

Recommendations

of
**Conferences of OIE Regional Commissions
organised since 1 June 2017**

**Endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE
on 24 May 2018**

**14th Conference of the
OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East**

Istanbul, Turkey, 2 to 6 October 2017

[Recommendation No. 1:](#) Sustainable strengthening of the epidemio-surveillance systems in Middle East Member Countries

[Recommendation No. 2:](#) Addressing Challenges in the Middle East at the Human-Animal Interface under the One Health Concept

Recommendation No. 1

**Sustainable strengthening of the epidemio-surveillance systems
in Middle East Member Countries**

GIVEN THAT:

1. OIE Member Countries have a responsibility to comply with the OIE standards and guidelines on animal disease surveillance and reporting;

CONSIDERING THAT:

2. Based on the responses to the questionnaire, filled in by the Member Countries of the Middle East region for the preparation of the Technical Item of the Conference, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), foot and mouth disease (FMD), brucellosis and bluetongue are the main diseases for which Member Countries perform surveillance;
3. The Veterinary Authority is the main body responsible for performing surveillance in Member Countries, which is of vital importance to manage global animal disease risks given the Middle East is at a geographical “crossroads” between three continents;
4. The Veterinary Authority use the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) for information on countries’ disease status;
5. Nine out of the 16 respondent Member Countries do not have an epidemiologist in their outbreak investigation teams, a situation that may adversely affect the quality of service provided and lead to the wrong decisions being taken by high officials;
6. Veterinary para-professionals have a major role in executing outbreak investigations;
7. The Veterinary Authority in the vast majority of Member Countries collaborates with other governmental agencies in the event of an outbreak, especially for diseases of public health importance such as brucellosis and infection with Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS CoV);
8. Half of the respondent Member Countries do not have a regular programme of capacity-building activities in the field of surveillance and outbreak investigations for relevant staff;
9. The main challenges faced by the epidemio-surveillance systems of the Member Countries are: shortage of field support staff, shortage of laboratory technical staff, budgetary constraints, insufficient level of capacity building and difficulty in obtaining diagnostic materials;
10. Training of relevant OIE National Focal Points and facilitating communication are the most requested actions the OIE could undertake to support building and improving the epidemio-surveillance systems in the Member Countries.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Member Countries define their duties, develop relevant legislation and undertake surveillance planning, applying the general and disease-specific provisions of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* when developing and implementing their epidemio-surveillance systems, especially the Chapters on Animal Health Surveillance, Infection with Avian Influenza Viruses, Infection with Foot and Mouth Disease Virus, Infection with *Brucella spp.*, Infection with Bluetongue Virus, and Infection with peste-des-petits ruminants (PPR) virus;
2. Member Countries commit to enhancing surveillance, especially through better communication and collaboration between bordering countries, as well as in reporting disease occurrences;
3. Member Countries ensure they have the required number of suitably trained staff to perform epidemio-surveillance activities relevant to their animal health situation;
4. Member Countries nominate their relevant OIE National Focal Points, if not already undertaken, and ensure their participation in OIE capacity-building activities and any other training programme deemed necessary for the proper functioning of epidemio-surveillance systems;
5. Member Countries seek better understanding of surveillance and reporting challenges at field level, including incentives and disincentives to reporting by farmers, the private sector and private veterinarians, including the socio-economic impacts of response to disease;
6. Member Countries be actively involved in all relevant activities related to strengthening intersectoral collaboration, especially with regard to addressing zoonotic diseases;
7. Member Countries take advantage of the new proposed approaches of the PVS Pathway to better identify and address the challenges faced by their epidemio-surveillance systems including in advocacy for improved budgets, and relating to the surveillance and reporting chain of command;
8. Member Countries actively participate in existing initiatives, such as the OIE/FAO Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) and, when relevant, the Mediterranean Animal Health Network (REMESA), to strengthen the regional epidemiological network;
9. Member Countries take advantage of the veterinary education establishments in the Region, the network of OIE Collaborating Centres and other relevant academic institutes to help address continuing education needs in epidemiology and risk analysis, and also explore the opportunity of developing a regional epidemiological and risk analysis training centre;

AND THAT:

10. The OIE accelerate the modernisation of WAHIS (WAHIS +) to ensure the system remains a relevant tool for informing and analysing the animal health situation worldwide, including developing a longer term epidemio-surveillance analysis for presenting to its Members;
11. The OIE provide guidelines on the expected competencies of veterinary para-professionals involved in epidemio-surveillance activities;

