



EUROPEAN UNION

SANCO

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Brussels,
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**Object: Meeting of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe 28 September –
1 October 2004 in Avila/Spain – Fourth OIE Strategic Plan 2005-2010**

Dear Bernard,

During the OIE General Session held in Paris in May 2004 the document 72SG/26 containing the draft of the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 was circulated. This paper will be amended by the OIE Administrative Commission in the light of comments received from all the OIE Regional Commissions and will be presented to the International Committee for adoption at the OIE General Session in May 2005 in Paris.

Please find attached as an annex to this letter the Community comments on the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan that will be discussed during the European Regional Commission meeting in Avila.

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

b/a

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Chief Veterinary Officer

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Enclosures: 1

Copy: All CVOs Member States, Bulgaria, Iceland, Norway, Romania and Switzerland.

ANNEX

OIE FOURTH STRATEGIC PLAN 2005 – 2010

- Comments of the European Union (EU) -

During the OIE General Session held in Paris in May 2004 the document 72 SG/26 containing the draft of the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 was circulated. This paper will be amended by the OIE Administrative Commission in the light of comments received from all OIE Regional Commissions and will be presented to the International Committee for adoption at the OIE General Session in May 2005 in Paris.

The European Union (EU) very much appreciates this draft which has been elaborated based on the Third OIE Strategic Plan. The EU can accept the main areas outlined i.e. strategic directions, institutional arrangements, information and communication, cooperation with other partners, capacity building for National Veterinary Services and additional matters; it supports the proposals in the draft outline strategic plan however it recommends that the following points are included or strengthened in the OIE strategic plan:

1. The EU is fully aware of the importance of strengthening of Veterinary Services in line with the relevant recommendations in the Terrestrial and Aquatic Code. It welcomes further development of the Standards in the Codes and in the Manuals in particular animal welfare. In addition a specific manual with guidelines for the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases including zoonoses should be developed. In this context the present worldwide network of OIE reference laboratories has to be updated and expanded to incorporate as far as possible all the diseases mentioned in the Manuals. The reference laboratories should provide standard diagnostic tests if no commercial tests are available.
2. Epidemiological modelling should be considered and where appropriate supported so as to evolve from just being a scientific tool to a practical applied instrument in the veterinary administration. Therefore guidelines to support this gradual development should be drawn up by the OIE.
3. Within the period covered by the last strategic plan a number of serious crisis have occurred in particular the outbreaks of foot and mouth and avian influenza which have had widespread, severe and long lasting consequences. In this regard the importance of animal disease notification and animal identification has to be stressed:

OIE Member Countries have to fulfil their obligations in disease reporting as it was clearly pointed out by Dr. Barry O'Neil, Vice President of OIE, in his speech on the occasion of the 72nd OIE General Session in May 2004 in Paris. In the framework of revising the animal disease information system it is important that this information should be disseminated as quickly as possible after outbreaks have been notified to OIE and that for important diseases the information is regularly updated especially necessary during animal health crisis in particular where the public is also concerned. This has been highlighted during the recent avian influenza crisis in Asia with major public health implications.

In addition to improve the OIE disease reporting system all outbreaks should be annually serial numbered – e.g. FMD 2004/1 for the first FMD outbreak in a country.

It is obvious that animal identification and herd registration is an important element in the frame work of animal disease control. OIE Member Countries should be invited to introduce appropriate systems adapted to their local animal husbandry systems.

4. Compensation rules have been incorporated in many countries into the system for the prevention and control of animal diseases. This is done for the promotion of farmers' cooperation in the prevention and control of animal diseases and mitigation of economic losses for farmers by stamping out of diseased or suspected animals. Compensation for animal losses is an indirect animal disease control measure, with an efficacy at least as high as of direct control measures. Therefore OIE Member Countries should be encouraged to establish such systems. OIE should support its Members by exchanging information on different schemes in Member Countries as there are a variety of possible solutions or mix of solutions covering public and private inputs including insurance schemes.
5. When animal disease occurs the environmental impact of disease control measures must be considered. The OIE has already taken up this issue by organising a seminar on Environmental Protection in relation to Veterinary Services activities held in Warsaw, Poland from 1 -5 September 2004; relevant recommendations in this area should be developed.
6. The proposal of the Director General that the International Trade Department is required to play an increasing role in terms of providing support in case of trade disputes between Member Countries by applying the OIE in-house procedure for settlement of disputes laid down in Article 1.3.1.4. of the Terrestrial Code can be supported. Experience has shown that primarily disputes are related to technical issues so that initially it should be tried to solve these on a technical level.

The EU recommends to the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to note the comments and consider them in the development of its opinion on the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan to be addressed to the OIE Administrative Commission.