

# **Recommendations**

**of  
Conferences of OIE Regional Commissions  
organised since 1 June 2004**

**Endorsed by the International Committee  
of the OIE on 26 May 2005**

**21st Conference  
of the  
OIE Regional Commission for Europe**

Avila (Spain), 28 September-1 October 2004

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- Recommendation No. 1: Contingency planning and simulation exercises for the control of epizootics
- Recommendation No. 2: Structure and organisation of the Veterinary Services to implement the concept 'from the stable to the table'
- Recommendation No. 3: Simplification of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) categorisation system and new surveillance and monitoring mechanisms for BSE adapted to the structure and dynamics of the national cattle population

Recommendation No. 1

**Contingency planning and simulation exercises for the control of epizootics**

CONSIDERING THAT

The introduction or spread of a highly contagious disease is a continuous threat to livestock and international trade in all countries,

Early warning, early detection and early reaction are fundamental policies for the control of animal diseases,

Negative sanitary experiences in several Member Countries has emphasised the need of a broad involvement of available resources to control an epizootic,

Contingency planning in Member Countries does not adequately cover all the following diseases: foot and mouth disease, vesicular stomatitis, swine vesicular disease, rinderpest, peste des petits ruminants, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, lumpy skin disease, Rift Valley fever, bluetongue, sheep pox and goat pox, African horse sickness, African swine fever, classical swine fever, highly pathogenic avian influenza, Newcastle disease,

There is an increased demand for high-level computerised information systems,

The 20th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe already recommended that countries develop scenarios in 'peace time' with detailed contingency plans of measures to be taken in case of outbreaks,

Lack of public support for stamping-out measures and poor cooperation with animal welfare and environmental groups has been a cause of concern,

Simulation exercises are an important tool to test contingency plans on their efficiency and on their practicability,

Information on and experiences with simulation exercises have not always been sufficiently shared between Member Countries,

Simulation exercises involving neighbouring states can assist planning for the control of outbreaks occurring in bordering regions,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. Member Countries be encouraged to establish contingency plans for all the following diseases: foot and mouth disease, vesicular stomatitis, swine vesicular disease, rinderpest, peste des petits ruminants, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, lumpy skin disease, Rift Valley fever, bluetongue, sheep pox and goat pox, African horse sickness, African swine fever, classical swine fever, highly pathogenic avian influenza, Newcastle disease.

2. Member Countries be encouraged to establish and strengthen a broad and comprehensive participation of all Government Services and stakeholder organisations in the preparation of contingency plans.
  3. Member Countries regularly conduct simulation exercises and publish the lessons learnt, and improve their plans where necessary following such exercises.
  4. The OIE encourage cooperation and exchange on simulation exercises, including the publication of national reports.
  5. Member Countries ensure Contingency Plans bring into their content the relevant recommendations of the 20th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe concerning animal welfare.
  6. Member Countries give special consideration in the Contingency Plans and simulation exercises to the following: actions in the initial period after suspicion and before disease is confirmed, national reference laboratory capacity and preparedness for scaling up of activities, cross-border co-operation, and emergency vaccination scenarios.
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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe on 1 October 2004 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)

Recommendation No. 2

**Structure and organisation of the Veterinary Services to implement the concept  
'from the stable to the table'**

CONSIDERING THAT

Food Safety, like animal health, is a public health priority in all the Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe,

An integrated approach to sanitary risks has become indispensable throughout the production chain for animal products, 'from the stable to the table', notably within the context of international trade,

The 68th and 69th General Sessions of the OIE International Committee adopted the Third Strategic Plan and the Work Programme of the Director General for the period 2001-2005 and gave the Director General a clear mandate to address food safety issues,

The OIE and the Codex Alimentarius Commission have signed an agreement aimed at clarifying the respective mandates of the two organisations, to avoid gaps and possible contradictions in the standards adopted by each of the two organisations,

The OIE permanent Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety has established permanent cooperative relations with the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the FAO and the WHO with the aim of developing international standards, guidelines and good practices intended to facilitate risk-based approaches and the implementation of risk management programmes at all stages of food production 'from the stable to the table'; the work of this Group notably consists of proposing international standards to be presented for adoption by the OIE; the scope of these standards covers hazards for consumers, such hazards needing to be managed from the animal production phase through to the primary processing of animals and animal products, even if the said hazards have no direct effect on the health of the animals,

The Working Group proposes to develop a common Codex / OIE stance on the roles and missions of the Veterinary Services relating to meat hygiene throughout the production chain, including the animal health and welfare missions, which can be conducted by the veterinarians responsible for food controls,

