Recommendation No. 2

The importance of integrating animal welfare, environmental health and veterinary legislation in improving food security and contributing to agricultural Gross Domestic Product in Africa

CONSIDERING THAT

1. Livestock systems occupy an important terrestrial surface area and that they play a significant socio-economic role;

2. The implementation of animal welfare, environmental health and veterinary legislation principles in animal production operations increases productivity, resulting in a higher quantity and quality of animal products, thereby ensuring food security and enhancing the contribution to agricultural gross domestic product;

3. The OIE has developed standards and guidelines on animal welfare as well as on veterinary legislation and that their implementation requires special efforts by Member Countries, including strengthening the governance of the Veterinary Services;

4. Although environmental health is considered in the general principles laid out in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code, the OIE is currently relatively silent on the topic;

5. OIE Member Countries have been invited to designate a National Focal Point for Animal Welfare and some Regional Commissions have established networks to share knowledge and experience amongst these Focal Points;

6. Animal welfare non-compliance and a disregard for environmental health in livestock production operations are common in both developed and developing countries;

7. The current OIE animal welfare standards are not yet exhaustive in that they do not address all animal husbandry operations and do not cover all species of livestock;

8. A proper awareness and capacity building of all relevant interested parties is an essential prerequisite for effective and efficient delivery of the mandate of the Veterinary Services; and

9. Implementation of the Veterinary Services mandated activities requires appropriate human and financial resources, a good organisational structure and a clearly defined national chain of command.
THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. The OIE continue to provide support to its Members and particularly African countries in advocating the implementation of animal welfare, environmental health and veterinary legislation principles complying with OIE Standards in animal production systems;

2. The OIE, through its Veterinary Legislation Support Programme, continue to offer expertise to its Members, upon request, so as to ultimately ensure they have good, enforceable legislation relevant to the veterinary domain;

3. The OIE develop additional animal welfare standards and guidelines to cover other relevant animal husbandry operations and species;

4. The Veterinary Services of all OIE Member Countries in the Africa region take all necessary measures to implement the standards on animal welfare and veterinary legislation adopted by the OIE;

5. The Delegates of OIE Member Countries in the Africa region take all necessary measures to ensure that, if a national Focal Point for Animal Welfare has not yet been appointed, one be appointed as quickly as possible and that the Focal Points take part in regional capacity-building programmes organised by the OIE;

6. The OIE use the results of evaluations performed within the framework of the OIE PVS Pathway to propose suitably adapted continuing training programmes and twinning actions between Collaborating Centres specialising in animal welfare, between veterinary education establishments (VEE) and between Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSB);

7. During the development of its 6th Strategic Plan, the OIE engage a discussion with its Members on extending the OIE’s mandate on environmental health as it relates to animal health and animal welfare;

8. OIE Member Countries step up and strengthen stakeholders’ knowledge and awareness of animal welfare and environmental health management issues through the use of mass communication media and the establishment of an information portal on their websites; and

9. OIE Member Countries, with the support of the OIE and development partners, make concerted efforts on capacity building so as to raise the level of competence and skills in animal welfare as well as environmental health management in livestock production operations.

(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Africa on 22 February 2013 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 30 May 2013)