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* spp. in Chicken Meat (September 2009)
 - the 30th Session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (October 2009);
 - the 41st Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (November 2009);
 - the 3rd Session of the Codex *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (October 2009);
 - the 9th Session of the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (February 2010);
 - the 18th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (March 2010);
 - the 26th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (April 2010);
 - the Electronic Working Group on Animal Feeding (2009/2010);
 - the Electronic Working Group on the draft Guidelines for the Control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* spp. in Chicken Meat (2010).
3. The OIE appreciates the ongoing participation of staff of the Codex Secretariat in OIE meetings, notably, since July 2009, the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety (November 2009); OIE *ad hoc* Group on Salmonellosis (August 2009 and May 2010).

Joint OIE/Codex standards

4. At the 32nd Session of the CAC, the OIE noted that it wished to strengthen the relationship with the CAC, including through the proposed development of a legal basis for the production of common OIE-Codex standards, where appropriate.
5. The OIE was pleased that in May 2010, the WHO Assembly approved an amendment to the cooperation agreement between the OIE and the WHO providing the legal basis for the development of joint standards relating to relevant aspects in animal production with impact on food safety.

¹ This document has been prepared by and under the responsibility of the OIE.

6. Given that similar text exists in the agreement between FAO and the OIE, the legal basis is now in place for the OIE and CAC to decide how to develop joint standards as appropriate to the subject under consideration and the respective mandates of the two organisations.

7. As agreed at the 25th Session of the CCGP, the Codex Secretariat, with input from the OIE Secretariat, presented a discussion paper to the 26th Session of the CCGP in April 2010, requesting that the CCGP consider and support the development of joint standards. Such standards would address areas of common interest with CAC, such as the control of pathogens transmitted through food products of animal origin; the use of antimicrobials in food producing animals; and standards for animal products ('commodities').

8. The OIE was disappointed that due to the late availability of the discussion document the Committee postponed detailed discussion of the document until its next scheduled meeting in 2012.

9. The OIE noted that the Committee agreed that the Codex Secretariat would send a circular letter including the working document to request comments from members so that the issues can be discussed in depth at the 27th Session of the CCGP. The OIE will continue to work with the Codex Secretariat on this matter. However, the OIE encourages the Commission to explore whether the 27th session can be brought forward to 2011 or other means to provide for timely consideration of this item.

10. As previously mentioned, collaboration between CAC and OIE at the international level is important. However, collaboration at the regional and national levels is also important. The OIE encourages its national Delegates to collaborate with national Delegates of the CAC. The list of OIE Delegates is available at http://www.oie.int/eng/OIE/PM/en_PM.htm?e1d1

11. The OIE was pleased to participate in the Informal Meeting on Collaboration between the SPS Committee and International Standard Setting Bodies in October 2009. The two secretariats will work together to progress the recommendations of the SPS Committee.

12. The OIE was pleased to collaborate with the FAO and WHO in the production of the 'FAO-OIE-WHO Collaboration, A Tripartite Concept Note' validated by Director Generals of these organisations and announced at the 7th International Ministerial Conference on 'Animal and Pandemic Influenza: The Way Forward' in Hanoi (April 2010). This document sets the strategic direction for FAO, OIE and WHO to a long term framework for international collaboration aimed at coordinating global activities to address health risks at the human-animal-ecosystem interfaces.

13. The Concept Note also establishes a complementary agenda with new synergies between FAO, OIE and WHO, which will include normative work, public communications, pathogen detection, risk assessment and management, technical capacity building and research development, as well as a global conference of the Ministers of Health and of Agriculture.

Private standards

14. The growth of private standards for animal health and animal welfare with application to animals and animal products in international trade continues to be of concern to OIE Members, particularly developing countries. Private standards may be established by private companies in a non scientific and non transparent manner, without reference to established official standards. The OIE is continuing to developing a strategy to help Members deal with the implications of private standards that can conflict with the OIE international trade standards.