12. The OIE continue to provide capacity-building activities for the benefit of relevant OIE National Focal Points;
 13. The OIE secure funds, through exploring with interested partners and donors, to support the implementation of PVS Pathway missions and related activities in the Region;
 14. The OIE, in collaboration with its partners, consider developing analysis of the economic and social costs of poor surveillance and delayed detection of animal diseases, including zoonoses, to promote advocacy to increase the budget allocations for improved surveillance activity.
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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East on 6 October 2017 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 24 May 2018)

Recommendation No. 2

**Addressing Challenges in the Middle East at the Human-Animal Interface
under the One Health Concept**

CONSIDERING THAT:

1. The One Health concept, which was initiated in the 2000s, recognises that the health of people is intimately connected to the health of animals and the environment;
2. The risks for pathogens to spread to new areas and evolve into new forms are growing stronger with globalisation, climate change and change in human behaviour;
3. Most of the newly emerging diseases are zoonotic in origin;
4. There is a lack of understanding on how the One Health Concept can be implemented at the global, regional and national level;
5. The OIE, FAO and WHO, under the Tripartite, have recently published a Commitment reconfirming their engagement to provide multi-sectoral collaborative leadership in addressing health challenges by maintaining the momentum the Tripartite has achieved in combating antimicrobial resistance (AMR), rabies, and zoonotic influenzas and in reinforcing collaboration across national public health, animal health and food safety systems;
6. As part of the International Health Regulations (IHR) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF), the WHO undertakes, at the request of countries, Joint External Evaluation (JEE) missions, during which three of the Technical Areas evaluated, namely AMR, zoonotic diseases and food safety, are considered as the ones most likely to require intersectoral collaboration at the human–animal interface, with other relevant partners of animal health and food safety, such as FAO;
7. The analysis of the JEE average score for these three Technical Areas obtained by 11 Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East indicates that, with the exception of two countries found to be in a state of critical challenge, the Region can generally be considered to be at the stage of establishing the One Health concept but not as yet having fully developed the required sustainable mechanisms to properly implement it;
8. The One Health concept, through collaboration with relevant stakeholders, has had a demonstrable impact on reducing the incidence of important zoonotic diseases, with examples in the region.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Member Countries pursue their engagement in the OIE PVS Pathway by requesting PVS Evaluation or PVS Evaluation Follow-up missions and other missions of this programme and ensure not only that the results of these missions are made available and used during IHR Self-Evaluation, JEE missions and all other IHR MEF-related activities, but that the Veterinary Services also actively participate in these activities;

2. Member Countries establish and make fully active, if they have not already done so, a National One Health Committee(s) or equivalent as a forum to address the challenges at the human-animal-environment interface, and also consider intersectoral training, simulations or exchanges as part of implementing the One Health approach in all relevant fields;
3. Member Countries request the WHO and OIE to undertake IHR/PVS National Bridging Workshops in the Middle East Region as a process to map, support and strengthen intersectoral collaboration at the human-animal-environment interface, in priority areas such as anti-microbial resistance, zoonotic diseases and animal production food safety;
4. Member Countries advocate and communicate on the One Health concept among all relevant national stakeholders, and especially veterinary and human medical students, practitioners and officials, the private sector and communities. This communication should support early detection and response to zoonotic diseases and issues (e.g. AMR) of public health interest, and Member Countries are encouraged to reflect the One Health concept in legislative, institutional and implementation frameworks;

AND THAT:

5. The OIE, in collaboration with FAO and WHO, communicate widely on the recent Tripartite Commitment Note and, through this renewed collaboration, ensure that future activities undertaken under the Tripartite collaboration, effectively support countries in strengthening the implementation of the One Health concept;
6. The OIE, in collaboration with WHO, strengthen connections between the PVS Pathway and the IHR MEF so to ensure that Veterinary Services are systematically considered as key actors and leading partners in global health security, supported by other key partners such as FAO as well as donors;
7. The OIE consider working with all its One Health partners to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Global One Health Awareness Week or similar to promote the important activities under the One Health approach;
8. The OIE continue training regional PVS experts and explore providing PVS Pathway training in the region, with the opportunity to develop new PVS experts, including as part of One Health capacity building, and include them in the relevant missions, pending a merit based selection process.

