



World Organisation
for Animal Health

26th Conference of the
Regional Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 4 to 7 February 2025

FINAL REPORT

Introduction

1. Following the kind invitation of the Government of Ethiopia, the 26th Conference of the *World Organisation for Animal Health* (WOAH) Regional Commission for Africa was held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) from 4 to 7 February 2025.
2. A total of 120 participants, comprising WOAHA Delegates and representatives of 37 Members of the Region and senior officers from 12 regional and international organisations and institutions (with an Agreement with WOAHA), attended the Conference. In addition, representatives of the private sector as well as private veterinary organisations from the Region and from the host country were present.

Members of the Commission: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Rep., Chad, Comoros, Congo (Rep. of the ~), Congo (Dem. Rep. of the ~), Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eswatini, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan (Rep. of), Seychelles, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia.

International/regional/organisations/institutions (with an Agreement with WOAHA): African Union - Inter-african Bureau on Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre of the African Union (AU-PANVAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), European Commission (EC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).

3. His Excellency Mr Temesgen Tiruneh, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia, H.E. Dr Girma Amente, Minister of Agriculture of Ethiopia, H.E. Dr Fikru Regassa, State Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Resources Development Sector and WOAHA Delegate of Ethiopia, Excellencies Ministers responsible for Livestock from Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, and Uganda, Dr Huyam Salih, Director of the African Union - Inter-african Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) representing the Commissioner for *Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Environmental Sustainability* (ARBE) of the African Union Commission, and representatives of International and Regional Organisations honoured the Conference with their presence during the official opening ceremony.
4. Dr Susana Pombo, President of WOAHA World Assembly of Delegates, Dr François Caya, WOAHA Deputy Director General for Institutional Affairs and Governance, Dr Honoré N'lemba Mabela, President of the WOAHA Regional Commission for Africa and Delegate of Congo (Dem. Rep. of the), Dr Karim Tounkara, WOAHA Regional Representative for Africa, Dr Moetapele Letshwenyo, WOAHA Sub-Regional Representative for Southern Africa, Dr Neo Mapitse, WOAHA Sub-Regional Representative for East Africa, Dr Rachid Bouguedour, WOAHA Sub-Regional Representative for North Africa, and Dr Baptiste Dungu, Member of the WOAHA Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases also participated in the Conference. The speakers presenting the two main Technical Items, namely Dr Musa Mulongo, Senior Scientist and TAHSSL¹ Platform Coordinator at ILRI, for Technical Item I, and Prof. Malek Zrelli from Tunisia, for Technical Item II, honoured the Conference with their presence.

¹ TAHSSL : Transforming Animal-Health Solutions and Services for Low-and middle-income countries

TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2025

Opening ceremony

5. The following authorities gave a welcome address:
 - Dr Honoré Robert N'lemba Mabela, President of the WOAHA Regional Commission for Africa,
 - Dr Susana Pombo, President of the WOAHA World Assembly of Delegates,
 - Dr François Caya, WOAHA Deputy Director General for Institutional Affairs and Governance,
 - Dr Huyam Salih, Director of AU-IBAR on behalf of H.E. Mrs Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Environmental Sustainability of the African Union Commission,
 - His Excellency, Dr Girma Amente, Minister of Agriculture of Ethiopia,
 - His Excellency Mr Temesgen Tiruneh, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia.
6. Dr Karim Tounkara, WOAHA Regional Representative for Africa delivered a vote of thanks.

Approval of the Programme

7. The Provisional Programme, including some modifications, was adopted (programme available in Annex 1).

Appointment of the Conference Committee

8. The Conference Committee was elected by participants as follows:

Chairperson:	H.E. Dr Fikru Regassa Gari, Delegate of Ethiopia
Vice-Chairperson:	Dr Garga Gonne, Delegate of Cameroun
Rapporteur General:	Dr Lepheana Relebohile, Delegate of Lesotho

Appointment of Session Chairpersons and Rapporteurs

9. Chairpersons and Rapporteurs were designated for the Technical Items as follows:

Technical Item I:	Dr Yao Akpo (Benin), (Chairperson) Dr Ghislaine Mbeurnodji Singambaye (Chad) (Rapporteur)
Technical Item II:	Dr Allan Azegale (Kenya), (Chairperson) Dr Habiboullah Habiboullah (Mauritania), (Rapporteur)

Empowering Veterinary Services, Increasing Visibility and Modernising WOAHA to Face Animal Health Challenges

10. Dr François Caya, WOAHA Deputy Director General for Institutional Affairs and Governance, presented, on behalf of Dr Emmanuelle Soubeyran, WOAHA Director General (DG), an overview of WOAHA's work in support to its Members.
11. He began his presentation by reminding participants of the centenary of WOAHA and the recent change in WOAHA leadership with the election of the new WOAHA Director General in May 2024, and briefly highlighted the new DG's clear and ambitious vision for the organisation.

12. Dr Caya highlighted WOA's comprehensive standards for the quality of Veterinary Services and invited Members to actively participate in the standard-setting process, reminding that the Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes and Manuals are designed to improve the quality of Veterinary Services. He also mentioned WOA's support to enhance the capacity of Members to implement these standards, including maintenance of recognised official diseases status and endorsed disease control programmes (*peste des petits ruminants* - PPR, rabies, etc.). He also highlighted WOA's support to Members through the *Performance of Veterinary Services* (PVS) Pathway and mentioned WOA's involvement in global initiatives in collaboration with other partners such as FAO, the World Health Organization (WHO) and AU to address animal health and welfare challenges such as transboundary animal diseases (TADs), zoonoses, *antimicrobial resistance* (AMR), wildlife health among others, while ensuring transparency of animal health data for early warning, quality monitoring and reliable data (the World Animal Health Information System, WAHIS, Observatory).
13. The Deputy Director General also shared the Director General's priorities: Increasing visibility, strengthening Veterinary Services and modernising WOA (to ensure adaptability and recognition of efficiency).
14. Finally, he referred to the ongoing work to revise the basic texts of the Organisation to ensure that it remains relevant and responsive to current and future challenges. Dr Caya also referred to the development of WOA's 8th Strategic Plan and emphasised the need for Members to be involved and committed to the organisation from a technical and financial perspective, as well as in the development of the next Strategic Plan.
15. The main conclusions of Dr Caya's presentation were as follows:
 - While the organisation is recognised for its technical expertise, it lacks political visibility and therefore needs to engage more effectively with policy makers.
 - Strengthening *Veterinary Services* (VS) is essential to respond to current challenges.
 - Veterinary Services are a global public good as they play a central role in food security, disease control and poverty reduction. However, they remain underfunded, and an advocacy strategy is needed to raise awareness and secure resources.
 - Gap analysis missions help to advocate for the resources needed to improve Veterinary Services.
 - Members need to be fully involved in all aspects of the life of the organisation, including statutory contributions, policy development and standard setting.
 - New Delegates are encouraged to use WOA training platforms to build their skills.
 - Focal Points are also key in supporting Members to actively participate and engage with WOA. Ensuring training, including for communication focal points, is key to showcasing the work of Veterinary Services and supporting the work of the Delegate.
 - The ongoing revision of the Basic Texts provides an opportunity to establish a framework for policy makers.
 - Engaging ministers is a priority, with proposals to organise a ministerial meeting prior to the General Session and to invite ministers to high-level panels to provide a strategic platform to address financial and policy issues. In addition, the establishment of a WOA Ambassador Network in Paris to convey key messages to Heads of Government will further support advocacy and political engagement efforts.
 - While the request for WOA to consider nominating national representatives to strengthen its presence at the national level, including in times of crisis, was noted, it was made clear that this would be impossible without funding. In this regard, it was recalled that the WOA Delegate plays a crucial role in ensuring WOA's visibility, advocating for statutory contributions and implementing WOA policies and standards. In a way WOA Delegates are WOA representatives at national level.
 - While alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should be approached with caution as it is the UN mandate, it remains a relevant way to engage ministers.

