

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY COMMENTS ON**CL 2004/32-EXEC**

Subject : How to address the issue of antimicrobial resistance within Codex.

As a general principle, the European Community strongly supports activities aimed at preventing antimicrobial resistance in a balanced way in all concerned areas: human medicine, veterinary medicine related in particular to animal and food productions, and plant protection.

It is also European Community understanding that Codex as other international organisations works under the general principles of Risk Analysis, which include risk assessment, risk management and risk communication. Those principles apply equally to the issue of antimicrobial resistance related both to non-human and human use of antimicrobials.

It should be noted that the comprehensive work developed so far by the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF), on a '*Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Antimicrobial Resistance*', was in particular drafted on the basis of the OIE provisions of the Terrestrial Code on Prudent Use of Antimicrobials. The European Community is very grateful that the CCRVDF at its recent 15th session proposed the said draft Code of Practice to the Codex Alimentarius Commission for final adoption at Step 5/8.

Furthermore the European Community recommends that any existing ongoing activities within any Codex Committee or ad-hoc Group on this issue should be urgently finalised, and that before deciding to start any specific future work on the matter within one or the other Committees, the Codex Alimentarius Commission should fully consider any international work already developed/adopted by other international organisations in order to prevent avoidable discrepancies and overlaps between internationally recognised standards.

At the 27th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, it was noted that there was unanimous support for the cooperation with the OIE in particular on the issue of antimicrobial resistance. However financial and legal implications of the creation of an ad-hoc joint task force raised concerns of several delegations. The European Community is therefore of the view that pending consensus on the modalities of the establishment of a new body, it would be more realistic that existing Codex subsidiary bodies, such as CCRVDF, be used to fulfil the defined objectives. In addition, in light of the debates at the 21st Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles, more informal relations between Codex and other international organisations seem to be favoured.

The European Community is convinced that the International Community would gain from the development at international level of a harmonised and cooperative approach on antimicrobial resistance in order to implement and/or further develop appropriate and coordinated recommendations in all relevant sectors mentioned above, including in particular human medicine. To progress on this global issue, the contributions that the different international organisations can make on related issues such as monitoring, preventive

measures, research and inter-sectorial co-ordination need to be clearly defined and summed up in such a global approach.