

Bamako Declaration

"The role of Veterinary Statutory Bodies"

Bamako, Mali, 14–15 April 2011

CONSIDERING:

1. The need to strengthen the capacities of countries globally to create or maintain national animal health and veterinary public health systems that cover the whole national territory and that can provide for surveillance, early detection and rapid response to outbreaks of aquatic and terrestrial animal diseases, including zoonoses, whether these arise through by natural or intentional events;
2. That the mandate of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) as an intergovernmental organisation with 178 Members (as of April 2011) is to improve animal health and welfare worldwide and to ensure sanitary safety of world trade of animals and animal products, while consolidating the place of the animal in the world;
3. That good governance, according to the OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services, in particular the provisions of Article 3.2.12 of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*), on Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSB), is of critical importance in enabling veterinary services to fulfil at least the basic missions recommended by the international community in order to improve animal health and welfare as well as veterinary public health at national, regional and global levels;
4. That the OIE provides to Members the global PVS Pathway for Efficient Veterinary Services under its mandate to strengthen capacities relevant to the veterinary domain, including for animal health and welfare, veterinary legislation, veterinary education and supervision of the veterinary profession by the VSB;

5. That the training (initial and on-going) of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals must take into account basic competencies, notably skills in diagnosis, epidemiology, food safety, animal welfare, veterinary legislation, management and leadership;
6. The disparities between veterinary registration, accreditation and monitoring procedures and the legislation governing VSB in the various regions/countries, and the lack of formal VSB or equivalent institutions in some countries;
7. The need for an increased regional integration and subsequent regional mobility of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals;
8. The opportunity to work within the framework established by Regional Economic Communities, to develop a harmonised approach to the training and regulation of the veterinary profession;
9. The insufficient participation in general of private veterinarians and their associations in supporting the activities of Veterinary Services and the need for more public-private veterinary partnerships in many countries;
10. The need for countries and organisations to work together to support countries that wish to improve veterinary governance;
11. That, following the 1st Global Conference on Veterinary Education (October 2009), the OIE convened an ad hoc Group on Veterinary Education, which recommended a set of the minimum competencies required of 'Day 1' veterinary graduates (in both the public and private sector) to enable Members to meet the OIE standards for efficient veterinary services;
12. That the 2nd Global Conference on Veterinary Education (13-14 May 2011, Lyon, France) will feature presentations on veterinary education and the role of VSB; and
13. The importance of promoting the veterinary profession in order to better address the ambiguity related to the recognition of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals.

THE BAMAKO CONFERENCE MAKES THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION:

1. The OIE, with support from relevant international organisations, should continue to provide the PVS Pathway for efficient Veterinary Services using all associated steps, including independent evaluation, the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme, the Twinning Programmes, the PVS Gap Analysis and the PVS follow-up missions;
2. The OIE should augment its standards and associated PVS critical competencies on VSB, to better provide guidance to OIE Members wishing to improve the governance of the veterinary profession and the OIE should develop a twinning mechanism for countries wishing to establish or strengthen existing VSBs or an equivalent body complying with the OIE *Terrestrial Code* definition (further referred to as “equivalent body”);
3. The OIE should continue to work closely with Member Countries, Regional Economic Communities and other organisations to support efforts to improve the initial and ongoing training of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals, and harmonised approaches to recognition of qualifications, including with the support of VSB;
4. The OIE should use the principles established under the successful Laboratories Twinning Programme to prepare pilot twinning projects between Veterinary Education Establishments (VEE) and between VSB (or equivalent body);
5. The OIE should, in association with relevant partners, organise a global conference for VSBs;
6. The OIE should present recommendations to the World Assembly of Delegates on the Day 1 minimum competencies required by veterinarians for countries to meet the OIE standards on competent Veterinary Services. The minimum competencies for veterinarians, including those working in governmental services, should include skills in diagnosis, epidemiology, food safety, animal welfare, veterinary legislation, management and leadership;
7. The OIE should consider the creation or the strengthening of mechanisms to support the evaluation of the quality of national Veterinary Services personnel on the basis of their initial and continuing education, particularly where recognised evaluation systems currently do not apply;

8. The OIE should encourage the creation, if necessary, of regional associations of VSB and/or other organisations with delegated educational accrediting authority which could facilitate the establishment of a list of veterinary education establishments (VEE) that would be subject to regional accreditation after appropriate external audit, based on criteria that may be accepted throughout the region to facilitate mobility of veterinarians as appropriate;
9. OIE Member Countries should take steps to improve compliance with international standards and the quality of national Veterinary Services by following, when needed, the OIE PVS Pathway, as appropriate to the national and regional context;
10. OIE Member Countries that have done a PVS evaluation, are urged to consider the findings of the evaluation and, where appropriate, apply the relevant next steps such as the PVS Gap Analysis and Veterinary Legislation Identification missions, to improve general compliance with OIE and other relevant international standards;
11. Those Members who have not yet done so should commence the process of creating an autonomous national VSB complying with the OIE *Terrestrial Code* definition, including as a first step providing national legislation for the establishment of a VSB with clearly defined objectives and powers to regulate the whole veterinary profession, in accordance with OIE standards as referred to in Article 3.2.12 of the *Terrestrial Code*;
12. VSBs are urged to comply with the OIE standards on the quality of Veterinary Services, in particular the provisions of Article 3.2.12 of the *Terrestrial Code* on VSB;
13. VSB, or national equivalent body , should be entrusted with the assessment and evaluation of VEE training veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals destined to work in the country, except when a relevant supranational body is already officially in charge of that mission;
14. VSBs are encouraged to increase the quality of national Veterinary Services by accrediting only veterinarians who have graduated from high-quality educational programmes (e.g. those programmes accredited by a recognised educational accrediting body and/or complying with the core curriculum model recommended by the OIE);

15. Countries/regions should encourage collaboration between VSBs, or equivalent bodies, or official national or regional accrediting agencies, in order to harmonise education programme evaluations and facilitate regional integration of veterinary services and regional mobility of veterinarians;
16. OIE Members should develop and implement national legislation enabling the establishment of veterinary associations, including clear definitions of the terms 'veterinarian' and 'veterinary para-professional' based on OIE definitions, and the modalities of their participation in relevant animal health activities in the country; and
17. When preparing national and regional strategic plans for compliance of Veterinary Services with quality standards, OIE Member Countries should, if necessary, seek appropriate support and funding from donor agencies, using the auspices of the OIE; and
18. The African Veterinary Association (AVA), in collaboration with the OIE, should promote exchanges between the Veterinary Statutory Bodies, or equivalent bodies, and the veterinary associations in order to stimulate the creation of networks in Africa and outside.