- WOAHA is committed to support the region in the implementation of the PPR project. The PPR vaccine bank is an important tool available to Members and is currently under-utilised.
- The rabies vaccine bank and WOAHA Twinning programmes are highly valued by Members and the Organisation is committed to continuing to provide these tools to support its Members.
- Some Members expressed the need to train local experts in PVS to ensure that evaluations can continue in countries facing security challenges. WOAHA has put in place a procedure to ensure the safety of experts travelling to countries. PVS virtual missions may also be considered as an alternative in high-risk areas.
- WOAHA will continue to collaborate with its partners (AU, FAO, WHO, Regional Economic Communities (RECs)) to address animal health and welfare challenges in line with each Organisation's mission and strategy.

The Role of Veterinary Service for Food and Nutrition Security in Ethiopia

16. H.E. Dr Fikru Regassa Gari, State Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Resources Development Sector and Delegate of Ethiopia delivered a presentation regarding the role of Veterinary Services in food and nutrition security by sharing Ethiopia's experience.
17. He began by explaining Ethiopia's rich cultural and natural heritage. The country boasts 76 ethnic groups, a unique alphabet and ancient landmarks. It is diversifying its economy beyond agriculture (45% of GDP) into mining, manufacturing, and tourism. It also has Africa's largest livestock population contributing 17-19% of GDP, although productivity remains low due to challenges such as low technology adoption, climate change and animal diseases.
18. Dr Regassa explained that to address these issues, Ethiopia has reviewed its agricultural and rural development policies and ratified the Animal Health and Welfare Proclamation, which will improve Veterinary Services, access to medicines and disease surveillance, and create investment opportunities in the livestock sector.
19. In 2022, the Prime Minister launched the 'Bounty of the Basket' initiative, a four-year plan to boost dairy, egg, poultry, honey, and fish production, aiming for over 100% growth in key animal value chains. The initiative supports food security and nutrition while implementing strategies for disease control, dairy and meat development, and agricultural expansion.
20. Ethiopia continues to invest in livestock production and animal health, implementing disease control measures, One Health initiatives, and AMR strategies. Veterinary training facilities, strong governance, and stakeholder collaboration support the success of these initiatives.
21. Dr Regassa concluded that, as a way forward, Ethiopia will focus on increasing private sector participation in livestock investments along the value chain, continue to work towards standardisation of Veterinary Service systems and global TAD control measures, strengthen regional and continental coordination to harmonise TAD control and eradication strategies, intensify One Health implementation and prioritise food safety to achieve food system transformation goals.

Technical Item I (without questionnaire):

Control and eradication of *Contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia* (CBPP) in Africa: Challenges and Strategies for a CBPP Free Africa

22. The Technical Item I, entitled "Control and eradication of CBPP in Africa: Challenges and Strategies for a CBPP Free Africa", presented by Dr Musa Mulongo, Senior Scientist and TAHSSL Platform Coordinator from ILRI, prompted interesting discussions among participants, allowing the Regional Commission for Africa to elaborate recommendations in accordance with WOAHA General Rules. Final recommendations are available in Annex 2.

WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2025

The Outcomes of the second SGE CBPP (Lusaka, Zambia)

23. Dr Viola Chemis, WOAHA Regional Programme Coordinator, presented the results of the GF-TADs for Africa second *Standing Group of Experts* (SGE) meeting on Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) in Africa. She provided details on the priority topics of the SGE, the rationale for national and strategic plans, and some lessons learned from Zambia. She emphasised that, strengthening the capacity of National Veterinary Services is essential for effective disease control, requiring investment in workforce training and vaccine delivery solutions. Efforts should be aligned with other priority disease strategies, using cost-effective approaches such as zoning, test and slaughter, surveillance, and combined vaccination. Key conclusions from the presentation included:
- Members should fully understand the epidemiological situation of CBPP in their territories in order to inform the establishment of epi-zones and to determine whether they aim at (progressive) control or eradication of CBPP.
 - While the *Regional Economic Communities* (RECs) are not in favour of the development of sub-regional strategies, they recognise that they have a critical role to play in facilitating cooperation among Members for coordination and cooperation on CBPP control, enabling agreements on cross-border activities, harmonised surveillance and control programmes, jointly funded programmes, monitoring progress, and facilitating consultations.
 - The development and validation of the continental strategy will be led by AU-IBAR with the aim of providing strong continental guidance and specific solutions for vaccine deployment and delivery with support from partners such as WOAHA, FAO, ILRI and others to build capacity and capability of Veterinary Services and ensure timely implementation of various disease strategies.
 - WOAHA will continue to provide a framework for endorsement of official control programmes and diseases status recognition.
 - At the international level, partners will continue to focus on advocacy, resource mobilisation, research coordination and a standardised framework or set of protocols to guide CBPP control and eradication.

Increasing the Adoption of Quality Vaccines for Livestock Diseases in Africa

24. Dr Charles Bodjo, Director of AU-PANVAC, delivered a presentation on "Increasing the Adoption of Quality Vaccines for Livestock Diseases in Africa". Among other things, he emphasised that vaccine quality is a critical factor in disease prevention and therefore vaccination should be prioritised. While the quality of vaccines in the region is improving, with clear testing procedures in place, which is encouraging, the need for vaccines and quality assessment remains a critical issue in the region. Laboratory improvements and assessment also play a key role in ensuring vaccine quality.
25. Key messages from the presentation were as follows:
- AU-PANVAC is an international independent body that, among other activities, conducts vaccine *quality control* (QC) tests according to the WOAHA "Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals" and issues QC certificates.
 - Examples of AU-PANVAC's ongoing activities in veterinary vaccines QC and production were presented: QC of *Foot and mouth disease* (FMD) vaccine; Genetic stability of PPR vaccine and development of standards for PPR thermotolerant vaccines; Characterisation of RVF vaccines; CBPP vaccine quality.
 - AU-PANVAC also supports Members in vaccine registration. The Recommendations for Harmonisation of Standards for Vaccine Registration in Africa and Auditing of Facilities drafted in Abuja (Nigeria) in July 2023 and endorsed by the 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council (AU Summit 2024): Decision EX.CL/Dec.1234(XLIV), were also presented and discussed.