15. At the OIE 76th General Session in May 2008, Members passed a Resolution calling for action to address the issue of private standards. In June 2009 an OIE expert ad hoc Group on Private Standards was convened to examine the current and possible future problems and benefits presented by private standards for sanitary safety and animal welfare in regard to international trade. This *ad hoc* Group sent a questionnaire on this topic to all OIE Members and to relevant organisations having an official agreement with the OIE and, at its November 2009 meeting, reviewed the results of the questionnaire. The Group's report showed that there were significant differences between the views of developed countries and developing countries on private standards. The results also confirmed the different attitude of the OIE members towards private standards for sanitary safety and private standards for animal welfare. The report on the OIE questionnaire was published as an annex (XXXIX pp 689-715) to the Terrestrial Code Commission report in March 2010

http://www.oie.int/download/SC/2010/A_TAHSC_Feb2010_PartB.pdf

16. As most of the 68 OIE Members responding to the questionnaire recommended that the OIE work more closely with private standard setting organizations in an effort to avoid negative effects of private standards, the OIE convened a meeting with private organisations, with the participation of the WTO SPS Secretariat, on 16 February to exchange information and consider possible next steps. This meeting concluded that the OIE should consider establishing formal frameworks for collaboration with global private standard setting organisations.

17. At the OIE General Session in May 2010 the views of the private sector on private standards were presented by a representative of the not-for-profit global alliance for a Safe Supply of Affordable Food Everywhere (SSAFE), who presented a paper on this topic. The subsequent Resolution passed by the World Assembly in May 2010 recommended that the OIE maintain and strengthen appropriate links and dialogue with relevant global private standard setting bodies and global private industry organisations (e.g. the International Meat Secretariat, the International Dairy Federation, the International Egg Commission and the International Federation of Agriculture Producers) with the aim to allow compatibility of private standards with OIE standards while ensuring communications with national governments and consumers (see Annex I).

The Resolution also recommended that the OIE maintain close cooperation on sanitary standards with relevant international organisations, notably the WTO and the CAC, to establish a transparent framework for dealing with private sanitary standards that affect international trade within the WTO.

18. The OIE will continue to collaborate closely with the SPS Committee and with the CAC on this issue.

OIE work programme on animal production food safety

19. The OIE Animal Production Food Safety (APFS) Working Group functions as a steering committee for the OIE's work programmed on standards to protect consumers from food-borne hazards arising at the production level of the food chain. Current and former high level officials of the FAO, WHO and CAC are members of the Working Group. The Working Group held its 9th meeting in November 2009. The report of this meeting was published as an annex (XXXVIII pp 635-687) to the Terrestrial Code Commission report in March 2010. http://www.oie.int/download/SC/2010/A_TAHSC_Feb2010_PartB.pdf

20. At the OIE 78th General Session in May 2010, the World Assembly of Delegates unanimously adopted Resolution No. 19 on APFS work priorities of the OIE (see Annex II).

21. The OIE prepared a discussion paper on 'Animal Production Food Safety: priority pathogens for standard setting by the OIE' at the request of the APFS Working Group. The objective is to develop a priority list of pathogens for which the OIE would develop standards to be included in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code and Aquatic Animal Health Code.

22. In the discussion paper, priority for standard setting was based on a pathogen's impact on human health; the potential for on-farm control and a lack of coverage in OIE Codes, with a particular focus on issues relevant to developing countries. As data required for prioritisation of pathogens involved in food borne disease are lacking, particularly for developing countries the review was based on expert opinion, consultation with the WHO, and a literature review.

23. Experts from most regions considered *Salmonella spp.* from sources other than poultry to be a top priority. Pathogenic *E.coli*, *Brucella spp.* and *Staphylococcus aureus* were given priority by three regions. *E. granulosus*, the causative agent of hydatidosis, was estimated to have the greatest impact of all food borne pathogens in Africa; it was also listed for the Middle East and thought to be of importance by both South American experts consulted. Hydatidosis was inconsistently considered as a food borne disease by experts. *Taenia saginata* was considered important in South America, Africa and by one expert in the Middle East.

24. In summary the recommended priorities for future standard setting were: for bacterial diseases, *Salmonella spp.* in animals other than poultry and *E. coli* 0157:H7; and for parasitic diseases, the OIE listed diseases, *Echinococcus spp.*, *Taenia solium* and *Trichinella spiralis* and the non listed parasite, *Taenia saginata* (salmonella in poultry being already covered).

