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REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON TRANSPORT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIALS[1]

Paris, 17 – 19 July 2017

The first meeting of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on transport of biological materials (hereafter referred to as the Group) was held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris from 17 to 19 July 2017.

1. Opening

Dr François Diaz, Chargé de mission in the Science and New Technologies Department, welcomed the participants and mentioned that the main objective of the meeting was to review and update the Chapter 1.1.3. "Transport of Specimens of Animal Origin" of the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*, and to discuss the feasibility of and interest in developing a guide for the transport of biological materials.

Dr Matthew Stone joined the meeting on Tuesday 18 July and welcomed the participants on behalf of Dr Monique Eloit, Director General of the OIE. Dr Stone highlighted the importance of the Chapter 1.1.3., especially for the control and surveillance of animal diseases. He also pointed out the very good collaboration of the different relevant international organisations on this issue.

2. Appointment of the chairperson and rapporteur, and adoption of the agenda

The meeting was chaired by Dr William B. Karesh, and Dr Joseph O'Keefe acted as rapporteur.

The adopted Agenda and List of Participants are presented in Appendices I and II of this report, respectively.

3. Presentations related to Transport of Biological Materials

Presentations were given on general aspects relevant to the transport of specimens of animal origin, on international transport of samples and related border customs operations, and the basis of the Nagoya Protocol and its relevance to transport of biological materials.

4 Update of the Chapter 1.1.3 of the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* on "Transport of Specimens of Animal Origin"

The Group first noted the close relationship between the chapter and a variety of other international regulations and guidance documents, including those published by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the World Health Organization (WHO). They agreed that it was important that the chapter be consistent with other official guidance.

The Group suggested that the name of the chapter be changed to 'Transport of Biological Materials' to more broadly include all biological materials which are not specimens and are regularly sent domestically or internationally.

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[1] Note: This ad hoc Group report reflects the views of its members and may not necessarily reflect the views of the OIE. This report should be read in conjunction with the September 2017 report of the Biological Standards Commission because this report provides its considerations and comments. It is available at: http://www.oie.int/en/international-standard-setting/specialists-commissions-groups/laboratories-commission-reports/meetings-reports/

On review of the structure of the chapter, the Group decided to reorder its sections to better explain the various requirements for transport of biological materials. The following changes were proposed to the structure of the chapter:

Introduction

The Group proposed to update the introduction to provide the scope and context of the materials to be included in the chapter.

A. Responsibilities

The Group proposed to begin the chapter with the responsibilities of the relevant parties engaged in the transport of biological materials so as to correctly identify the different roles of the sender, carrier and recipient. The Group also integrated additional information related to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Nagoya Protocol and material transfer agreements.

B. Classification and categorisation

The Group decided to separate the discussion of classification and categorisation of biological materials from the recommendations for packaging. The Group updated information on the different categories and reviewed the information on the classification of biological materials.

C. Packaging

The Group reformatted and updated information on packaging requirements linked to the categories and associated labelling requirements.

D. Additional consideration

The Group reviewed information provided by CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and provided summary guidance on the application and relevance of the CBD Nagoya Protocol and CITES to the transport of biological materials.

E. References and further reading

The Group updated the references and publications listed in the current version of Chapter 1.1.3.

Appendix 1 on Definitions

The Group proposed to move the definitions from the beginning of the current version of Chapter 1.1.3 to an appendix. These definitions are consistent with the definitions in the United Nation Model Regulations.

Appendix 2 on Example of the packaging system (IATA recommendations) for the packing and labelling of different types of biological materials

The Group proposed that the Appendix include illustrations for Category A and Exempt Materials in addition to the current illustration for Category B materials.

Appendix 3

The Group reviewed the proposed Material Transfer Agreement and proposed minor amendments.

Appendix 4 on decision trees for deciding on the transport requirements of a biological material

The Group proposed to expand the decision tree, which currently only covers infectious agents, to also include responsibilities related to the various stages of transport and other regulations and treaties such as the CITES agreement. The Group also noted that it would be useful to provide a decision tree on Nagoya Protocol, but due to continuing development on the topic, further consideration will be required.

5. Explore the feasibility and interest of developing a practical guide on transport of biological materials for veterinary laboratories

The Group mentioned that the collaborative development of a practical guide on transport of biological materials endorsed by international agencies, involved in this transport, is of interest. However, this may be challenging, and there is first a need to explore initiatives being pursued by other organisations and groups. The Group suggested that OIE use the opportunity of upcoming meetings to explore the interest in and utility of such a document.

6. Other matters

The Group noted that changes to Chapter 1.1.3 may result in inconsistency with Chapter 1.1.2, which has not been updated, and suggested that the OIE Biological Standards Commission consider whether an update of Chapter 1.1.2 is necessary.

The Group identified the need to update the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* Chapter 5.8 entitled "International transfer and laboratory containment of animal pathogens", especially with respect to the international requirements for transfer of animal pathogens, due to CITES and the Nagoya Protocol.

The Group recognised that the requirements for various approvals and permits relating to CITES and the Nagoya Protocol have the potential to delay diagnostic laboratory testing in cases of disease emergencies. The Group suggested that OIE continue its engagement with CITES and the CBD on this topic.