26. The plenary discussion focused on the importance of using only certified quality vaccines, the development and use of thermotolerant vaccines. It was clarified that AU-PANVAC also produces diagnostic kits (e.g. ELISA² for PPR and CBPP) and its services are free of charge to all AU Members. A document on guidelines for the production of PPR thermotolerant vaccines is being finalised and will be submitted to WOAHP for consideration to update the relevant section of the Standards. The following points can also be highlighted from the discussions:
- Best practice should start with national action plans, followed by mass vaccination and sero-monitoring. Monitoring slaughterhouses for antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is also critical.
 - It is important to involve producers in vaccine control efforts and the national AMR strategy.
 - Vaccination is a collective effort; a country that does not vaccinate while its neighbours do, undermines disease control efforts.
 - Each country is responsible for implementing legislation to ensure that only certified vaccines are used. Authorities should encourage quality certification before vaccines are used. AU-PANVAC is available to verify vaccine certification and compliance with quality standards.
 - Technology exists to improve PPR thermotolerant vaccines. AU-PANVAC, ILRI and other laboratories have developed thermotolerant stability technologies. PANVAC is assisting laboratories to transfer these technologies to improve vaccine stability. Standards have been established to assess the quality of these vaccines.

**Technical item II (without questionnaire):
Veterinary Services and food safety: challenges and perspectives for policy
development in the context of market unification on a continental scale**

27. Technical Item II, entitled “Veterinary Services and food safety: challenges and perspectives for policy development in the context of market unification on a continental scale”, presented by Prof. Malek Zrelli from Tunisia, led to lively discussions among the participants, allowing the Regional Commission for Africa to elaborate recommendations in accordance with WOAHP General Rules. Final recommendations are available in Annex 3.

**WOAH Standards, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS), Trade and the
African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**

28. Dr Moetapele Letshwenyo, Subregional Representative for Southern Africa, provided an overview of WOAHP Standards, the World Trade Organization (WTO) Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) Agreement, and the *African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*. He also presented the new WOAHP AfCFTA - SPS project, which aims to improve the governance of the SPS systems in Africa and align them with international standards.
29. Key messages from the presentation were:
- There may be as many ways of organising the process of setting the terms of trade between countries as there are interactions between countries. However, whatever the differences, these processes should respect the principles of the WTO SPS Agreement and be based on WOAHP international standards.
 - The WOAHP's Codes and Manuals provide science-based risk management measures to ensure safe trade and provide a consistent framework for disease control and food safety.
30. The plenary session included discussions on capacity building, multilateral trade agreements between countries, *public-private partnerships* (PPPs) and the involvement of all stakeholders at national level (e.g. carriers), as well as the key role of Members in providing feedback to WOAHP so that it can continue to improve the quality of its services. The following main points emerged from the discussions:

² ELISA : Enzym-linked immuno-sorbent assay

- Members should broaden their focus beyond SPS measures to include key issues such as animal transport and general trade facilitation.
 - The establishment of zones and compartments is essential to ensure disease-free trade areas are in accordance with WOH standards.
 - Close cooperation with the private sector, especially farmers, is necessary for effective implementation.
 - Effective trade in animals and animal products requires cooperation between stakeholders, including national authorities, regional bodies and the private sector.
 - Training programmes should be targeted to ensure that veterinary professionals and future generations are equipped to implement WOH standards effectively.
 - It is more practical to start with minimal but essential requirements for safe trade than to set overly ambitious targets from the outset.
 - The PVS pathway serves as a diagnostic tool to identify gaps in the system. It is essential that PVS recommendations are implemented to improve compliance with international standards.
 - Delegates are responsible for the adoption and implementation of WOH standards in their respective countries.
 - Efforts should be made to avoid working in silos and to promote cross-sectoral cooperation.
 - Trade policies need to take into account animal welfare, transport conditions and infrastructure to be consistent with WOH's mandate for ethical and sustainable trade.
 - Improving certification and validation systems is key to ensuring effective implementation of WOH standards and facilitating international trade.
 - Aligning regional trade regulations helps to create a more consistent and predictable framework for the movement of animals and animal products.
31. In conclusion, Dr Letshwenyo mentioned that despite the recognised potential difficulties in implementing international standards and agreements (e.g. traceability issues), countries were encouraged to continue working in this direction. He also emphasised the importance of developing mechanisms for the issuance, control and verification of health documents/certificates at the national level.

**WOH Standards Setting Process open discussion:
Aquatic Code and Manual, Terrestrial Code and Manual**

32. Dr Patrick Bastiaensen, Regional Programme Officer at the Sub-Regional Representation for Eastern Africa, provided participants with an overview of the WOH Standards Setting process, which aims to make the organisation more inclusive and efficient.
33. The main points of conclusion from the presentation were:
- Members were invited to actively engage in all 4 phases of the Standard-setting process: New topics identification/proposal; Development of a new or revised standard; Comments and review; Adoption.
 - The important role of the African Union and AU-IBAR in coordinating this process was acknowledged, but it was then recalled that it is the individual countries that vote on the adoption of standards at the WOH General Session.
 - Calendars of activities of the four Specialists Commissions and Ad-hoc Groups/Working Groups are available on the WOH website () and the Delegates' [Portal](#)
 - Members were strongly encouraged to consult the reports of the February 2025 Specialists Commissions meetings and to participate in the webinars scheduled in April prior to the General Session.
 - The plenary discussion focused on:

- The key role that WOAHA Focal Points should play in supporting their Delegates in the Standard Setting process and ensuring timely science-based input from the Members,
- The decision on which profile is best to head a national reference laboratory rests with each Member. While WOAHA recommends that a veterinarian be appointed to this role (Chapter 1.1.1 of the WOAHA Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals), it recognises that the final decision is at the discretion of the Member. In some countries there is a distinction between research and diagnostic laboratories, which may affect the operation and management of the laboratory.

