



EUROPEAN UNION

SANCO

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Brussels,

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Subject: **Meeting of the International Aquatic Animal Health Code Commission –
September 2009**

Dear Bernard,

Please find attached as an annex to this letter the Community comments with reference to certain Chapters in the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code for discussion at the next Code Commission meeting. In order to facilitate the examination of the comments of the Community, they have been incorporated in boxes into the OIE reports. In this context, the Community thanks the OIE for providing the electronic version of the Report.

Thank you for the continued excellent collaboration and trust you will find our comments constructive and useful.

Yours sincerely,

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Cc: All CVOs Member States, Croatia, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey

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NON_PAPER

Community comments on the proposals from the OIE for amendments to the OIE Aquatic Code Chapters concerning the Spring Viraemia of the Carp and Infection with abalone herpes-like virus.

REVISED ARTICLES 2.X.X.3. AND 2.X.X.9.
AND ARTICLE 2.X.X.12.

USING THE SVC CHAPTER ARTICLES AS AN EXAMPLE

Community comments

The Community would agree with the proposed articles. However, we would like that the AAC takes the following comments into consideration:

1) Article 2.1.4.3

Point 1.a) ii on “biological samples preserved for diagnostic applications in such a manner as to inactivate the disease agent”; may be deleted as the new CHAPTER 1.5.6. on MEASURES CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF AQUATIC ANIMAL DISEASE AGENTS AND PATHOLOGICAL MATERIAL” deals with this issue.

2) Articles 2.1.4.9. and 2.1.4.12 contain the following sentence:

Members may wish to consider introducing internal measures to address the risk of prevent such *commodities* being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.

This sentence may be misleading and has no added value: members are free to impose internal measures provided they do not unnecessarily influence international trade. Therefore, we propose the deletion of that sentence in both articles.

Article 2.1.4.3.

Commodities

1. When authorising the importation or transit of the following *commodities*, ~~the Competent Authorities~~ should not require any SVC related conditions, regardless of the SVC status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*.
 - a) From the species referred to in Article 2.1.4.2. intended for any purpose:
 - i) *commodities* treated in a manner that inactivates the *disease agent* (e.g. leather made from fish skin, pasteurised products and some ready-to-eat meals; and fish oil and fish *meal* intended for use in *feed*);
 - ii) biological samples preserved for diagnostic applications in such a manner as to inactivate the *disease agent*.
 - b) ~~The following *commodities* destined for human consumption from the species referred to in Article 2.1.4.2. which have been prepared and packaged for direct retail trade:~~
 - i) ~~*eviscerated fish* (chilled or frozen);~~
 - ii) ~~*fillets or cutlets* (chilled or frozen);~~

iii) ~~dried eviscerated fish (including air dried, flame dried and sun dried).~~

~~For the commodities referred to in point 1b), Members may wish to consider introducing internal measures to prevent the commodity being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.~~

2. When authorising the importation or transit of *commodities* of a species referred to in Article 2.1.4.2., other than those referred to in point 1 of Article 2.1.4.3., the *Competent Authorities* should require the conditions prescribed in Articles 2.1.4.7. to 2.1.4.12. relevant to the SVC status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*.
3. When considering the importation/ or transit of a commodity from an *exporting country, zone or compartment* not declared free of SVC ~~of a live commodity~~ from a species not covered in Article 2.1.4.2. but which could reasonably be expected to be a potential mechanical vector/fomite for SVC, the *Competent Authorities* should conduct a *risk analysis* in accordance with the recommendations in the *Aquatic Code*. The *exporting country* should be informed of the outcome of this assessment.

[...]

Article 2.1.4.9.

Importation of live aquatic animals and aquatic animal products for processing for human consumption from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from spring viraemia of carp

When importing, for processing for human consumption, live *aquatic animals* of the species referred to in Article 2.1.4.2. and aquatic animal products from a country, *zone or compartment* not declared free from SVC, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the *risk* and, if justified, require that:

1. the consignment is delivered directly to and held in *quarantine* facilities for slaughter further and processing to one of the products referred to in point 1 of Article 2.1.4.3., or products described in point 1 2 of Article 2.1.4.12., or other products authorised by the *Competent Authority*; and
2. all effluent and waste material from the processing are treated in a manner that ensures inactivation of SVCV or disposed in a manner that prevents contact of waste with susceptible species.

