

RESOLUTION No. XIV

Animal Welfare Mandate of the OIE

CONSIDERING THAT

At the 68th General Session in May 2000 the International Committee examined and approved the OIE Third Strategic Plan,

At the 69th General Session in May 2001 the International Committee adopted the Director-General's Work Programme to implement the recommendations of the Third Strategic Plan for the period 2001–2005. The Work Programme indicated that new areas identified in the Third Strategic Plan would be given special attention,

An OIE Ad hoc Group on Animal Welfare met from 2 to 4 April 2002 and drafted recommendations for the consideration of the International Committee concerning the scope of OIE involvement in the area of animal welfare, priorities for the OIE and a *modus operandi*,

This Ad hoc Group noted the OIE's 75-year history of achievement as the international reference organisation for animal health with an established infrastructure and international recognition. Recognising the essential link between animal health and animal welfare, the Ad hoc Group believed that the OIE was well placed to provide international leadership on animal welfare,

THE COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. As animal welfare is a complex, multi-faceted public policy issue that includes important scientific, ethical, economic and political dimensions, the OIE develop a detailed vision and strategy to incorporate, balance and take account of these dimensions.
2. The OIE then develop policies and guiding principles to provide a sound foundation from which to elaborate specific recommendations and standards.
3. The OIE establish a Working Group on Animal Welfare to coordinate and manage animal welfare activities in accordance with the tasks listed below, and the Working Group advise on specific tasks to be carried out by Ad hoc Groups.
4. In consultation with the OIE, the Working Group develop a detailed operational plan for the initial 12 months, addressing the priority issues identified.
5. The Working Group and its Ad hoc Groups consult with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) having a broad international representation and make use of all available expertise and resources, including those from academia, the research community, industry and other relevant stakeholders.

6. The scope of OIE involvement in animal welfare issues be grouped into the following:
 - animals used in agriculture and aquaculture for production, breeding and/or working purposes,
 - companion animals including 'exotic' (wild-caught and 'non-traditional') species,
 - animals used for research, testing and/or teaching purposes,
 - free-living wildlife, including the issues of their slaughter and trapping,
 - animals used for sport, recreation and entertainment, including in circuses and zoos,and that, for each group, in addition to essential animal health considerations, the topics of housing, management, transportation and killing (including humane slaughter, euthanasia and killing for disease control) be addressed.
7. The OIE give priority to animal welfare issues regarding animals used in agriculture and aquaculture and, regarding the other groups identified, the OIE establish relative priorities to be dealt with as resources permit.
8. Within the agriculture and aquaculture group, the OIE firstly address transportation, humane slaughter, and killing for disease control, and, later, housing and management. The OIE also consider the animal welfare aspects as issues arise in the areas of genetic modification and cloning, genetic selection for production and fashion, and veterinary practices.
9. When addressing zoonoses, the OIE give priority to addressing the animal welfare aspects of animal population reduction and control policies (including stray dogs and cats).
10. The OIE incorporate within its communication strategy key animal welfare stakeholders, including industry and NGOs.
11. The OIE incorporate animal welfare considerations within its major functions and assume the following specific roles and functions:
 - development of standards and guidelines leading to good animal welfare practice,
 - provision of expert advice on specific animal welfare issues to OIE stakeholder groups, including Member Countries, other international organisations and industry/consumers,
 - maintenance of international databases on animal welfare information, including different national legislations and policies, internationally recognised animal welfare experts, and relevant examples of good animal welfare practice,
 - identification of the essential elements of an effective national infrastructure for animal welfare, including legislation/legal tools and the development of a self-assessment check list,

- preparation and circulation of educational material to enhance awareness among OIE stakeholders,
- promotion of the inclusion of animal welfare in undergraduate and post-graduate veterinary curricula,
- identification of animal welfare research needs and encouragement of collaboration among centres of research.

(Adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 29 May 2002)