Animal Welfare: the role of the OIE

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Animal Welfare in Europe: Achievements and Future Prospects
Strasbourg, 23-24 November 2006
• Introduction to the OIE
• OIE role in Animal Welfare
• OIE Animal welfare Guidelines
• Future Steps
OIE: an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1924

5 Regions; 167 Member Countries
29 Americas; 50 Africa; 49 Europe; 13 Middle East; 26 Asia.
“The hand of God struck the Netherlands, afflicting its cattle with Rinderpest”
Updating International Standards

COMMITTEE, COMMISSIONS, DELEGATES

PROBLEM

Specialist Commissions

Review

Advice of experts or other Specialist Commissions

Draft text

1

DELEGATES

2

COMMITTEE

OIE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

Adoption
To facilitate trade in Animals & products while avoiding unjustified trade barriers;
To support countries in the control of animal diseases and prevention of zoonoses.
PRINCIPLES OF THE OIE CODE

• WTO obligations
• Risk Assessment
• Measures based on science
• Strengthening Veterinary Services
OIE OBJECTIVES

1. Transparency
2. Scientific information
3. International Solidarity
4. Global trade standards
5. Veterinary Services
6. Food safety & Animal welfare
• Disease is an important cause of poor welfare in livestock production

• The OIE is well placed to provide international leadership

• Guidelines should be based on science

• Taking into account ethical, cultural, religious and political contexts
Animal Welfare WG

- Manages the work program set by the International Committee
- Develops priorities and strategies
- Views of academia, governments, private sector in all regions
- Reports to the Code Commission
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ‘Five freedoms’
- ‘Three Rs’
- Science-based recommendations
- There is a clear link between animal health and animal welfare

Better animal welfare helps improve productivity and can give other benefits
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

• Relevance for 167 Member Countries
• Initial priority of animals in agriculture and aquaculture
• Involvement of stakeholders
• Collaboration (incl. with other international organisations)
OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code
Guidelines adopted in 2005 on:
1. Slaughter of animals for human consumption
2. Killing of animals for disease control
3. Transport by land
4. Transport by sea
USING THE GUIDELINES

• By veterinary services
  – in bilateral discussions between trading partners
  – as part of the domestic or international policy framework

• By the private sector
  – Company veterinarians, Livestock producer organisations, Retailers of animal products etc
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- Global Animal Welfare Conference 2004
  *Proceedings* available
- Expansion of animal welfare content of OIE website and publications.
- Inclusion of Animal Welfare in OIE 4th Strategic Plan.
FUTURE WORK

• New Guidelines being developed on:
  – stray dog control
  – laboratory animal welfare
  – aquatic animal welfare
  – housing of production animals
  – zoo / exotic animal welfare
• International Declaration
• Animal welfare in the teaching curriculum and as a scientific research priority
Global Animal Welfare Conference 2008
“Towards the Implementation of International Guidelines”