Members may wish to consider introducing internal measures to address the risk of ~~prevent~~ such *commodities* being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.

~~This Article does not apply to commodities referred to in point 1 of Article 2.1.4.3. or products described in point 1 2 of Article 2.1.4.12.~~

[...]

Article 2.1.4.12.

Importation of aquatic animal products from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from spring viraemia of carp

1. The risk posed by the following products destined for human consumption from the species referred to in Article 2.1.4.2. which have been prepared and packaged for direct retail trade is considered negligible:
 - i) eviscerated fish (chilled or frozen);
 - ii) fillets or cutlets (chilled or frozen);
 - iii) dried eviscerated fish (including air dried, flame dried and sun dried);:

For these commodities Members may wish to consider introducing internal measures to prevent the commodity being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.

2. When importing *aquatic animal products*, other than those referred to in point 1 above, of the species referred to in Article 2.1.4.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from SVC, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the *risk* and apply appropriate *risk* mitigation measures.
3. ~~In the case of dead fish, whether *eviscerated* or *uneviscerated*, such *risk* mitigation measures may include:~~
 - 1-a) the direct delivery into and holding of the consignment in *biosecure/quarantine* facilities for processing to one of the products referred to in point 1 of Article 2.1.4.3., or products described in point 1 2 of this Article, or other products authorised by the *Competent Authority*;
 - 2-b) the treatment of all effluent and waste material in a manner that ensures inactivation of SVCV or disposed in a manner that prevents contact of waste with susceptible species.

~~This Article does not apply to *commodities* referred to in point 1 of Article 2.1.4.3. or products described in point 1 2 of Article 2.1.4.12.~~

— Text deleted

CHAPTER 2.2.X.

INFECTION WITH ABALONE HERPES-LIKE VIRUS

Community comment.

The Community agrees with the proposed chapter.

However, several comments can be found in Articles 2.2.X.1, 2.2.X.3, 2.2.X.5 and 2.2.X.8. We would like that the AAC takes them into consideration.

Article 2.2.X.1.

Community comment

It is not clear what it is meant with "associated manifestations". The text would benefit of clarification in this regard.

For the purposes of the *Aquatic Code*, infection with abalone herpes-like virus means herpes-like virus associated manifestation in abalone.

Methods for conducting *surveillance*, diagnosis and confirmatory identification of infection with abalone herpes-like virus are provided in the *Aquatic Manual*.

Article 2.2.X.2.

Scope

The recommendations in this Chapter apply to: *Haliotis diversicolor* (subspecies *aquatilis* and *supertexta*) and in *Haliotis laevegata*, *H. rubra* and hybrids of *H. laevegata* x *H. rubra*. These recommendations also apply to any other *susceptible species* referred to in the *Aquatic Manual* when traded internationally.

Article 2.2.X.3.

Community comments

1) Point 1.a) ii on "biological samples preserved for diagnostic applications in such a manner as to inactivate the disease agent"; may be deleted as the new CHAPTER 1.5.6. on MEASURES CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF AQUATIC ANIMAL DISEASE AGENTS AND PATHOLOGICAL MATERIAL" deals with this issue.

2) Point 1.b). contain the following sentence:

For the *commodities* referred to in point 1b), Members may wish to consider introducing internal measures to prevent the *commodity* being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.

This sentence may be misleading and has no added value: members are free to impose internal measures provided they do not unnecessarily influence international trade. Therefore, we propose its deletion

Commodities

1. When authorising the importation or transit of the following *commodities*, the *Competent Authorities* should not require any abalone herpes-like virus related conditions, regardless of the abalone herpes-like virus status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*:
 - a) For the species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. intended for any purpose:
 - i) *commodities* treated in a manner that inactivates the *disease agent* e.g. canned or pasteurized products;
 - ii) biological samples preserved for diagnostic applications in such a manner as to inactivate the *disease agent*.
 - b) The following *commodities* destined for human consumption from the species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. which have been prepared and packaged for direct retail trade
 - i) off the shell (chilled or frozen).