Veterinarians are qualified to play a key role in implementing the concept 'from the stable to the table',

The Veterinary Services have a major and non-substitutable role to play in implementing controls and inspections during the production phase, in particular during primary processing at the abattoir,

The structure and organisation of the Veterinary Services and other services involved need to be adapted to modern food safety approaches,

Sanitary risks extend well beyond national borders, and the cost of sanitary crises is out of all proportion to the cost of preventing them,

The World Bank notably recognises the surveillance and early warning activities of the Veterinary Services as an International Public Good, and thus in the interests of the international community as a whole,

## THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

### RECOMMENDS

#### A. THAT THE OIE:

1. Continue its activities within the framework of the permanent Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety, in particular those relating to the role of the Veterinary Services 'from the stable to the table'.
2. Complete Chapter 1.3.3. of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* relating to the quality and evaluation of the Veterinary Services, so as to take into account the concept 'from the stable to the table', notably concerning the resources needed to guarantee the quality of certification of animals and animal products for export.
3. In association with the other relevant international organisations, continue its action to convince policy decision-makers to view the work of the Veterinary Services as an International Public Good and, as a consequence, to grant them the resources they need in order to comply with OIE standards.
4. Provide OIE Member Countries with the necessary technical assistance and guidance to enable them to implement all of the OIE standards.

#### B. THAT THE MEMBER COUNTRIES:

1. At very least, consider the implementation of the provisions of Chapter 1.3.3. of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* relating to the quality and evaluation of the Veterinary Services as a priority.
2. Promote and put in place an integrated, intersectoral system of veterinary control within the fields of production and control of feed, foodstuffs and products of animal origin.
3. Make fully sure that the organisation of public services ensures a continuum of sanitary controls throughout the food production chain.
4. When the national organisation does not itself ensure this continuum, set up effective coordination structures.
5. Assign to the Veterinary Services (as defined in the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*), the Head of which is in the vast majority of Member Countries the Delegate to the OIE, responsibility for supervising the application of all OIE standards in their country.
6. Take into account, for the management of sanitary risks, non-scientific aspects such as socioeconomic considerations and the technical and financial feasibility of the proposed measures, notably when the risk assessment and risk management functions are separate.
7. Provide the competent national authorities, and in particular the Veterinary Services, with the necessary legal and financial support to fulfil the missions they have been assigned, notably those relating to the application of OIE standards.

8. Put in place all the necessary measures to maintain or develop a network of veterinary practitioners to assure an efficient on-farm sanitary surveillance, particularly to meet the emerging and re-emerging phenomena.
  9. Encourage and implement communication relating to sanitary risks and to actions carried out by the Veterinary Services for the prevention and management of these risks, in particular to consumers.
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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe on 1 October 2004 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)





Recommendation No. 3

**Simplification of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) categorisation system  
and new surveillance and monitoring mechanisms for BSE adapted to the structure and  
dynamics of the national cattle population**

CONSIDERING THAT

During the 71st General Session in May 2003, the International Committee adopted Resolution No. XXII, mandating the Director General to take all necessary measures to submit to the 72nd General session a draft proposal for a simplification of categories for the sanitary status of Member Countries with respect to BSE,

The OIE Code Commission organised a meeting of an Ad hoc Group of BSE experts to address a request from the International Committee to simplify the current BSE categorisation system in the *Terrestrial Code* and consider suggestions from several Member Countries on alternative approaches,

The BSE Ad hoc Group that met in April 2004, recommended to replace the current categorisation system by a new one, which would group countries into the following three categories: negligible risk of BSE, controlled BSE risk, undetermined risk of BSE,

During the 72nd General Session in May 2004, the OIE requested that Member Countries send their comments to the OIE to give the Code Commission some indications as to the direction in which it should be heading. Furthermore, the OIE recalled that in addition to the priority of a simplified approach to country categorisation in the BSE chapter, a revision of the BSE surveillance appendix was included in the work programme of the OIE Code Commission,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

RECOMMENDS THAT THE OIE

1. Further develop the proposal to replace the current BSE categorisation by a system establishing the following three proposed categories: general category, controlled risk and negligible risk.
2. Further develop the list of tradeable products regardless of the BSE status of the exporting country.
3. Develop standards and guidelines for surveillance based on epidemiological grounds in order to replace the current appendix by a more scientific surveillance programme.
4. Establish a Collaborating Centre as centre of excellence in the field of TSE epidemiology, in relation with an international panel of experts, to provide the necessary guidance for Member Countries to design the appropriate surveillance programme taking into account the structure and dynamics of the cattle population.

