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COMPETENT AUTHORITIES FOR AQUATIC ANIMALS HEALTH SERVICES:

VETERINARY OR FISHERIES

Regional training Seminar on aquatic animal diseases

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Introduction (1)

➤ Introduction

Competent Authority

- *Definition*
- *Background*

OIE provisions:

- Terrestrial Code
- Aquatic Code
- Veterinary Services
- Veterinary Authority
- Veterinary paraprofessionals
- Aquatic Animal Health Services

- Competent Authority and disease notification on aquatic animals
- The prevalent situation in OIE Member
- Challenges
- Conclusions

Introduction (2)

Competent Authority

➤ DEFINITION – General

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Competent_authority 06/02/2012 - 10:49)

- A **competent authority** is any person or organization that has the legally delegated or invested authority, capacity, or power to perform a designated function. Similarly, once an authority is delegated to perform a certain act, only the competent authority is entitled to take accounts there from and no one else.

Background (1)

OIE provisions:

Competent Authority (CA)

Terrestrial Code

- ...the *Veterinary Authority* or other Governmental Authority of a Member having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and welfare measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* and in the OIE *Aquatic Animal Health Code* in the whole territory

Aquatic code

- ...the *Veterinary Authority* or other Governmental Authority of a Member having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of *aquatic animal* health and welfare measures, international health certification and other standards and recommendations in the *Aquatic Code* in the whole territory.

Background (2)

OIE provisions:

Terrestrial code Chapter 3.1

- *Veterinary Services*
- means the governmental and non-governmental organisations that implement animal health and *Welfare* measures and other standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* and the OIE *Aquatic Animal Health Code* in the territory. The Veterinary Services are under the overall control and direction of the *Veterinary Authority*. Private sector organisations, *Veterinarians*, *Veterinary para-professionals* or aquatic animal health professionals are normally accredited or approved by the *Veterinary Authority* to deliver the delegated functions.

Background (3)

OIE provisions:

Veterinary Authority (VA)

OIE Terrestrial Code

- ...the *Governmental Authority* of an OIE Member, comprising *veterinarians*, other professionals and para-professionals, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and *welfare* measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* in the whole territory.

OIE Aquatic Code

- ...the *Governmental Authority* of an OIE Member, comprising *verinarians*, other professionals and para-professionals, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of *aquatic animal* health and welfare measures, international *aquatic animal* health certification and other standards and recommendations in the *Aquatic Code* in the whole territory.

Background (4)

OIE provisions:

OIE Terrestrial Code

Veterinary para-professionals

- ... a person who, for the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, is authorised by the *Veterinary Statutory Body* to carry out certain designated tasks (dependent upon the category of *veterinary para-professionals*) in a territory, and delegated to them under the responsibility and direction of a *veterinarian*. The tasks for each category of *veterinary para-professional* should be defined by the *veterinary statutory body* depending on qualifications and training, and according to need.

Background (5)

OIE provisions:

Aquatic Animal Health Services (AAHS)

- ...the governmental and non-governmental organisations that implement animal health and welfare measures and other standards and recommendations in the *Aquatic Code* in the territory. The Aquatic Animal Health Services are under the overall control and direction of the ***Competent Authority***. Private sector organisations, *veterinarians, aquatic animal* health professionals or veterinary paraprofessionals are normally accredited or approved by the ***Competent Authority*** to deliver the delegated functions.

CA vs Disease Notification on Aquatic animals (1)

NOTIFICATION

Terrestrial Code

- ...procedure by which:
 - the *Veterinary Authority* informs the *Headquarters*,
 - the *Headquarters* inform the *Veterinary Authority*
- of the occurrence of an *outbreak of disease or infection*, according to the provisions of Chapter 1.1 of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Aquatic Code

- ...procedure by which:
 - the *Veterinary Authority* informs the *Headquarters*,
 - the *Headquarters* inform *Veterinary Authorities* of Members
- of the occurrence of a *disease*, according to the provisions of Chapter 1.1 of the *Aquatic Code*.

CA vs Disease Notification on Aquatic animals (2)

ADDITIONALLY:

- *Both Terrestrial/Aquatic Code have common statement - Articles 1.1.1.:*
- ✓ every Member of the OIE shall recognise the right of the *Headquarters* to communicate directly with the *Veterinary Authority* of its *territory* or *territories*.

All *notifications* and **all information** sent by the OIE to the *Veterinary Authority* shall be regarded as having been sent to the country concerned and all *notifications* and **all information** sent to the OIE by the *Veterinary Authority* shall be regarded as having been sent by the country concerned.

Prevalent situation in OIE Members (1)

- *Aquatic Animal Health Services may be located in different Departments (Ministry or other Institution) from the Veterinary Authority; Examples:*
- - Ministry of Agriculture
 - Ministry of Fisheries
 - Ministry of the Environment
 - Ministry of Natural Resources
 - And so

Prevalent situation in OIE Members (2)

Advantages and disadvantages


Advantages:

- Better devotion in addressing aquatic animals matters (full time allocation);
- Resource allocation (in some cases higher than those for terrestrial animals);
- Better lobbying for the sector (attract specific investments);

Disadvantages:

- Poor coordination between different stakeholders vs inadequate legislation (clarify the mandate of each one)
- Ad hoc communication/"coordination"
- In some cases poor or non observation of international disease reporting requirements;
- **As a result:** poor aquatic animals disease information/communication

Challenges

- Clarity in nominating of Competent Authority / its role and responsibilities  areas of intersection/possible conflicts;
- Approve adequate legislation;
- Define specific training needs for the personnel of the Competent Authority;
- Capacity building, reference laboratories, etc. (Access to resources)

Conclusions (1)

❖ Competent Authority can be either Aquatic Animals Services or Veterinary Services, according to OIE member specificities.

• BUT

In any case:

Important:

1. OIE members - Competent Authority - the institution that can diligently undertake the responsibilities: particularly the skills and technical ability for early detection and rapid response to aquatic animal health events.

ALWAYS:

2. Must observe OIE Codes (international standards and guidelines)

Conclusions (2)

Country Legislation

3. provisions for appropriate coordination on critical matters between the Competent Authority and the Veterinary Authority.

4. Way forward

- *Strengthen continuing education for Veterinary Services Staff on the reporting matters other than those of the terrestrial animals.*
- ❖ *OIE Members to consider that ALL OIE national focal points be employed by Veterinary Services – it maintains better coordination and communication between Veterinary Authority and different Competent Authorities?!!!*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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