For the *commodities* referred to in point 1b), Members may wish to consider introducing internal measures to prevent the *commodity* being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.

2. When authorising the importation or transit of *commodities* of a species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2., other than *commodities* referred to in point 1 of Article 2.2.X.3., the *Competent Authorities* should require the conditions prescribed in Articles 2.2.X.7. to 2.2.X.11. relevant to the abalone herpes-like virus status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*.
3. When considering the importation/transit from an *exporting country, zone or compartment* not declared free of infection with abalone herpes-like virus of a *commodity* from mollusc species not covered in Article 2.2.X.2. or in point 1b) of Article 2.2.X.3. but which could reasonably be expected to be a potential mechanical vector for abalone herpes-like virus, the *Competent Authorities* should conduct a *risk analysis* in accordance with the recommendations in the *Aquatic Code*. The *exporting country* should be informed of the outcome of this assessment.

Article 2.2.X.4.

Abalone herpes-like virus free country

A country may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from abalone herpes-like virus if it meets the conditions in points 1, 2, 3 or 4 below.

If a country shares a *zone* with one or more other countries, it can only make a *self-declaration of freedom* from abalone herpes-like virus if all the areas covered by the shared water are declared abalone herpes-like virus free *zones* (see Article 2.2.X.5.).

1. A country where none of the *susceptible species* referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. is present may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from abalone herpes-like virus when *basic biosecurity conditions* have been continuously met in the country for at least the past 2 years.

OR

2. A country where any *susceptible species* referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. are present but there has been no observed occurrence of the *disease* for at least the past 10 years despite conditions – in all areas where the species are present – that are conducive to its clinical expression, as described in Chapter 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*, may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from abalone herpes-like virus when *basic biosecurity conditions* have been continuously met in the country for at least the past 2 years and infection with abalone herpes-like virus is not known to be established in wild populations.

OR

3. A country where the last known clinical occurrence was within the past 10 years or where the *infection* status prior to *targeted surveillance* was unknown (e.g. because of the absence of conditions conducive to clinical expression as described in Chapter 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*) may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from abalone herpes-like virus when:
- basic biosecurity conditions* have been continuously met for at least the past 2 years; and
 - targeted surveillance*, as described in Chapters 3.3.1. of the *Aquatic Code* and 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*, has been in place for at least the past 2 years without detection of abalone herpes-like virus.

OR

4. A country that has previously made a *self-declaration of freedom* from abalone herpes-like virus but in which the *disease* is subsequently detected may make a *self-declaration of freedom* from abalone herpes-like virus again when the following conditions have been met:
- on detection of the *disease*, the affected area was declared an *infected zone* and a *buffer zone* was established; and
 - infected populations have been destroyed or removed from the *infected zone* by means that minimize the *risk* of further spread of the *disease*, and the appropriate *disinfection* procedures (see *Aquatic Manual*) have been completed; and
 - targeted surveillance*, as described in Chapters 3.3.1. of the *Aquatic Code* and 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*, has been in place for at least the past 2 years without detection of abalone herpes-like virus; and
 - previously existing *basic biosecurity conditions* have been reviewed and modified as necessary and have continuously been in place for at least the past 2 years.

In the meantime, part of the non-affected area may be declared a free *zone* provided that such part meets the conditions in point 3 of Article 2.2.X.5.

Article 2.2.X.5.

Community comment

A) The Community encourages the OIE to lay down the ways that a previously free compartment may follow to regain freedom status.

Waiting for a proposal in this regard, the Community may argue that certain compartments formed by a single establishment with a previously disease free status may immediately regain such freedom after the detection of the disease provided:

- they are supplied with safe water (e.g. a borehole);
- the population has been removed;
- the compartment has been cleansed, disinfected and fallowed as appropriate;
- the compartment has been re-stocked with certified free animals; and
- the biosecurity management system has been re-evaluated.

B) Please, replace *M. mackini* by abalone herpes-like virus from paragraph 4.