(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East on 6 October 2017 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 24 May 2018)

**30th Conference of the
OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania**

Putrajaya, Malaysia, 20 to 24 November 2017

[Recommendation No. 1:](#) How to implement farm biosecurity: the role of government and private sector

[Recommendation No. 2:](#) Surveillance and risk mitigation measures for illegal and unregulated movement of animals across borders or through markets

Recommendation No. 1

How to implement farm biosecurity: the role of government and private sector

CONSIDERING THAT:

1. Farm biosecurity represents a suitable measure for public–private partnerships (PPP) given its potentially valuable contribution to the prevention and control of all diseases of livestock, with private sector benefits at both the individual and commercial farming level, as well as public sector benefits at the wider community, national and international levels;
2. Despite this potential, research indicates that in most rural sectors, livestock farmers generally have a poor understanding of biosecurity, the exception being some intensive commercial operations (mainly pigs, poultry and ruminant feed lots);
3. The implementation of biosecurity interventions suitable for livestock smallholders through to village-level practices, commercial operations, and via national or international programmes, is a complex process of education and behaviour change aimed at empowering people to make better personal and collective decisions that mitigate disease risks;
4. Biosecurity interventions need alignment with the motivations of all involved in the supply chain of livestock production, preferably offering clear short-term risk management benefits that elicit interest, investment and application;
5. As the practices of the commercial sector demonstrate, and public–private partnerships offer, the linking of biosecurity and disease control with improved livestock productivity and financial outcomes is important as it provides opportunities for sustainable improvements in livelihoods and economic development and more effective control and eradication strategies for foot and mouth disease (FMD) and other diseases;
6. Comprehensive farm biosecurity comprises a package of preventive measures and vaccination should not be a disincentive to engage in other necessary elements such as farm hygiene, quarantine, or feed and water safety given the general protection these measures provide;
7. Based on the response to the questionnaire provided to the Delegates of the Asia, the Far East and Oceania region for preparing this Technical Item, the use of systemic antibiotics for FMD cases appears common in the region and such practice is not recommended for viral diseases, unless there is evidence of secondary bacterial infection;
8. Based on the response to the questionnaire, livestock trader engagement is considered challenging, but an important area of work for achieving effective biosecurity in most Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania;
9. Based on the response to the questionnaire, the role of government in livestock farm biosecurity is variable in Member Countries of the Asia, the Far East, and Oceania region, presumably reflecting the variations in legislation, availability of resources, including field Veterinary Services, and priorities of livestock farming to the economies and social fabric of individual countries;

10. Based on the response to the questionnaire, the role of the private sector in livestock biosecurity is stronger in the developed Member Countries of the region and those with large intensive pig and/or poultry industries;
11. Based on the response to the questionnaire, public-private partnerships for on-farm biosecurity were reported by the majority of the Member Countries in the region; and
12. Based on the response to the questionnaire, the majority of the Member Countries in the region indicated they were satisfied with the current OIE involvement in on-farm biosecurity, but would be open to more support from the OIE.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA, THE FAR EAST AND OCEANIA

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Member Country Veterinary Authorities, in collaboration with interested parties including from the private sector, explore the further development of systems/activities/programmes/training aimed at aligning farm biosecurity interventions with the motivations of all involved in the supply chain of livestock production, preferably offering clear and simple risk management measures that offer immediate and sustained benefits and protect and increase productivity and improve livelihoods;
2. Member Country Veterinary Authorities develop promotional messages on such biosecurity measures that could include, among others: improved hygiene, routine quarantine of new introductions, isolation of sick animals, identifying and applying options for managing the high risks of communal grazing and sale of non-vaccinated animals, managing the risks of feeding uncooked food scraps to pigs, promoting the importance of keeping accurate records of animal health events, and ensuring wild birds do not have access to water or feed used for commercial poultry;
3. Member Country Veterinary Authorities discourage the use of systemic antibiotics for FMD cases since it is ineffective, and due to the concerns of emergence of antimicrobial resistance;
4. Member Countries' Veterinary Authorities encourage the establishment of a Collaborating Centre on biosecurity, with a focus on farm biosecurity, which could provide and coordinate capacity-building activities on biosecurity to Member Countries;
5. Member Countries' Veterinary Authorities assess and share lessons learned and best practices on farm biosecurity, including the use of public–private partnership mechanisms, and including activities targeting aquatic animals and apiculture;
6. The OIE include references to farm biosecurity in the development of the competencies and model core curriculum for veterinary para-professionals;
7. The OIE develop further guidance on biosecurity at the farm level aligned with the relevant sections of both *Terrestrial* and *Aquatic Codes*, including for apiculture, and consider the development of templates for farm biosecurity planning in collaboration with relevant partners such as FAO; and
8. The OIE identify relevant experts that could be made available to Member Countries to work on developing resources and training capacity for farm biosecurity, such as through a train-the-trainer mechanism.