The Group noted the development of international recommendations relating to 'dual use research of concern' (DURC) and suggested that the OIE monitor the ongoing development of these recommendations to determine if future chapter revisions should take the developments into account.

The Group noted that the listing of rinderpest virus as a category A infectious substance under UN transportation guidelines is for 'cultures only'. The impact of this is that samples from suspect cases and other materials that may contain infectious rinderpest are subject to a lower packaging standard (Category B infectious substance). The Group proposed that the OIE engage with other international organisations (e.g. FAO, IATA etc.) on the recategorisation of any potential infectious rinderpest material as Category A, given the following considerations: (a) the current status of rinderpest as 'eradicated' world-wide (b) the need to ensure ongoing surveillance would not impeded, particularly in resource-constrained environments and (c) the requirement to ensure ongoing destruction of archival material that may contain rinderpest.

The Group suggested that the listing for hantavirus causing haemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome as a category A infectious substance under UN transportation guidelines should be updated to include strains that cause 'pulmonary disease', and that the OIE engage with other international organisations on this matter.

7. Adoption of report

The Group adopted the report.

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…/Appendices

Appendix I

MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON TRANSPORT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIALS

Paris, 17 – 19 July 2017

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Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting;
2. Appointment of chair and rapporteur and adoption of the agenda;
3. Presentation related to Transport of Biological Materials;
4. Update of the Chapter 1.1.3. of the *Manual of Diagnostic tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* on "*Transport of specimen of animal origin*";
5. Explore the feasibility and interest of developing a practical guide on transport of bilogical materials for veterinary laboratories;
6. Other matters;
7. Adoption of the report.

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Paris, 17 – 19 July 2017

List of Participants

MEMBERS

Dr William B. Karesh
Executive Vice President for Health and Policy
EcoHealth Alliance / Wildlife Trust
460 West 34th St., 17th Floor
New York, NY. 10001, USA
Tel: (1.212) 380.4463
Fax: (1.212) 380.4465
karesh@ecohealthalliance.org

Dr Christopher H. C. Lyal
Access and Benefit-Sharing Consultant
UNITED KINGDOM
Tel: + 44 7944 099902
christopher.lyal@btopenworld.com

Dr Élodie Monchatre - Leroy
Laboratoire de la rage et de la faune sauvage
Technopole Agricole et Vétérinaire
Domaine de Pixérécourt - Bât. H.
CS 40009 - 54220 Malzéville
FRANCE
Tel : 33 - (0)3 83 29 89 50
elodie.monchatre-leroy@anses.fr

Dr Joseph O'Keefe
OIE National Focal Point for Veterinary Laboratories
66 Ward Street, PO Box 40742
Upper Hutt 5018, NEW ZEALAND
Joseph.OKeefe@mpi.govt.nz

Dr Delille Wessels
Quality Assurance Manager
ARC-Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute
Private Bag X05
Onderstepoort 0110, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 12 529 9337
Fax: +27 12 565 4667
WesselsD@arc.agric.za

Dr Henk Wisselink
Research Scientist, Department of Infection Biology
Wageningen Bioveterinary Research
P.O. Box 65, 8200 AB Lelystad
THE NETHERLANDS
henk.wisselink@wur.nl

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Mr David Cooper
(Invited but could not attend)
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800
Montreal QC H2Y 1N9, CANADA
david.cooper@cbd.int

Ms Andrea Gruber
Senior Manager, Special Cargo
International Air Transport Association
33 Route de l'Aéroport
1215 Geneva 15 Airport, SWITZERLAND
Tel: + 41 22 770 2690
grubera@iata.org

Dr Kazunobu Kojima
Scientist, IHR Assessment, Development and Maintenance, Global Capacities, Alert and Response
20 avenue Appia
CH-1211 Geneva 27, SWITZERLAND
Tel: + 41 22 791 35 07
Fax: + 41 22 791 13 88
kojimak@who.int

Mr Theodorus Hesselink
Technical Officer
Rue du Marché, 30
B-1210 Brussels
BELGIUM
Tel: +32 (0) 2 209.92.11
Fax: +32 (0) 2 209.92.62
Theo.Hesselink@wcoomd.org

Dr Akiko Kamata
Animal Health Service
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel:+ 39 06 570 54552
Akiko.Kamata@fao.org

Mr Jose Rovira-Vilaplana
Technical Officer
World Health Organization
20 avenue Appia
CH-1211 Geneva 27
SWITZERLAND
roviraj@who.int

Mr John E. Scanlon
(*Invited but could not attend*)
Secretary General
CITES
Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Genève
SWITZERLAND
john.scanlon@cites.org

BIOLOGICAL STANDARDS COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE

Prof Anthony R. Fooks
Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
Woodham Lane, New Haw, Addlestone. Surrey. KT15 3NB
UNITED KINGDOM
tony.fooks@apha.gsi.gov.uk

OIE HEADQUARTERS

Dr Matthew Stone
Deputy Director General
12 rue de Prony, 75017 Paris
FRANCE
Tel: 33 - (0)1 44 15 18 88
Fax: 33 - (0)1 42 67 09 87
m.stone@oie.int

Dr François Diaz
Chargé de mission
Science and New Technologies Dept
f.diaz@oie.int

Dr Laura Espinosa
Intern
Science and New Technologies Dept
l.espinosa@oie.int