Abalone herpes-like virus free zone or free compartment

A *zone* or *compartment* free from abalone herpes-like virus may be established within the *territory* of one or more countries of infected or unknown status for infection with abalone herpes-like virus and declared

free by the *Competent Authority(ies)* of the country(ies) concerned if the *zone* or *compartment* meets the conditions referred to in points 1, 2, 3 or 4 below.

If a *zone* or *compartment* extends over more than one country, it can only be declared a abalone herpes-like virus free *zone* or *compartment* if the conditions outlined below apply to all areas of the *zone* or *compartment*.

1. In a country of unknown status for abalone herpes-like virus, a *zone* or *compartment* where none of the *susceptible species* referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. is present may be declared free from abalone herpes-like virus when *basic biosecurity conditions* have been continuously met in the *zone* or *compartment* for at least the past 2 years.

OR

2. In a country of unknown status for abalone herpes-like virus, a *zone* or *compartment* where any *susceptible species* referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. are present but there has been no observed occurrence of the *disease* for at least the past 10 years despite conditions – in all areas where the species are present – that are conducive to its clinical expression, as described in Chapter 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*, may be declared free from abalone herpes-like virus when *basic biosecurity conditions* have been continuously met in the *zone* or *compartment* for at least the past 2 years and infection with abalone herpes-like virus is not known to be established in wild populations.

OR

3. A *zone* or *compartment* where the last known clinical occurrence was within the past 10 years or where the *infection* status prior to *targeted surveillance* was unknown (e.g. because of the absence of conditions conducive to clinical expression as described in Chapter 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*) may be declared free from abalone herpes-like virus when:
 - a) *basic biosecurity conditions* have been continuously met for at least the past 2 years; and
 - b) *targeted surveillance*, in Chapters 3.3.1. of the *Aquatic Code* and 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*, has been in place for at least the past 2 years without detection of abalone herpes-like virus.

OR

4. A *zone* previously declared free from abalone herpes-like virus but in which the *disease* is detected may be declared free from *M. mackini* again when the following conditions have been met:
 - a) on detection of the *disease*, the affected area was declared an *infected zone* and a *buffer zone* was established; and
 - b) infected populations have been destroyed or removed from the *infected zone* by means that minimize the *risk* of further spread of the *disease*, and the appropriate *disinfection* procedures (see *Aquatic Manual*) have been completed; and
 - c) *targeted surveillance*, as described in Chapters 3.3.1. of the *Aquatic Code* and 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*, has been in place for at least the past 2 years without detection of abalone herpes-like virus; and
 - d) previously existing *basic biosecurity conditions* have been reviewed and modified as necessary and have continuously been in place for at least the past 2 years.

Article 2.2.X.6.

Maintenance of free status

A country, *zone* or *compartment* that is declared free from abalone herpes-like virus following the provisions of points 1 or 2 of Articles 2.2.X.4. or 2.2.X.5. (as relevant) may maintain its status as abalone herpes-like virus free provided that *basic biosecurity conditions* are continuously maintained.

A country, *zone* or *compartment* that is declared free from abalone herpes-like virus following the provisions of point 3 of Articles 2.2.X.4. or 2.2.X.5. (as relevant) may discontinue *targeted surveillance* and maintain its status as abalone herpes-like virus free provided that conditions that are conducive to clinical expression of infection with abalone herpes-like virus, as described in Chapter 2.2.9. of the *Aquatic Manual*, exist and *basic biosecurity conditions* are continuously maintained.

However, for declared free *zones* or *compartments* in infected countries and in all cases where conditions are not conducive to clinical expression of infection with abalone herpes-like virus, *targeted surveillance* needs to be continued at a level determined by the *Competent Authority* on the basis of the likelihood of *infection*.

Article 2.2.X.7.

Importation of live aquatic animals from a country, zone or compartment declared free from abalone herpes-like virus

When importing live *aquatic animals* of species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* declared free from abalone herpes-like virus, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should require an *international aquatic animal health certificate* issued by the *Competent Authority* of the *exporting country* or a *certifying official* approved by the *importing country*.

This *certificate* must certify, on the basis of the procedures described in Articles 2.2.X.4. or 2.2.X.5. (as applicable), whether the place of production of the *aquatic animal* is a country, *zone* or *compartment* declared free from abalone herpes-like virus.