Follow up of the last Conference recommendations

34. Dr Neo Mapitse, Sub-Regional Representative for Eastern Africa, conducted a brief exercise, at the request of the Director General, on the follow-up to the recommendations of the last Conference. Whilst progress was reported in some areas regarding PPR and rabies, more efforts were needed to ensure that all recommendations were fully implemented. Such an exercise allowed Dr Mapitse to emphasise the importance of ensuring that the recommendations developed and adopted are measurable and realistic, avoiding long and unattainable proposals. It is better and much more efficient to go step by step than to include in a recommendation a long list of desired/ideal situations that will be impossible to achieve in a two-year period.

Elevating Animal Welfare in Africa

35. Dr Hiver Boussini, Head of the Animal Unit at AU-IBAR provided participants with an overview of the *Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa* (AWSA), introduced the *African Platform for Animal Welfare* (APAW), presented the collaboration between AU-IBAR and WOAHA to promote policy alignment, capacity building in Africa and stronger regional integration, and discussed the next steps to strengthen animal welfare in the region. Members were encouraged to:
- Increase the engagement of African stakeholders, including local communities, NGOs and the private sector;
 - Consider and work towards a collective effort to address current challenges and implement sustainable solutions;
 - Develop strong partnerships between governments, regional bodies, international organisations and stakeholders, as these are essential to achieving a common vision for animal health and welfare.

Emergency Preparedness and Health Security Threats

36. Dr Francesco Valentini, from the Sub-Regional Representation for North Africa, made a presentation on emergency preparedness and health security threats. He began by highlighting that WOAHA, as the global animal health authority, has a mandate to address all hazards relevant to animal health, including biological threats. The presentation highlighted two successful WOAHA-supported projects in Africa, namely:
- **FIRABioT Project:** Funded by the Weapons Threat Reduction Programme of Global Affairs Canada, the FIRABioT Project aims to enhance the capacity of the Organisation and its Members, particularly in Africa, to respond effectively to events involving the deliberate or accidental release of animal pathogens. Developed through a country-driven approach, the project's activities in Africa focus on four key areas: emergency management, epidemic intelligence, sustainable laboratories and veterinary legislation.

- **PROVNA Project:** Development of an ecoregion-based surveillance system for *vector-borne diseases* (VBDs) in North Africa, in particular *Rift valley fever* (RVF). Led by IZS Teramo³ and funded by BMZ - PC-TAD⁴, the project is helping to optimise disease surveillance and resource allocation. A second phase is now expanding the risk-based surveillance system for mosquito-borne diseases across North Africa.

37. Both projects demonstrate WOAHA's commitment to strengthening animal health security in Africa.

38. The following points can be highlighted from his presentation:

- To effectively support its Members, WOAHA remains flexible in responding to requests and delivering tailored activities that address emerging challenges;
- Active engagement with its Members and partners is a cornerstone of its approach, ensuring that strategies and solutions are both relevant and impactful;
- By fostering collaboration across sectors and stakeholders, WOAHA strengthens global efforts to safeguard animal health, improve disease preparedness, and promote sustainable veterinary practices.

Eradication of *Peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) in Africa

39. The PPR session started with a keynote address by Dr Huyam Salih, AU-IBAR Director, who presented the developments on PPR eradication in relation to AU policies, the African Animal Health Strategy, the 2025 Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Strategy, the 2025 Kampala Declaration, details of the preparatory phase of the EU-funded programme, mentioning the governance aspects to be operationalised through the *Pan African PPR Secretariat* (PAPS).

40. This was followed by a panel discussion in which she mentioned other immediate activities such as stakeholder sensitisation and awareness raising, collaborating with the RECs, strengthening advocacy and resource mobilisation with a push for policy decisions to prioritise PPR eradication at various levels.

41. Among the other interventions of the panellists, one could highlight:

- To ensure the quality of vaccines used in the country, the Director of AU-PANVAC, Dr Charles Bodjo, stressed the importance of Members using only certified vaccines and using AU-PANVAC's website to confirm the certification of vaccine batches. He also encouraged public-private partnerships in vaccine production, noting that existing vaccine manufacturers have the capacity to meet estimated vaccine needs, but that demand remains unknown.
- Highlights from the Delegate of Morocco, Dr Abderrahman El-Abrak, on their PPR eradication programme showed the importance of national resource mobilisation, the existence and implementation of a vaccination strategy, a supportive legislation for the use of control measures such as vaccination involving private veterinarians, and the provision of free vaccination and compensation to farmers. The weakest point of the programmes remains the risk of reintroduction of PPR through livestock movement, which requires a sub-regional approach to PPR eradication. The involvement of private sector veterinarians (and of VPPs in the case of Senegal) has helped to increase coverage.

³ IZS : The 'Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "Giuseppe Caporale", Teramo, Italy

⁴ BMZ : Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, BMZ), Germany. PC-TAD : Prevention and Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases for the benefit of smallholder farmers.

- The Delegate of Senegal, Dr Mbargou Lô, reported that they have vaccine production capacity and have supplied vaccines to neighbouring countries to support the implementation of harmonised vaccination plans. Senegal is one of the countries implementing the World Bank funded PRAPS⁵ project and is able to support vaccination against PPR and CBPP as well as post-vaccination surveillance. The country is diversifying the tools used to identify vaccinated animals to support traceability and post-vaccination monitoring. However, they are facing difficulties in accessing sero-monitoring kits, which is delaying the process.
- The Co-Chair of the Joint FAO/WOAH PPR Secretariat, Dr Felix Njeumi, informed Members of the need to prioritise the collection of epidemiological, socio-economic (livestock census, animal movement, watering/grazing points, trade routes) and molecular data. He stressed the importance of a traceability system, information on actors in the value chain, improved surveillance and submission of PPR sequence data to PPR reference laboratories to support characterisation and understanding of circulating strains to help delineate epizootics. He also mentioned the support that can be provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through the veterinary laboratories network for capacity building and technology transfer. Members were also informed that the Secretariat can provide support for advocacy, awareness raising, coordination and partnership, resource mobilisation and capacity building.
- The WOA Regional Representative for Africa, Dr Karim Tounkara, highlighted the support provided through existing standards for surveillance and vaccination, manuals of diagnostic, endorsement of official control programmes and status recognition, self-assessment using the PMAT⁶, notification and reporting using the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS), diagnostic support, capacity building and comprehensive proficiency testing using the WOA PPR Reference Laboratories and scientific networks. He also reminded the audience of the existing programmes through BMZ OHRT⁷ supporting Cameroon and Namibia, the PCTAD project in Eastern Africa and the PRAPS project in West and Central Africa.

Discussion of recommendations

42. Dr Neo Mapitse presented draft Recommendations 1 and 2 on the two Technical Items of the Conference to Delegates for discussion. Both draft recommendations will be submitted for adoption at the Thursday session with amendments as per participants' suggestions and discussions.
43. Following adoption by the Regional Commission, the Recommendations will be submitted for endorsement by the World Assembly of Delegates in May 2025. Once endorsed by the Assembly, they will serve as an important guideline for Members of the Regional Commission for Africa, as well as for the Organisation as a whole.

THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2025

Africa Public Private Partnership Forum in the Veterinary Domain

44. Dr Rahul Shrivastava, PPP Project Officer, WOA Capacity Building Department, commented on the Africa Public Private Partnership Forum in the Veterinary Domain that was launched in November 2024, and highlighted the main conclusions:
 - To improve the governance, management, and implementation of PPPs, it is essential to establish a clear legal and regulatory framework supported by comprehensive guidelines;
 - The development of an implementation guide with templates for Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), agreements, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and best practices will streamline the development, implementation and evaluation of PPP projects;

⁵ PRAPS : Projet régional d'appui au pastoralisme au Sahel

⁶ PMAT : Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) Monitoring and Assessment Tool

⁷ OHRT : One Health, Rabies and TADs

- Increased consultation and cooperation between public and private stakeholders are crucial for successful joint programmes;
- A digital networking forum and an advocacy platform should be provided to raise awareness among policy makers, farmers, and other beneficiaries;
- Producers and non-governmental stakeholders can contribute resources and play a leading role in developing and implementing effective programmes in partnership with Veterinary Services;
- In addition, a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) platform should be established to facilitate knowledge sharing, disseminate best practices, and document lessons learned from existing PPPs.

Progressing Eradication Rabies in Gambia: A Journey Towards Zero by 2030

45. Dr Abdou Ceesay, Delegate of Gambia, provided participants with details of the rabies situation in his country. He began with some key details about Gambia in general, including details of the dog population. He also provided details on disease reporting, highlighting that rabies has never been reported in wildlife in the country, with only 8 confirmed cases in dogs over a 5 year period (all between 2009 and 2012). Other suspected but not confirmed cases were reported in dogs, donkeys and horses in 2014. He also provided details of human cases reported between 2006 and 2021, with 171 patients with a history of rabies exposure, all of whom were treated with post exposure prophylaxis.
46. With regard to the current situation in the country, the Delegate explained that rabies control is part of the disease prevention and control programme of the Department of Livestock Services (Veterinary Services of Gambia), rabies is a priority zoonotic disease for Gambia and a strategic approach for the control and eventual elimination of rabies was adopted in 2016, the rabies control initiative is fully supported by the Government and partners of the VS. With the exception of the last two years, the government has provided annual funding for rabies vaccines.
47. Gambia has implemented a year-round rabies control strategy, with annual vaccination campaigns starting on 28 September to coincide with World Rabies Day. The approach includes demand-driven vaccination of owned dogs and trap-and-vaccinate initiatives for strays, although coverage remains low. Public awareness campaigns use mass media, including national television, community radio and symposiums. Dog population control measures, such as neutering, are also in place, particularly for stray dogs. Rabies is a priority zoonosis under the country's One Health platform, with strong collaboration between NGOs, veterinary organisations and government agencies. Partnership with the Gambian Tourism Board enables *ad hoc* rabies control programmes, primarily supported by the Ministry of Tourism.
48. Collaboration between Mission Rabies UK and the Gambian VS has been initiated to implement a more effective vaccination campaign. With the support of WOA, the VS have plans to survey the dog population in Gambia.
49. Following Gambia's presentation and discussion among Delegates, it was emphasised that good data, dog population management, education and awareness of communities and dog owners, and awareness of policy makers are key elements in achieving elimination by 2030.
50. Finally, it was recalled that WOA supports its Members in rabies control through a comprehensive approach in line with the global strategy "Zero by 30". WOA provides technical advice, capacity building and policy support to strengthen national rabies programmes. It facilitates access to high-quality vaccines through its rabies vaccine bank, enabling mass vaccination campaigns. In addition, WOA promotes the One Health approach by fostering collaboration between the veterinary, public health and wildlife sectors. Members can also benefit from WOA's PVS Pathway programme with rabies specific content. WOA also supports surveillance, laboratory diagnostics and public awareness campaigns to improve rabies prevention and control. Through partnerships with international organisations and regional initiatives, WOA helps its Members implement effective, sustainable and science-based strategies to eliminate dog-transmitted human rabies.

WAHIS: what has changed, and what is in it for you

51. Dr Jenny Hutchison, Head of the *World Animal Health Information and Analysis Department* (WAHIAD), delivered a presentation on the latest enhancements of the *World Animal Health Information System* (WAHIS), and the reporting situation of Members from Africa.
52. She provided context to the reporting of Foot and mouth disease in Africa to support a panel discussion regarding their use of WAHIS and reporting practices including their use of stable events.
53. Five panellists (Delegates from Côte d'Ivoire, Lesotho, Madagascar, Nigeria, Uganda) participated in the discussion. The following points can be drawn from the exchange between the panellists:
 - WAHIS and its official information are important to support Members' decision-making, particularly in relation to trade. Other sources of information are also used by Members.
 - Timely, accurate and complete reporting to WAHIS is essential to maintain its relevance.
 - Reporting can be challenging in areas with poor internet, lack of infrastructure and insufficient resources, including trained personnel and laboratory capacity.
 - A significant part of the reporting burden is the requirement to report similar data to multiple systems, not just WAHIS.
 - WAHIAD is committed to supporting its users and has a dedicated support desk (<https://wahis-support.woah.org>).
 - There is a need for WAHIS to accept bulk uploads and downloads of data.
 - Members would appreciate a mobile application to receive and view instant alerts.

The PVS Information System (PVS IS): Objectives, access to, and use of PVS data

54. Ms Jennifer Lasley, Senior Programme Coordinator of WOAHO Capacity Building Department, provided all the conference participants with a training session on how to use PVS data in the PVS IS and evidence to defend investment cases for VS and act on PVS recommendations made so that the VS can provide billions of people with access to key services they lack to impact their livelihoods and improve animal health and welfare.
55. Delegates used PVS data, insights, and dashboards contained in the PVS IS to complete interactive exercises that helped them to discover how relevant data can be found, analysed, presented and to exploit the PVS IS to support and develop investment cases and strategic plans, for performance maintenance and improvement.
56. After the hands-on experience, Delegates concluded that failure to create attractive investment cases can be a bottleneck for investment in VS and that evidence-based investment cases are key to meeting infrastructure and service gaps in the VS to inspire confidence among investors, demonstrate financial viability, and promote accountability and transparency.

The New Standards Navigation tool

57. Dr Ronald Mora Castillo, WOAHO Standards Department, presented the new WOAHO Standards Navigation Tool, which should be launched soon.
58. He explained that this new tool is in line with the 7th Strategic Plan Framework, as it is in line with the objectives of digital transformation and innovation, strengthening global health security, and using technology to support Members.