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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe on 1 October 2004 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)



**17th Conference  
of the  
OIE Regional Commission for the Americas**

Panama City (Panama), 16-19 November 2004

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Recommendation No. 1: Risk communication

Recommendation No. 2: Veterinary education: meeting the needs of official Veterinary Services

Recommendation No. 3: Simplification of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) categorisation system and new surveillance and monitoring mechanisms for BSE adapted to the structure and dynamics of the national cattle population

Recommendation No. 4: Functioning of Committees and Ad hoc Groups within the scope of the OIE Regional Commissions



Recommendation No. 1

**Risk communication**

CONSIDERING THAT

Risk communication is an integral phase of the risk analysis process and is the basis for the transparency required in applying health measures,

Effective risk communication calls for a strategy to identify the audience to which the message is to be communicated, the source and the most efficient communication channel,

Several countries have developed guidelines for risk communication,

The Ad hoc Group on Risk analysis of the Regional Commission for the Americas has revised the chapters of the Code relating to risk analysis, including Article 1.3.2.7 on risk communication, and has proposed a number of amendments, including the development of an article on risk communication components,

Article 1.3.2.7 considers scientific critique to be part of the risk communication process and that it is desirable for risk analyses to be submitted for impartial peer review,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. The heading of Article 1.3.2.7 of the Spanish version of the *Code* be changed to read: "*Principios de la comunicación sobre el riesgo*" and that the word "*información*" be replaced with "*comunicación*" in the rest of the text to accord with the English version. The Spanish version uses the term "*información sobre el riesgo*" to refer to both risk communication and risk information in the English version.
2. The OIE convene an ad hoc group to carry out the following tasks:
  - a) Prepare a proposal for adding an Article 1.3.2.8. on risk communication components.
  - b) Prepare a more detailed guide on the principles of risk communication.
  - c) Develop guidelines for the scientific review of risk analysis studies by impartial experts.

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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas on 19 November 2004 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)



Recommendation No. 2

**Veterinary education: meeting the needs of official Veterinary Services**

CONSIDERING THAT

The rationalisation of public sector spending in most countries of the Americas is causing difficulties for official Veterinary Services, preventing the entry of new officials, or reducing their numbers,

The demand for activities is growing steadily, relative to the demand from markets purchasing livestock production and from consumers, and as a result of the occurrence of diseases that hitherto were exotic,

In all countries there is a good supply of private veterinary professionals with spare capacity,

Centres for pre and post-graduate training represent the source of supply for the public veterinary sector,

It is essential to link the needs of official Veterinary Services with vocational training programmes, and official Veterinary Services are entirely willing to discuss those needs,

Training for new veterinary professionals must not only meet national demand, but must also take into account global issues,

The OIE and its rules represent rules of great value for countries to follow in determining the health status and safety of animal products, and that the entire veterinary profession should be familiar with these rules,

In the *Terrestrial Code* the free exercise of the profession is complementary to the actions of the official Services,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. Official Veterinary Services take the initiative of establishing strategic alliances with the veterinary education authorities, educators and students, in order to discuss the feasibility of adapting training programmes for new veterinary professionals to meet the needs of public organisations.
2. Those needs of official Veterinary Services be based on norms and regulations of the OIE in order to facilitate a harmonised application.
3. The participation of private veterinary professionals in those activities, which can be delegated, and which are currently carried out entirely by public officials, be promoted.
4. This involvement be supported by professional ethics and disciplines, regulated and guaranteed by a statutory body, and optionally by accreditation.

5. In order to standardise the relation between the private veterinarian and the official Veterinary Services it is appropriate to prepare through an ad hoc group the basis and format of this alliance to the completion of this proposal.
  6. The official Veterinary Services support integration between the Veterinary and Medical Schools to further education in the areas of zoonosis, food safety, epidemiology and other disciplines to strengthen the principles of public health.
  7. Collaboration between official Veterinary Services and Veterinary Learning Institutions within Member Countries be promoted.
  8. Cooperation with the OIE Collaborating Centre in Lyon (France) to encourage advanced training be promoted.
  9. Promote better usage of electronic tools to develop the necessary competencies between public and private sectors, and to guide current and future efforts in this context.
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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas on 19 November 2004 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)



Recommendation No. 3

**Simplification of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) categorisation system  
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dynamics of the national cattle population**