(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania on 24 November 2017 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 24 May 2018)

Recommendation N°2

**Surveillance and risk mitigation measures for illegal and unregulated movement of animals
across borders or through markets**

CONSIDERING THAT:

1. There has been a marked rise in demand for poultry meat, beef, lamb, pork, and aquatic animal products in recent years, due to the increasing population, continued economic development and the transition towards a more meat-rich diet in the Asia, the Far East and Oceania region;
2. Animal movements are considered a major factor in the transmission of transboundary animal diseases, including some important diseases that pose a threat to the livestock, poultry, and aquatic animal industries;
3. The distribution and spread of transboundary animal diseases in the region are a reflection of the market-driven movement of animals;
4. Illegal or unregulated movements of animals between or within countries have been reported in several countries of the region;
5. Livestock and poultry markets continue to be important components in the movement pathways of animals across the region;
6. Water ways, and particularly rivers, can be a source of transboundary animal diseases' spreads (e.g. African swine fever), such as through the dumping of infected carcasses;
7. Surveillance is essential to prevent diseases entering and moving along the livestock and poultry market chain, whereas the shortage of funding and the lack of coverage of the field animal health network, well-equipped laboratories, experienced and skilled staff, and reliable and affordable reagents are constant constraints on surveillance activities in some countries of the region; and
8. The OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, in Section 4 on disease prevention and control, Section 5 on trade measures, import/export procedures and veterinary certification and in disease-specific chapters, and the OIE *Aquatic Animal Health Code*, in the corresponding Sections 4 and 5 and in disease-specific chapters, provide recommendations including mitigating measures to be implemented by OIE Members for the safe trade of animals and products of animal origin.

THE OIE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA, THE FAR EAST AND OCEANIA

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Members of the Asia, the Far East and Oceania region affected by illegal and unregulated movement of animals take joint actions aimed at better exchanging information on disease status, monitoring animal movements, identifying current and new movement routes and establishing movement protocols including joint check points and strategies to mitigate illegal movements;

2. Members of the region strengthen and implement their legislation on animal movements to reduce the risk of transboundary animal diseases being spread through movement of animals;
3. Members of the region establish buffer zones along borders where there is a known potential for animal movements;
4. Members of the region consider, bilaterally or multilaterally, and in collaboration with livestock and poultry dealers and traders, the establishment of orderly and efficient official pathways and risk-based cross-border protocols for animal movements, that would benefit livestock, poultry, and aquatic animal product traders, dealers, and producers (through safe but cost-effective transboundary movements); as well as governments (through reduced costs of disease control);
5. Members of the region apply for OIE official recognition of country or zone disease-free status or formally self-declare disease free status as appropriate;
6. Members of the region make their import/export regulations and protocols readily accessible to all stakeholders, including providing relevant contact details;
7. Members of the region ensure they have strong animal disease surveillance in place supported by adequate field animal health networks and laboratory capacity allowing for proper certification of animals destined for trade;
8. Members of the region improve their animal identification and traceability systems and consider how such systems can contribute to safer cross border animal movements, including through identifying vaccination status and minimising illegal movements;
9. Members of the region ensure that livestock and poultry markets and border checkpoints be provided with experienced veterinarians and/or veterinary paraprofessionals trained to perform inspection activity and respond to (or refer as appropriate) disease detections;
10. Members of the region establish cross-sectoral relationships with their national authorities in fields such as Customs, Border Police, and the Military to ensure there is cross-sectoral awareness of the risks and referral, with appropriate penalties, to minimise the risk of illegal or unregulated cross border animal movement;
11. Members of the region take advantage of the OIE PVS Pathway to evaluate and monitor their compliance with OIE standards, including those relevant to the movement of animals;
12. Members of the Region address risks of transboundary animal diseases' spread by water ways, such as from illegal dumping of contaminated carcasses;
13. The OIE encourage through its Reference Laboratories, the undertaking of inter-laboratory proficiency testing to make sure that laboratory diagnostic results are reliable;
14. The OIE continue to develop guidelines, recommendations and standards to support its Members in mitigating the risk of animal disease transmission through the movement of animals;

15. The OIE continue to provide training to its Members on the OIE official disease status recognition procedures; and
 16. The OIE continue to support its Members in their efforts to monitor their compliance with OIE standards, including for transboundary animal movements, by providing PVS Pathway missions and related support.
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(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania on 24 November 2017 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 24 May 2018)