59. Dr Mora Castillo explained that the tool will provide a single point of access to WOAHA standards with an intuitive search and filter system for easy navigation of WOAHA's terrestrial and aquatic codes and manuals. It will allow users to visualise recommendations for safe international trade by commodity. And, in the case of WOAHA internal use, it will provide a dedicated platform to centralise and efficiently manage and update WOAHA International Standards following the adoption of new or revised texts by the WOAHA World Assembly.
60. He also commented that this tool offers potential for future integration with other WOAHA tools to enhance data usage and cross-referencing of standards data with other organisational platforms. It will also open up new opportunities for data analysis and insight, allowing long inaccessible data to be used to improve understanding and standardisation of data elements within the standards.
61. The Regional Commission welcomed the progress made by WOAHA to facilitate the Standards navigation making them more accessible and manageable.

**Wildlife framework: Engaging discussions and collecting feedback
for a wildlife strategy and health programme adapted to
Members needs-Interactive Session**

62. Ms Sophie Muset, from WOAHA Preparedness and Resilience Department, provided details regarding the Wildlife Health programme, its objectives and ways to achieve them.
63. She highlighted the development and review process of the WOAHA *Wildlife Health Framework* (WHF), which was designed to support wildlife health management as part of the One Health approach. WOAHA Members, through surveys and consultations, have actively contributed to shaping this framework, showing strong engagement. The WHF is a critical component of broader health surveillance systems, focusing on wildlife health throughout the supply chain.
64. Key milestones include the Members' consultations in 2020 and 2022–2023, with significant input from WOAHA Delegates and the adoption of Resolution #31, which underscores the importance of wildlife health in achieving One Health resilience. Under the Wildlife Health Framework funded by six Members and the European Union, collaborations were enhanced, guidelines were produced, data use was emphasised, training and capacity building were catalysed and multiple communication tools were produced.
65. Finally, she informed that WOAHA was preparing the next phase of the Wildlife Health programme [2026-2030], involving the review of the strategy, the development of a logic model, and the analysis of the achievements of the implementation programme.
66. She underlined that Members' opinions and priorities will be key to guide the next Wildlife Health Strategy ensuring that the framework remains aligned with Members' needs and effectively supports wildlife health and surveillance efforts globally.
67. Finally, Ms. Muset invited Delegates to provide input in real-time on the impact of the current WHF and areas of interest for the future WOAHA wildlife health program using an interactive presentation tool. These data, combined with feedback from Delegates from other WOAHA Regions will inform the next WOAHA Wildlife health strategy development.

**Proposal of date and venue of the
27th Conference of the Regional Commission for Africa**

68. The President of the Commission, Dr Honoré N'lemba Mabela, asked Delegates present if any of their countries would like to host the 27th Conference of the Regional Commission for Africa in 2027.
69. The Members of the Commission decided to give the potential hosts more time to confirm with their respective authorities. The final decision on the next venue will be taken at the Regional Commission meeting during the 92nd World Assembly.

Conclusions of the Conference and adoption of Recommendations

70. Dr Neo Mapitse summarised the main conclusions of the conference, in which advocacy and visibility, clear frameworks and policies, collaboration and partnerships as well as stakeholder engagement and awareness were highlighted as essential elements to ensure sustainability and responsiveness of all actions related to animal health and welfare, food safety and safe trade in the Region.
71. Dr Mapitse then presented the Recommendation to the Delegates, including all the comments made during the discussion session. He explained the procedures for the adoption of recommendations, stressing that they must be adopted during the current session and cannot be amended subsequently.
72. The two draft recommendations were unanimously adopted and will be published without any additional amendment along with the final report.

Closing ceremony

73. The meeting concluded with an emphasis on the spirit of cooperation and collaboration among Members, in line with WOAHA's mission to improve animal health worldwide.
74. The following authorities delivered closing statements :
 - Dr Honoré Robert N'lemba Mabela, President of the Regional Commission for Africa,
 - Dr Susana Pombo, President, WOAHA World Assembly of Delegates,
 - Dr Karim Tounkara, Regional Representative for Africa, and
 - His Excellency, Dr Fikru Regassa, State Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Resources Development Sector and WOAHA Delegate of Ethiopia
75. Dr Susana Pombo, encouraged participants to translate discussions into concrete actions, recognising the significant challenges ahead, but also the strong support available within the WOAHA community. She also highlighted the enriching nature of the conference and the value of sharing experiences and knowledge. Finally, she acknowledged the central role of the WOAHA Governance Review Committee, mentioning that the region should be proud that the elected Chair is from Africa, a clear reflection of the region's active contribution to WOAHA's mission. Dr Pombo thanked the Commission for the invitation and stated that it allowed her, as the President of the Assembly, to understand the challenges and needs of the region.
76. The Conference was officially closed at 6 pm.



26th Conference of the WOAH Regional Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 4 - 7 February 2025

PROGRAMME

SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2025

Arrival of participants for the AMR Workshop

MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2025

**Regional Workshop on Advocacy on Commitment Towards
the UNGA High Level Meeting (UNGA- HLM) on AMR**

8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. Arrival and Registration of participants and distribution of Workshop materials

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Africa Regional Workshop on Advocacy on Commitment Towards the UNGA HLM

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Arrival of participants and distribution of materials for the Regional Conference

TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2025

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Banquet Hall: Arrival of participants / Conference registration and distribution of materials

10:30 a.m. Arrival of Dignitaries - Banquet Hall

11:00 a.m. **Opening Session: (Director of Ceremonies - Ethiopia)**

Introductions, Remarks and Official opening

1:00 p.m. Tour of exhibition stalls/Posters session
Break/Refreshments/ Group Photo

1:30 p.m. Move to Conference room No. 5

1:45 p.m. Approval of the Programme
Appointment of the Conference Committee
(Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, General Rapporteur)
Appointment of session chairpersons and rapporteurs
(Technical items)

2:00 p.m. Empowering Veterinary Services, Increasing Visibility and Modernising WOAH to Face Animal Health Challenges (Dr François Caya, Deputy Director General for Institutional Affairs and Governance)

2:40 p.m. Discussion

3:00 p.m. Lunch

4:00 p.m. The Role of Veterinary Service for Food and Nutrition Security in Ethiopia (Dr Fikru Regassa, WOAH Delegate of Ethiopia)

4:30 p.m. Discussion

- 5:00 p.m. **Technical item I** (without questionnaire): Control and eradication of CBPP in Africa: Challenges and Strategies for a CBPP Free Africa (Dr Musa Mulongo, Senior Scientist & TAHSSL Platform Coordinator. ILRI)
- 5:30 p.m. Discussions
- 6:00 p.m. End of the session
- (Preparation of Recommendation No.1 by designated small group)*
- 7:00 p.m. Official dinner offered by Ethiopia

WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2025

- 8:00 a.m. Arrival of participants (Conference room 5)
- 8:30 a.m. Outcomes of the second SGE CBPP (Lusaka, Zambia)
(Viola Chemis, WOA Regional Activities Department)
- 8:50 a.m. Increasing the Adoption of Quality Vaccines for Livestock Diseases in Africa (Dr Charles Bodjo, Director AU PANVAC)
- 9:20 a.m. Discussion
- 9:40 a.m. **Technical item II** (without questionnaire): Veterinary Services and food safety: challenges and perspectives for policy development in the context of market unification on a continental scale. (Prof. Malek Zrelli, Tunisia)
- 10:10 a.m. Break
- 10:30 a.m. Discussion
- 11:00 a.m. WOA Standards, SPS, Trade and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) (Dr Moetapele Letshwenyo, WOA Sub-Regional Representative for Southern Africa)
- 11:20 a.m. Discussion
- 11:40 a.m. WOA Standards Setting Process open discussion: Aquatic Code and Manual, Terrestrial Code and Manual (Dr Patrick Bastiaensen, WOA Sub-Regional Representation for Eastern Africa)
- 12:00 p.m. Follow up of the last Conference recommendations (Dr Neo Mapitse)
- 12:20 p.m. Elevating Animal Welfare in Africa (Dr Hiver Boussini, Head of Animal Unit, AU IBAR)
- 12:50 p.m. Discussion
- 1:00 p.m. Lunch
Preparation of Recommendation No. 2 by designated small group
- 2:00 p.m. Emergency Preparedness and Health Security Threats (Dr Francesco Valentini, WOA Sub Regional Representation for North Africa and Dr Ian Busuulwa, WOA Sub Regional Representation Eastern Africa)
- 2:30 p.m. Eradication of *Peste des petits ruminants* (PPR) in Africa (Dr Huyam Salih, Director African Union/Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)) (followed by a panel discussion)
- 4:00 p.m. Break
- 4:30 p.m. Discussion of recommendations Nos. 1 and 2
- 6:00 p.m. End of the day
- 7:00 p.m. Official dinner offered by WOA

THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2025

- 8:00 a.m. Arrival of participants
- 8:30 a.m. Africa Public Private Partnership Forum in the Veterinary Domain (Dr Rahul Srivastava, WOAHA Capacity-Building Department)
- 9:00 a.m. Progressing Eradication Rabies in Gambia: A Journey Towards Zero by 2030 (Dr Abdou Ceesay, WOAHA Delegate of Gambia)
- 9:30 a.m. Discussion
- 9:40 a.m. WAHIS: what has changed, and what is in it for you (presentation and panel discussion) (Dr Jenny Hutchison, Head of World Animal Health Information and Analysis Department)
- 10:50 a.m. Break
- 11:20 a.m. The PVS Information System: Objectives, access to, and use of PVS data (Ms Jennifer Lasley, WOAHA Capacity Building Department) (all participants should bring their computer/tablet to this session)
- 12:30 p.m. The New WOAHA Standards Navigation tool (Dr Ronald Mora, WOAHA Standards Department)
- 1:00 p.m. Lunch
- 2:00 p.m. Wildlife framework: Engaging discussions and collecting feedback for a wildlife strategy and health programme adapted to Members needs - Interactive Session (Dr Sophie Muset, WOAHA Preparedness and Resilience Department)
- 3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:30 p.m. Proposal of date and venue of the 27th Conference of the Regional Commission for Africa
- 3:45 p.m. Conference conclusions and Adoption of Recommendations
- 4:45 p.m. Closing ceremony
- 5:30 p.m. End of the day
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner (offered by Ethiopia)

FRIDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2025

Technical/Cultural visit organised by Ethiopia

- 1:00 p.m. End of the Conference/Lunch



**26th Conference of the WOAH Regional Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 4-7 February 2025**

Recommendation n°1

**Control and eradication of CBPP in Africa:
Challenges and Strategies for a CBPP Free Africa**

Final

CONSIDERING:

1. The importance of cattle to livelihoods, food, and nutrition security, incomes, and resilience of rural and pastoral communities in Africa, as well as their contribution to national economies and the emergent opportunities to increase intra-African trade under the African Continental Free Trade Area;
2. The persistent threat of CBPP to large cattle populations in Africa and the uncontrolled internal and cross-border movements of animals;
3. The persistent occurrence of climate change related droughts trigger long distance movement and leave animals weakened and susceptible to CBPP;
4. The gaps in knowledge and expertise on the regional, and sub-regional CBPP control strategies/programmes and the requisite tools to support and assess the implementation of CBPP control programmes; the different and uncoordinated national, regional, and continental CBPP control strategies coupled with poor coverage and tracking of vaccination;
5. The limited surveillance and challenges with CBPP diagnostic tests including irregular market availability and limited technical capacity;
6. The persistence on the market of CBPP vaccines that have not been quality controlled, as well as the poor infrastructure for vaccine storage and transportation;
7. The inadequate resources (human, technical and financial) to effectively implement existing national strategies for CBPP control and to undertake WOAH processes and procedures for Disease Status recognition and the endorsement of official control programmes;
8. The need to strengthen policies, including legislation, and the engagement of stakeholders, including private sector actors in CBPP control efforts, taking advantage of existing regional coordination mechanisms such as the standing group of experts for Africa;
9. On one hand, the attainment of WOAH official recognition of CBPP free status by four Members with two of these having WOAH endorsement of their official control programs for CBPP and, on the other hand, the slow progress towards WOAH recognition of CBPP free status of other potential Members;
10. Abattoir surveillance is key to support targeted investigation and diagnosis of CBPP and there are existing innovations to support real time flow of data; and
11. Need to expand the network of WOAH Reference Laboratories for this disease in Africa to support Members' efforts towards a CBPP free Africa.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. WOAHA continues to provide support to its Members to strengthen their Veterinary Services with respect to the control and eradication of CBPP, through the implementation of the PVS Pathway with consideration of CBPP, reflecting Members' specific needs to control this disease, as well as training on WOAHA official recognition procedures;
2. Members and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) enhance efforts in collaboration and coordination to enforce regulations and procedures to control both internal and cross-border animal movements and vaccination approaches. This should be supported by the regular sharing of information on nomadic, transhumant, and trade-related movements of animals;
3. WOAHA, FAO, AU-IBAR and RECs to continuously insist on the need for continental efforts towards a CBPP-free Africa through AU-IBAR's *Animal Health Strategy for Africa* (AHSa) framework for transboundary livestock disease control and the respective regional CBPP strategies among Members and policy makers, to enhance ownership, buy-in and continued support as well as the appropriate alignment and harmonisation of national CBPP control activities, including vaccination strategies and movement control;
4. Members in consultation with WOAHA, FAO, AU-IBAR, development partners and RECs, prioritise the development, where relevant, review and implementation of their CBPP *national strategic plans* (NSP) and national investment plans, aligned with AU-IBAR's to-be-developed Africa CBPP control strategy, and increase their participation and cooperation within the GF-TADs framework;
5. Members improve knowledge of their CBPP epidemiological situation, by monitoring disease occurrence within their ecosystems through coordinated surveillance and submit reports to WOAHA in compliance with the requirements of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* regarding the notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information. This knowledge should support decision making to target the animal populations at risk for CBPP;
6. Members improve their capacity for CBPP diagnosis through participatory community training, general surveillance, enhanced targeted abattoir surveillance, and participation in training activities for validation of CBPP tests with support from the WOAHA Reference Laboratories;
7. Members ensure the use of quality CBPP vaccines by procuring and registering, only those vaccines that have undergone quality certification by AU-PANVAC and ensuring the full enforcement of legislation pertaining to vaccine storage, transportation, and delivery;
8. WOAHA Reference Centres and research institutions are invited to enhance efforts to develop new vaccines and therapeutics;
9. Members review their legislation, policies, licensing, and guidelines for the use of antimicrobials for the treatment of CBPP and other infectious diseases for which there exist efficacious vaccines;
10. Members enact legislation to limit the sale of counterfeit antimicrobials and unregulated use of antimicrobials for the treatment of CBPP and other infectious diseases for which there exist efficacious vaccines;
11. WOAHA is requested to develop clear guidance on the use of antimicrobials in the framework of CBPP control;