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The BSE Ad hoc Group that met in April 2004, recommended to replace the current categorisation system by a new one, which would group countries into the following three categories: negligible risk of BSE, controlled BSE risk, undetermined risk of BSE,

During the 72nd General Session in May 2004, the OIE requested that Member Countries send their comments to the OIE to give the Code Commission some indications as to the direction in which it should be heading. Furthermore, the OIE recalled that in addition to the priority of a simplified approach to country categorisation in the BSE chapter, a revision of the BSE surveillance appendix was included in the work programme of the OIE Code Commission,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS  
RECOMMENDS THAT THE OIE

1. Further develop the proposal to replace the current BSE categorisation by a system establishing the following three proposed categories: negligible risk, controlled risk and undetermined risk of BSE.
2. Further develop the list of tradeable products regardless of the BSE status of the exporting country. Furthermore, continue to work on measures applied to products which do depend on the sanitary status of the exporting country.
3. Based on recent scientific advances, continue to improve the Appendix on surveillance with its recommendations directly linked to the production systems, and commensurate with the outcomes of a risk assessment in compliance with Article 1.3.6 of the *Terrestrial Code*.

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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas on 19 November 2004 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)



Recommendation No. 4

**Functioning of Committees and Ad hoc Groups within the scope  
of the OIE Regional Commissions**

CONSIDERING THAT

The OIE Regional Commission for the Americas has identified a need to work in close collaboration with Associations, having a regional or continental focus, of primary producers or other livestock industry sectors, to be more aware of the needs and proposals of these sectors within the framework of the OIE mandate,

There are no procedures within the General Regulations of the OIE, as no specification in this respect exists,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE AMERICAS

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. The following text be introduced in Chapter III of the General Rules of the OIE, as Article 18:

“The Bureau of the Regional Commission, in agreement with the General Director, and based on the sanitary priorities of the region, can establish committees and ad hoc groups, to analyse, discuss and develop proposals on their specific expertise, that will be submitted to the Regional Commission for approval and subsequently brought before the International Committee through its official procedures.”

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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas on 19 November 2004 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)



**16th Conference  
of the  
OIE Regional Commission for Africa**

Khartoum (Sudan), 7-10 February 2005

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- Recommendation No. 1: Organisation and management of transhumance in Africa
- Recommendation No. 2: The implications of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) for the livestock sector in Africa
- Recommendation No. 3: Animal health and production policies and implementation mechanisms in Africa



Recommendation No. 1

**Organisation and management of transhumance in Africa**

CONSIDERING THAT

Transhumance is a very important pastoral management method that is practised in many African countries,

It often provides the most relevant system to manage natural pastoral resources,

It is a cultural, social and economic basis of many pastoral African communities representing large populations,

There is a need to exchange information in this field among the countries,

In some instances, there is dire lack of regulations and legislation on transhumance,

Transhumance is a source of social conflicts that often has dramatic consequences,

Transhumance can carry epidemiological risks and diverse resulting losses,

Recommendation No. 1 of the Regional Conference of Maputo in 2003 relating to the importance of livestock identification and movement control to the promotion of animal disease control and facilitation of trade,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

RECOMMENDS THAT

A. THE ORGANISATIONS AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIONS IN CHARGE OF LIVESTOCK IN OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION MEMBER COUNTRIES

1. Take advantage of current initiatives, such as the ALive Platform and the GF-TADs Programme, for the development of animal production and the control of animal diseases and zoonoses.
2. Identify, whenever possible, grazing zones and transhumance corridors, as well as their appropriate development, in a more precise and operational manner.
3. Boost epidemiological surveillance and tools for the control of the major diseases associated with transhumance (foot and mouth disease, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, PPR, animal trypanosomoses, anthrax, etc.).
4. Take into account the sustainability of pastoral natural resources managed within pastoral systems linked with transhumance.
5. Implement mechanisms for the supervision of animal movement linked with transhumance practices.

6. Make use of the supportive specialised framework of the OIE Regional Representation for Africa and the AU-IBAR to develop capacity-building in Member Countries and transfer of knowledge among African countries for the development of animal production and animal health actions.
7. Strengthen cooperation between sub-regional organisations (ECOWAS, CEBEVIRHA, SADC, IGAD, AMU, etc.) in order to limit the negative effects of transhumance.