25. The discussion paper was submitted to OIE Delegates for comment and for further consideration of the proposed priorities. The paper will be published in the OIE Scientific and Technical Review plurithematic series in 2010.

26. The OIE continues to work on a text that addresses hygiene and biosecurity practices in poultry farms to prevent food borne illness in humans. Noting that the CAC is currently working on standards for salmonellosis, the OIE will continue its active participation with CAC on this work in order to avoid duplications or contradictions.

27. In the important field of biotechnology, OIE *ad hoc* Groups have been established to develop standards relevant to vaccinology and molecular diagnostic tests. The *ad hoc* Group on Vaccines in relation to New and Emerging Technologies met in November 2009, with the main task of updating texts in the OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals (Terrestrial Manual). The *ad hoc* Group met again in January 2010 to consider food safety aspects related to the use of biotechnology derived vaccines in animals. The members of the latter meeting included experts nominated by FAO and WHO, in addition to OIE experts. The OIE Biological Standards Commission agreed to the Group's proposal to include a new introductory chapter on vaccines derived from biotechnology in the *Terrestrial Manual*. The Commission also proposed to add a specific section on safety, including food safety, to the existing *Terrestrial Manual* Appendix 1.1.8.2 on Risk Analysis for Veterinary Vaccines. The report and the recommendations were approved at the 78th OIE General Session in May 2010 and will be published on the OIE Website as part of the report of the meetings of the Biological Standards Commission.

28. The OIE continues to participate actively in the work of the Codex Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance and works in collaboration with WHO and FAO in fields of common interest, respecting the mandate of each organization. OIE continues to participate as an observer in the Codex *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance and considers that the chapters in the Terrestrial Code on antimicrobial resistance have provided a good basis for the Codex work.

29. With regard to the important topic of veterinary products administered to animals, the OIE continues working to help Members to strengthen their governance and infrastructure, including putting in place effective legislation to assure the quality, safety and efficiency of veterinary medicinal products. The OIE Conference on Veterinary Medicinal Products in the Middle East: "Towards the Harmonisation and Improvement of Registration, Distribution and Quality Control" took place in Damascus (Syria) on 2 to 4 December 2009.

30. A Consultative *ad hoc* Group on Collaborative activities on antimicrobial resistance to find common areas and the modus operandi for cooperation and communication between FAO, OIE and WHO on antimicrobial resistance was established. The first meeting was held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris from 30 September to 1 October 2009 and a short term, medium term and workplan for common and joint activities was discussed. It was also agreed to enhance the collaboration within the framework of AGISAR in its future activities.

31. The OIE is encouraging all Members to nominate Focal Points for six strategic issues, two of which are APFS and for Veterinary Products. Please see additional information on OIE Focal Points in paragraph 39-40 below.

Food Safety and Aquatic Animals

32. At the 77th General Session in May 2009, the OIE World Assembly of Delegates gave the Aquatic Animals Health Standards Commission (Aquatic Animals Commission) an expanded mandate to include APFS issues associated with aquatic animals.

33. As one of its first priorities, the Aquatic Animals Commission undertook the development of a new text on antimicrobial resistance. This work followed similar lines to the approach taken in the *Terrestrial Code*. A new *Aquatic Code* chapter (6.1.): Introduction to the recommendations for controlling antimicrobial resistance was adopted at the 78th General Session in May 2010 (see [Annex III](#)). A draft chapter on Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary medicine was circulated to OIE Members for comment in April 2010 and comments will be considered by the Aquatic Animals Commission at its October 2010 meeting.

34. The *Aquatic Code* Chapter 4.5. Control of Aquatic Animal Health Hazards in Aquatic Animal Feed was amended to address the food safety implications of feed for aquatic animals and the revised text was adopted at the 78th General Session in May 2010.

Capacity Building for OIE Members

PVS activities and PVS Follow-up activities

35. As part of the OIE global initiative for Good Governance of Veterinary Services, and at a Member's request, the OIE will conduct an evaluation of the quality of its Veterinary Services using the OIE PVS Tool (Performance of Veterinary Services), PVS Gap analysis and follow up missions to support compliance of key elements of the veterinary infrastructure with the OIE quality standards. To date the OIE has received 103 requests and 91% of the missions have been completed.