12. WOAHA, in collaboration with partners, support Members to conduct and document analyses of the cost of CBPP to social, cultural, food security, nutrition, climate resilience and economic well-being of livestock keepers in order to encourage Governments and international development partners to continue to commit to, and support disease control and eradication by allocating necessary resources (financial, structural and human) as well as supportive legislation to foster proper implementation of relevant CBPP control strategies or programmes including, among others, cooperation with farmers, vaccination and animal movement controls;
13. Members enhance the engagement and involvement of stakeholders in CBPP control activities beyond conventional partners. In particular, efforts should be made to leverage private sector vaccine producers and animal health service providers, farmers associations, community-based organisations, to better deliver disease control interventions;
14. Members that have never reported CBPP and do not have vaccination programs against CBPP implement the necessary activities to ensure compliance with the relevant WOAHA standards with regard to a country or zone free from CBPP and subsequently undertake the procedures and processes for submission of an application to WOAHA for the official recognition of their disease free status.

**26th Conference of the WOA Regional Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 4 to 7 February 2025**

Recommendation No. 2

**Veterinary Services and food safety: challenges and perspectives for policy
development in the context of market unification on a continental scale**

Final

CONSIDERING THAT:

1. Livestock farming plays a key economic and social role in Africa, where it accounts for a substantial proportion of agricultural GDP, especially in the poorest countries. However, the sector remains vulnerable to diseases that can have a significant economic and sanitary impact;
2. Despite having considerable economic potential, intra-African trade remains weak (16-17% of all trade), due in part to non-tariff barriers, differences in sanitary policies and the lack of traceability systems meeting international standards;
3. Zoonoses and infectious diseases continue to limit the sustainability of animal production sectors. The informal sector, which dominates agricultural trade, presents serious sanitary risks;
4. The unification of African markets, driven by initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), offers a unique opportunity to strengthen food safety and the Veterinary Services, which are essential not only in promoting sustainable, fair trade but also in improving animal and human health;
5. The consumption of meat and milk in Africa is likely to double by 2050, driven by an equivalent demographic increase. This growth presents an opportunity for economic integration through the AfCFTA;
6. The regional economic communities (REC) and the AfCFTA provide opportunities for harmonising sanitary policies and stimulating trade in products of animal origin;
7. The Veterinary Services play a key role in fully exploiting the opportunities that the AfCFTA offers. However, they face significant challenges, including the lack of human and financial resources, technical disparities between countries, the absence of harmonisation of sanitary standards and the growing threats posed by zoonoses and food contamination;
8. The implementation of coordinated, well-funded programmes at national, regional and continental levels is essential to strengthen the food safety systems in Africa;
9. Initiatives such as the Maputo Declaration, the Malabo Declaration, the Kampala Declaration and programmes such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the LiDeSA strategy seek to strengthen the Veterinary Services and harmonise regulatory frameworks at continental level;
10. The WOA PVS Pathway promotes continuous improvement and alignment with WOA standards through its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) cycle, while providing evidence-based data through its Information System that support decision making and sustainable investments adapted to the specific needs and priorities of each Member.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

RECOMMENDS THAT

MEMBERS:

1. Continue active engagement in the PVS Pathway and advocate for strategic planning and increased resources for the Veterinary Services, backed up by data and analyses present in the PVS Information System;
2. Provide the Veterinary Services with needs-based competencies, infrastructure and resources to better manage the challenges linked to sanitary threats;
3. Align and harmonise regulatory frameworks covering animal production, processing, veterinary public health and animal production food safety regulatory frameworks with international standards, including zoning and compartmentalisation, in order to promote smooth, safe continental trade;
4. Integrate actors in the informal animal food sector into formal market chains through training and economic incentive measures and by reducing regulatory and fiscal burdens;
5. Strengthen participation in the standard-setting process of WOA and in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission;
6. Pursue efforts to strengthen the food safety systems' capacities of the Veterinary Services, including through multisectoral collaborations;
7. Improve their transparency obligations in diseases notification and reporting through the *World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS)*;
8. Assure their veterinary workforce access to competency-based training to strengthen and maintain the necessary capacity to implement WOA standards.
9. Urge AU-IBAR to prepare a note to Heads of States stressing the need of adequate staffing of Veterinary Services to enable them to fulfil their role in ensuring safe trade and effective surveillance systems, making reference to PVS Reports, where relevant, in particular recommendations on human resources and access to markets.

WOA:

1. Continue to give priority to work that enables the voice of the animal health sector and the Veterinary Services to be heard in all relevant political fora and their key role in animal production food safety and safe trade to be recognised;
2. Continue to support Members through the PVS Pathway to strengthen their capacities, including Public Private Partnerships to facilitate advocacy and support sustainable investments;
3. Continue developing competency-based training for the Veterinary Services' workforce, based on learning need assessments focused on the capacities needed to assure safe trade, control of transmittable diseases including zoonoses, food safety;
4. Further develop and promote the data housed in the PVS Information System (PVS IS) to support performance monitoring of the Veterinary Services and the development of methodologies, data and tools to facilitate the analysis of the economic impact of animal diseases and demonstrate the essential role of animal health in public health and trade.