The *certificate* should be in accordance with the Model Certificate in Appendix 4.1.2.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* referred to in point 1 of Article 2.2.X.3.

Article 2.2.X.8.

Community comments

a) Paragraph 3 e) refers to " produce F-1 generation from the F-0 stock in *quarantine*;

In this paragraph it should be mentioned that quarantine conditions must be conducive to multiplication of the pathogen and eventually to clinical expression (indeed, if quarantine conditions are not suitable for pathogen multiplication and development, the recommended diagnostic approach might not be sensitive enough to detect low infection level).

b) Please, replace *M. mackini* by abalone herpes-like virus from paragraph 3 g).

Importation of live aquatic animals for aquaculture from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from abalone herpes-like virus

1. When importing, for *aquaculture*, live *aquatic animals* of species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from abalone herpes-like virus, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the *risk* and, if justified, apply the following *risk* mitigation measures:
 - a) the direct delivery to and lifelong holding of the consignment in biosecure facilities for continuous isolation from the local environment; and
 - b) the treatment of all effluent and waste material in a manner that ensures inactivation of abalone herpes-like virus.
2. If the intention of the introduction is the establishment of a new stock, the Code of Practice on the Introductions and Transfers of Marine Organisms of the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) should be followed.
3. For the purposes of the *Aquatic Code*, the ICES Code (full version see: <http://www.ices.dk/indexfla.asp>) may be summarised to the following main points:
 - a) identify stock of interest (cultured or wild) in its current location;
 - b) evaluate stock health/disease history;
 - c) take and test samples for abalone herpes-like virus, pests and general health/disease status;
 - d) import and quarantine in a secure facility a founder (F-0) population;
 - e) produce F-1 generation from the F-0 stock in *quarantine*;
 - f) culture F-1 stock and at critical times in its development (life cycle) sample and test for abalone herpes-like virus and perform general examinations for pests and general health/disease status;
 - g) if abalone herpes-like virus is not detected, pests are not present, and the general health/disease status of the stock is considered to meet the *basic biosecurity conditions* of the *importing country*, *zone* or *compartment*, the F-1 stock may be defined as free of infection with *M. mackini* or specific pathogen free (SPF) for abalone herpes-like virus;
 - h) release SPF F-1 stock from *quarantine* for *aquaculture* or stocking purposes in the country, *zone* or *compartment*.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* referred to in point 1 of Article 2.2.X.3.

Article 2.2.X.9.

Importation of live aquatic animals for processing for human consumption from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from abalone herpes-like virus

When importing, for processing for human consumption, live *aquatic animals* of species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from abalone herpes-like virus, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the *risk* and, if justified, require that:

1. the consignment be delivered directly to and held in *quarantine* facilities until processing and/or consumption; and
2. all effluent and waste material from the processing be treated in a manner that ensures inactivation of abalone herpes-like virus.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* referred to in point 1 of Article 2.2.X.3.

Article 2.2.X.10.

Importation of aquatic animal products from a country, zone or compartment declared free from abalone herpes-like virus

When importing *aquatic animal products* of species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* declared free from abalone herpes-like virus, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should require that the consignment be accompanied by an *international aquatic animal health certificate* issued by the *Competent Authority* of the *exporting country* or a *certifying official* approved by the *importing country*.

This *certificate* must certify, on the basis of the procedures described in Articles 2.2.X.4. or 2.2.X.5. (as applicable), whether or not the place of production of the consignment is a country, *zone* or *compartment* declared free from abalone herpes-like virus.

The *certificate* should be in accordance with the Model Certificate in Appendix X.X.X. (under study).

This Article does not apply to *commodities* referred to in point 1 of Article 2.2.X.3.

Article 2.2.X.11.

Importation of aquatic animal products from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from abalone herpes-like virus

When importing *aquatic animal products* of species referred to in Article 2.2.X.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from abalone herpes-like virus, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the *risk* and apply appropriate *risk* mitigation measures.

This Article does not apply to *commodities* referred to in point 1 of Article 2.2.X.3.

— Text deleted