36. The OIE has also addressed the specialised needs for the evaluation of Aquatic Animal Health Services, with a pilot mission and the development of a modified Tool for the evaluation of Aquatic Animal Health Services. This Tool is available on request from the OIE.

37. In the face of increasing global trade, climate change and the emergence and re-emergence of diseases that can rapidly spread across international borders, Veterinary Services need an effective legislative framework to fulfil their key functions. The OIE is aware that in many developing countries the veterinary legislation is inadequate to address the challenges of today and of the future. To assist Members, the OIE has published guidelines on the essential elements to be covered in veterinary legislation (refer to:

http://www.oie.int/eng/OIE/organisation/A_Guidelines_Vet%20Leg.pdf

38. OIE Members that have received an OIE PVS Evaluation may benefit from a follow-up mission dedicated to the provision of advice and assistance in modernising the national veterinary legislation. To date the OIE has received 22 official requests for missions and 9 have been completed.

39. To discuss needs and provide advice on tools that can help Members to modernise veterinary legislation, the OIE will hold the First OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Legislation, in Djerba Tunisia on 7-9 December 2010. The CAC Secretariat has been invited to make a presentation at the conference as the key standard setting organization for food safety in relation to international trade. Information on the conference may be found at:

http://www.oie.int/eng/A_LEG_VET2010/ENG_first%20announcement.pdf

National focal points

40. The creation of OIE National Focal Points for animal production food safety and for veterinary products, under the overall authority of the OIE National Delegate, will contribute to the OIE expertise and strengthen communication between the OIE, its Members and the INFOSAN network on these important topics. The Terms of Reference for these OIE Focal Points are provided at Annex IV.

41. Specific training for Focal Points for APFS and for veterinary products is underway worldwide, on a region by region basis. To date, APFS Focal Point seminars have been held in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and South America, and a seminar is planned to take place in Asia later this year. The first Focal Point seminar on veterinary products will take place in July 2010 in Belgrade, Serbia. Consistent with the 'One Health' concept and recognizing the need to strengthen liaison at the national level between professionals responsible for the entire food production chain, the need for veterinarians to liaise with human health professionals is emphasized in the OIE Focal Point training seminars.

Annex I

RESOLUTION No. 26

Roles of public and private standards in animal health and animal welfare

CONSIDERING THAT

1. OIE Members adopted, at the 76th General Session in 2008, Resolution No. XXXII 'Implications of private standards in international trade of animals and animal products';
2. The World Trade Organization (WTO), under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), formally recognises the OIE as the reference organisation for establishing international standards on animal diseases, including zoonoses;
3. In areas not covered by the SPS Agreement, the OIE international standards could be considered as a basis for national technical regulations under the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade;
4. The OIE Members and the international community at large recognise the OIE as the organisation responsible for setting standards for animal health (including zoonoses), animal production food safety and animal welfare, with the objective of providing a scientific basis for safe international trade in animals and animal products and improving animal health and welfare worldwide;
5. The OIE World Assembly of Delegates has adopted and continues to adopt international standards covering animal health, animal welfare and animal production food safety;
6. While private standards can be beneficial in promoting good practice and supporting producers to meet public standards, it is of major concern to OIE Members that some private standards for sanitary safety and animal welfare relating to animal products have the potential to conflict with OIE standards;
7. Private sanitary standards have the potential to create doubts or confusion on the part of consumers regarding the safety of foods that meet official standards;
8. The OIE has signed official Agreements and works in close collaboration with the international industry organisations such as International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), International Dairy Federation (IDF), International Meat Secretariat (IMS), International Egg Commission (IEC), International Poultry Council (IPC) and Safe Supply of Affordable Food Everywhere (SSAFE);
9. Formal linkages and channels of communication between private standard setting organisations and the OIE have so far been limited and could be strengthened.

