Recommendation No. 2

Proper application of Halal slaughter

CONSIDERING THAT

1. Religion is the foundation and major source of the culture and ethics in the Middle East Region, and most people believe it is the main driver of all aspects of their lives;

2. Until now, in many Member Countries of the Region, the understanding of animal welfare, especially during slaughter, has generally been expressed in terms of religious precepts and humane ethics rather than through regulations and legislation;

3. In spite of the fact that the majority of populations in the Region are Muslim, Halal slaughter is not being implemented in some cases as it should be, according to religious precepts;

4. Slaughterhouses in most Middle East countries need to make huge efforts to achieve better animal welfare and food safety objectives;

5. Animal welfare is a complex, multi-faceted, national and international public policy issue with important scientific, ethical, economic, cultural, political and commercial dimensions;

6. The OIE has a mandate to improve animal health and welfare worldwide, that standards on animal welfare were first adopted at the General Session in May 2005 and that they have been regularly updated ever since;

7. Animal health is a key dimension of animal welfare and that the subject of animal welfare is included in the OIE PVS Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services and is also taken into account in the OIE initiative on veterinary legislation and veterinary education;

8. Regional animal welfare strategies or approaches, adapted to the situation in each region and accompanied by a suitable implementation plan, make a major contribution to enabling the OIE to carry out its mandate with respect to improving animal health and welfare worldwide;

9. Through PVS evaluations and other activities, the OIE has been able to assess the challenges faced by some countries in the Region of Middle East in trying to fulfil the missions inherent in good quality of Veterinary Services;

10. The lack of organisation of the various involved parties in the animal production sector prevents the creation of public–private partnerships essential for the sustainable implementation of OIE recommendations and standards in the field of animal health and welfare; and

11. It is important to continue capacity-building activities and to improve and develop them, both for the exchange of information and for their contribution to the overall strengthening of the capacities of the Veterinary Services using all the components of the OIE PVS Pathway.
THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. Delegate of OIE Member Countries of the Region of the Middle East sensitise religious leaders and other relevant authorities of their country with regard to the cruelty that may currently occur, especially during transport and slaughter of animals for human consumption;

2. OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East, with the support of the Member Countries and the OIE Regional Representation for the Middle East, take the lead in promoting the proper application of animal slaughter in accordance with OIE Standards, which also comply with Halal precepts, and that NGOs, national and religious authorities, producers, consumer associations and other stakeholders also be included in this process so to encourage the creation of public-private partnerships;

3. Member Countries of the Region better implement the OIE animal welfare standards, including those dealing with land transport and slaughter of animal for human consumption;

4. Member Countries improve abattoirs by equipping them with all the facilities required for the proper implementation of animal welfare standards, including the following: correct design of the facility, unloading facilities and lairage; availability of feed and water; ante-mortem inspection; control of animal movement within the slaughterhouse; equipment for restraining animals; slaughter boxes;

5. Member Countries promote the involvement of consumer associations as possible leaders to highlight the regulatory partnerships for Halal slaughter, animal welfare and food safety and quality;

6. Member Countries of the Region sensitise official veterinarians in charge of livestock, especially at abattoirs, to the concepts of animal welfare and how these relate to Islamic precepts;

7. Member Countries implement effective and continuous training and education for all personnel working in abattoirs, and especially slaughterers;

8. OIE provide technical support to the publication of a document on the best practice for Halal slaughter complying with OIE adopted standards, which should be made available to personnel in slaughterhouses and also to the general public;

9. The OIE use the results of evaluations performed using the OIE PVS Evaluation Tool and Gap Analysis Tool to propose suitably adapted continuing training programmes, including training the trainers seminars as well as twinning actions using OIE Collaborating Centres (CC) specialised in animal welfare and between Veterinary Education Establishments (VEE), or other relevant twinning activities; and

10. The OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East with the support of the Member Countries and the OIE Regional Representation for the Middle East work jointly on the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy (RAWS), which will define the required action plan for the Region and include the standards that Member Countries consider to be necessary to improve animal welfare in the Region with proper application of Halal slaughter precepts being one of the main components.

(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East on 26 September 2013 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 29 May 2014)