B. GOVERNMENTS OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES

1. Allocate as a priority adequate public resources for developing livestock production and controlling animal diseases, in compliance with the decision of the Heads of States taken in Maputo (i.e. 10% of the national investment budgets allocated to agriculture).
2. Draw up, harmonise and implement sub-regional agreements and directives and national laws and regulations adapted to transhumance practices.
3. Strengthen the capacities of the sub-regional organisations for setting up sub-regional observatories for collecting and processing the information required to organise and manage transhumance.
4. Strengthen national and regional devices for preventing and managing conflict arising from transhumance.

C. THE OIE

Provide Member Countries with standards and guidelines on livestock identification and traceability taking into account the economic and practical constraints to be faced by Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa.

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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Africa on 10 February 2005 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)



Recommendation No. 2

**The implications of genetically modified organisms (GMOs)  
for the livestock sector in Africa**

CONSIDERING THAT

A range of strategies is required in agriculture to adequately address the growing need for increased food security, nutrition and poverty reduction,

Livestock production requires substantial development to keep pace with the growing demand for increased food production,

Several advances have been made in recent years in the field of biotechnology and many applications, including genetically modified organisms, are relevant to livestock production,

The potential for the application of biotechnology, including genetic modification, in disease management and livestock production is gaining increasing recognition,

There is need for policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks in Member Countries to facilitate the exploitation of such new technology, taking into account potential risks to human, animal and environmental health, and consumer concerns,

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. Member Countries review or develop national policies, legislation and guidelines in compliance with international standards for the safe application of biotechnology, including genetically modified organisms, in the livestock sector.
2. Member Countries, in relation with industry, engage in general awareness and educational initiatives on biotechnology, in particular genetically modified organisms.
3. Member Countries develop, improve, acquire and/or maintain the necessary institutional and technical capacity, and infrastructure, to optimally utilise the value of available biotechnologies (including genetically modified organisms) in the livestock sector.
4. The OIE assist Member Countries in these efforts within its mandates.

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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Africa on 10 February 2005 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)



Recommendation No. 3

**Animal health and production policies and implementation mechanisms in Africa**

CONSIDERING THAT

The Cairo Declaration and four Recommendations adopted during the Africa-Middle East Conference on the Implementation of Animal Health Standards: the Quest for Solutions, which was held in Cairo (Egypt) from 11 to 13 October 2004,

The mandate of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, composed of the Delegates of Member Countries nominated by their respective governments having submitted valid and legal adhesion documents to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE),

The legal status of the recommendations adopted by the OIE Regional Commissions, which are subsequently submitted for validation to the General Session of Delegates of OIE Member Countries (OIE International Committee composed of 167 Member Countries on 31 December 2004),

The mandate of the African Union (AU) and the Interafrican Bureau of Animal Resources (IBAR),

The mandate of the OIE Regional Representation for Africa, adopted by the OIE International Committee during its 69th General Session,

The respective mandates of Sub-Regional and International Organisations, such as the FAO, dealing with livestock development in Africa,

The necessity for the Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa to progressively adhere to the SPS agreement of the WTO in order to have better access to inter-regional and international trade in animals and their products, in particular with regard to the quality of their Veterinary Services,

The positive impact of public health and poverty alleviation linked to the regional and national implementation of public investment programmes aimed at controlling animal diseases, including zoonoses,

The necessity to harmonise the animal health and production policies and to improve and strengthen the regional implementation mechanisms,

The recent development in international initiatives aimed at promoting the animal health and production policies in Africa, such as the ALive Platform (African Livestock), GF-TADs (Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases) and STDF (Standards for Trade Development Facility),

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. Mechanisms associating closely the OIE Regional Commission for Africa via the elected Representatives, the African Union, the Sub-Regional Institutions of economic integration (ECOWAS, IGAD, CEBEVIRHA, SADC, AMU ...), the OIE Regional Representation for Africa, the FAO and the donors be set up to implement efficiently the ALive, GF-TADs and STDF programmes as soon as they are operational.
2. The AU-IBAR plays a major role in the governance of the said mechanisms, in particular on the level of the Regional Steering Committees of these initiatives, in association with other concerned Regional Organisations in Africa.
3. The permanent Secretariat of the ALive Platform currently conducted by the World Bank in Washington be transferred to Africa, to give support to joint implementation by the AU-IBAR and the OIE Regional Representation for Africa.
4. Donor meetings be organised on a regular basis under the joint aegis of the OIE, AU-IBAR and the FAO in order to mobilise the multi-donor fiduciary funds of ALive and GF-TADs.

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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Africa on 10 February 2005 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2005)