THE ASSEMBLY

RECOMMENDS

1. That standards for sanitary safety, which are covered by the WTO SPS Agreement, and animal welfare standards should be addressed separately;
2. To reaffirm the standards published by the OIE in the field of animal health, including zoonoses, as the official guarantees for safe international trade in animals and animal products, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade and promoting the prevention and control of animal diseases worldwide;
3. That for sanitary safety, because the mandate of the international standard setting organisations is clearly recognised under the WTO SPS Agreement, the role of private standards should be limited to supporting the implementation of official standards;
4. To promote the implementation of the OIE animal welfare standards as reference standards that apply globally;
5. That the Director General continue undertaking relevant activities to further strengthen the OIE's activities in standard setting for animal health, including zoonotic diseases, and animal welfare

and speed up work on new animal welfare standards;

6. To continue to implement and reinforce capacity building programmes to help Members to implement the OIE standards;
7. That the Director General continue to provide advice on the steps that may be available to advocate that private animal health and animal welfare standards, where used, are consistent with and do not conflict with those of the OIE;
8. That the Director General maintain close cooperation on sanitary standards with relevant international organisations, notably the WTO and the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, to establish a transparent framework for dealing with private sanitary standards that affect international trade within the WTO;
9. That the Director General maintain and strengthen appropriate links and dialogue with relevant global private standard setting bodies and global private industry organisations with the aim to allow compatibility of private standards with OIE standards while ensuring communications with national governments and consumers;
10. To encourage global private standard setting bodies to promote the use of official standards as benchmarks against which private standards are referenced for international trade in animals and animal products;
11. To encourage global private standard setting bodies to strengthen or develop transparent mechanisms and to work towards increased harmonisation with public standards and transparency of private standards.

(Adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 27 May 2010)

Annex II

RESOLUTION No. 19

Animal Production Food Safety

CONSIDERING THAT

1. The permanent Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety, established by the Director General in 2002, held its ninth meeting in November 2009 and drafted a work programme for 2010. It also proposed some minor amendments to its Terms of Reference and Modus operandi;
2. The Working Group has developed various texts aimed at minimising food safety risks associated with hazards in animal production, including a *Guide to Good Farming Practices*. The text has been finalised and will be published in cooperation with FAO in English, French and Spanish;
3. The Working Group has reviewed the revised *Terrestrial* and *Aquatic Code* chapters on the control of hazards of animal health and public health importance in animal feed and a draft text on control of such hazards in heat-treated petfood;
4. The Working Group has reviewed a discussion paper by Dr Knight-Jones on priority pathogens for standard setting by OIE and recommended that it be sent to OIE Members for comment prior to making a decision on which pathogens should be given priority for standard setting in OIE;
5. The OIE and the Codex Alimentarius Commission continued to work together to ensure that standards relevant to animal production food safety developed by both organisations are consistent and take a 'whole food chain' approach to food safety;
6. The work on animal production food safety benefits from cooperation between the OIE and the FAO and WHO, which provide additional expert advice and expertise in regard to food safety, zoonotic diseases and related issues.

THE ASSEMBLY

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. The Director General retain the Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety to advise him and the relevant Specialist Commissions on issues relevant to animal production food safety, with the amended Terms of Reference shown in Annex VIII to the report of the ninth meeting of the Working Group.
2. The participation of high level FAO and WHO experts as members of this Working Group be maintained, to further strengthen the collaboration between OIE and Codex.
3. The 2010 work programme prepared by the Working Group guide the OIE's activities on animal production food safety during the next 12 months, with provision of the resources needed to address the identified priorities.

(Adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 26 May 2010)

Annex III

CHAPTER 6.1.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
CONTROLLING ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE**

Article 6.1.

Objective

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance for OIE Members to appropriately address the selection and dissemination of resistant micro-organisms and antimicrobial resistance determinants ~~baacteria~~ from the use of antimicrobial agents in *aquatic animals*.

Antimicrobial agents are essential drugs for human and animal health and welfare. The OIE recognises the need for access to antimicrobial agents in veterinary medicine: antimicrobial agents are essential for treating, controlling and preventing infectious *diseases* in *aquatic animals*. The OIE therefore considers that ensuring continued access to effective antimicrobial agents is important.

The OIE recognises that antimicrobial resistance is a global public and animal health concern that is influenced by the usage of antimicrobial agents in humans, *animals* and elsewhere. Those working in the human, animal and plant sectors have a shared responsibility to address the risk factors for the selection and dissemination of antimicrobial resistance. Arising from its mandate for the protection of animal health and food safety, the OIE developed these chapters to provide guidance to Members in regard to risks in the animal sector.

The application of *risk assessment* and *risk management* measures should be based on relevant international standards on *risk analysis* and supported by sound data and information when available. The guidance provided in these chapters should be consulted as part of the standard approach to reduce the risk associated with the selection and dissemination of antimicrobial resistant micro-organisms and antimicrobial resistance determinants.

Annex IV***Terms of Reference for the OIE National Focal Point on Animal Production Food Safety***

During the 76th General Session in May 2008 the importance of the focal point for information on animal diseases was re-iterated and Delegates were also requested to nominate additional focal points for wildlife, veterinary products, animal production food safety, animal welfare and aquatic animals.

As detailed in the final report of the 76th OIE General Session in May 2008, the responsibilities of the focal points are under the authority of the OIE Delegate. Any information transmitted to the OIE from the different focal points needs to be transmitted under the designated authority of the OIE Delegate. This practice would equally apply, if focal points are located in other Departments or Ministries not under jurisdiction of the Veterinary Authority, as from a legal perspective, the OIE considers the official OIE Delegate to be the unique representative of the country.

Details on proposed tasks of the national focal point for animal production food safety.

1. to establish a network of animal production food safety experts within his country or to communicate with the existing network;
 2. to establish and maintain a dialogue with the Competent Authority for animal production food safety in his country, and to facilitate cooperation and communication among several authorities where responsibility is shared;
 3. to receive from the OIE Central Bureau copies of the reports of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission), including reports of the Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety, and other relevant reports;
 4. to conduct the in-country consultation process with recognised animal production food safety experts on draft texts proposed in those reports as well as draft standards proposed by the Code Commission when dealing with animal production food safety issues; and
 5. to prepare comments for the Delegate on each of the relevant meeting reports reflecting the scientific view and position of the individual OIE Member Country or Territory and/or the region, including comments on the proposals for new or revised OIE standards related to animal production food safety, taking into account when relevant their compliance with *Codex Alimentarius* existing standards.
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Terms of Reference for the OIE National Focal Point for Veterinary Products

During the 76th General Session in May 2008 the importance of the focal point for information on animal diseases was re-iterated and Delegates were also requested to nominate additional focal points for wildlife, veterinary products, animal production food safety, animal welfare and aquatic animals.

As detailed in the final report of the 76th OIE General Session in May 2008, the responsibilities of the focal points are under the authority of the OIE Delegate. Any information transmitted to the OIE from the different focal points needs to be transmitted under the designated authority of the OIE Delegate. This practice would equally apply, if focal points are located in other Departments or Ministries not under jurisdiction of the Veterinary Authority, as from a legal perspective the OIE considers the official OIE Delegate to be the unique representative of the country.

Details on proposed tasks of the national focal point for veterinary products:

1. to establish a network of veterinary product experts within his country or to communicate with existing networks;
2. to establish and maintain a dialogue with the Competent Authority for veterinary products in his country, and to facilitate cooperation and communication among several authorities where responsibility is shared;
3. under the authority of the OIE Delegate of his country, to monitor legislation on and control of veterinary products to ensure that these are in support of OIE international standards, guidelines and recommendations;
4. to act as a contact point with the OIE on matters related to veterinary products;
5. to receive from the OIE Central Bureau information on VICH² activities and copies of the reports of the Biological Standards Commission and other relevant reports, should they address discussion points on veterinary products;
6. to conduct, on request, the in-country consultation process with recognised veterinary product experts on draft texts of standards and/or on guidelines and recommendations proposed in those reports; and
7. to prepare comments for the Delegate on each of the relevant meeting reports reflecting the scientific view and position of the individual OIE Member Country or Territory and/or the region, including comments on the proposals for new or revised OIE standards and guidelines and recommendations related to veterinary products.

² VICH: International Cooperation on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Veterinary Medicinal Products.