

RESOLUTION No. XVIII

**Terms of Reference of the Regional Commissions  
of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)**

NOTING

That the five Regional Commissions of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), namely the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas, the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, the OIE Regional Commission for Europe and the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East, were created on the basis of the OIE Organic Rules decided by the International Committee on 24 May 1973,

AWARE

Of the need for a more precise definition of the purpose and mode of operation of the Regional Commissions, namely to take into account the evolution and the extension of the missions of the OIE and the provisions of the Fourth Strategic Plan adopted by the International Committee on 27 May 2005,

GIVEN

The Basic Texts and in particular Chapter III of the General Rules of the OIE relating to Regional Commissions,

The favourable opinion of the Administrative Commission,

THE COMMITTEE

DECIDES THAT

1. The five Regional Commissions of the OIE shall be governed by the Terms of Reference and Internal Rules of the Regional Commissions appended to the present Resolution.
2. The Director General shall be responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the Terms of Reference and Internal Rules of the Regional Commissions appended to the present Resolution.
3. The Member Countries hosting the Regional Conferences shall be invited to respect the corresponding provisions appended to the present Resolution.

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(Adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 26 May 2006)

## TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

### Terms of Reference and Internal Rules

#### I. Terms of Reference

The OIE Regional Commissions are bodies of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) established by decision of the International Committee of the OIE to further the objectives of the OIE in each region of the world.

When Countries accede to the OIE through diplomatic channels they automatically become members of the corresponding OIE Region. The Member Countries of the Region, meeting in Conference, may vote to approve the membership of other countries.

There are five Regional Commissions (Africa; the Americas; Asia, the Far East and Oceania; Europe; and the Middle East). Their terms of reference are:

1. to hold Regional Conferences bringing together the OIE Member Countries of the Region, the OIE Regional Representative(s), the Director General of the OIE, the representatives of international and regional organisations and experts invited to:
  - a. examine within a regional framework issues relating to animal health, animal welfare and animal production food safety;
  - b. produce recommendations to be submitted for approval to the International Committee of the OIE and implemented, after adoption, by the Central Bureau and/or the Regional Representations;
2. to propose adaptations of OIE decisions, programmes, strategies, policies and activities to the conditions and needs of the Regions and, where appropriate, Sub-regions;
3. to contribute to strengthening the capacities of the Veterinary Services of the OIE Member Countries of each Region;
4. to contribute to the harmonisation of sanitary regulations relating to trade in animals and animal products between the Member Countries of each Region;
5. to increase the contribution of livestock to national economies and participate in poverty alleviation through international trade;
6. to give an advisory opinion on the headquarters of the Regional Representation and, where appropriate, that of Sub-regional Representations, and on the work programmes of the Regional Representations and their sub-regional offices;
7. to examine, and where appropriate approve, applications from Member Countries of the Region relating to the creation of new OIE Collaborating Centres. Candidatures presented by Member Countries must first have received the approval of the Specialist Commission concerned and the Administrative Commission. Applications are then transmitted to the President of the relevant Regional Commission by the Director General. The candidatures are then submitted to the the International Committee for approval.

Regional Commissions shall function on the basis of the Internal Rules.

#### II. Internal Rules

##### *Article 1*

OIE Regional Commissions shall be constituted by decision of the International Committee following a proposal by members of the Committee or by the Administrative Commission.

**Article 2**

OIE Member Countries whose territory is predominantly situated in a given Region delineated by the OIE shall have an automatic right to membership of the corresponding Regional Commission. In certain cases, duly warranted by the presence within a Region of a geographical territory of a country belonging to another Region, an OIE Member Country may be a member of two or more Regional Commissions, subject to its request being accepted by the Regional Commission(s) concerned and then endorsed by the International Committee.

**Article 3**

Non member countries may participate, with observer status and without the right to vote, in meetings of the Regional Commissions, subject to a joint decision by the Director General and the President of the Regional Commission.

**Article 4**

In accordance with Article 13 of the General Rules, the Bureau of each Regional Commission shall be composed of a President, two Vice-Presidents and a Secretary General, elected by the International Committee from among the Members on duty of the Committee, on the proposition of Delegates who are Members of the Regional Commission in question.

**Article 5**

The members of the Bureaux of the Regional Commissions shall be elected, in an individual capacity, by the International Committee for a period of three years. Members shall be eligible for re-election.

In the event of elections to fill vacancies on the Bureaux of Regional Commissions, the Commissions may agree on regional candidatures. The candidates proposed shall be chosen from among the Delegates of the Member Countries of the Regional Commission. The President of each of the Regional Commissions concerned or, in the absence of the President, one of the Vice-Presidents shall then inform the International Committee, during one of the administrative sessions of the General Session, of the proposition of the Commission. The International Committee shall then be invited to vote on the proposition.

**Article 6**

The Bureaux of the Regional Commissions may, in accordance with the sanitary priorities of their region, invite the Director General to convene Ad hoc Groups to analyse, discuss and develop proposals on their specific expertise. These proposals shall be submitted to the Bureaux of the Regional Commissions before being assessed by the statutory Specialist Commissions (the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, the Biological Standards Commission, the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission and the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission).

**Article 7**

The Bureaux of the Regional Commissions shall meet, in accordance with Articles 14 and 15 of the General Rules, at least once a year, convened by the Director General of the OIE in consultation with the President of the Commission concerned and the OIE Regional Representative concerned, to discuss the programmes, strategies, policies, activities and recommendations of the Commission.

The Regional Commissions shall meet during the annual General Session on the basis of an agenda prepared by their respective Bureaux, with the support of the Regional Representative concerned and in accordance with the Director General.

### ***Article 8***

Each Regional Commission shall hold, every two years and on each occasion in a different country, with the approval of the International Committee or, in an emergency, with the agreement of the Administrative Commission and the Director General, a Regional Conference to examine animal health, animal welfare and animal food production safety issues within the Region in question and elaborate recommendations and reports, in accordance with Article 16 of the General Rules.

### ***Article 9***

Regional Conferences shall be convened by the Director General and organised by the Regional Commissions and the OIE Central Bureau in liaison with the corresponding Regional Representation, after they have ensured that the government of the Host Country is willing to grant all the Delegates, rapporteurs and observers and the members of the OIE secretariat participating in the Conference the immunities they need in order to carry out in total independence the duties that they are required to perform, and to grant all material facilities for holding the Regional Conference. The Host Country shall make the necessary arrangements to ensure that any entry visas and stay permits that may be required by the Delegations of OIE Member Countries are issued in a timely manner.

### ***Article 10***

The programme for Regional Conferences shall be approved by the Director General and the President of the Regional Commission in liaison with the corresponding Regional Representation. Invitations to the countries concerned to take part in a Regional Conference shall be sent by the Director General to the Delegates of these countries. Other invitations shall be issued with the agreement of the Director General, the Delegate of the Host Country and the President of the Regional Commission.

### ***Article 11***

The OIE Central Bureau and the relevant Regional Representation shall assist the General Rapporteur with the preparation of meeting reports, in particular by providing secretarial staff to coordinate and support the activities of the secretariat provided by the Host Country for the Conference.

### ***Article 12***

For Regional Conferences, the OIE Central Bureau and/or its Regional Representation, if the Host Country so requests, shall be responsible for:

- defraying the travelling expenses and per diem allowance of speakers, members of the Bureau of the Regional Commission and members of the Central Bureau and the corresponding Regional Representation;
- defraying the travelling expenses and fees of interpreters (if appropriate);
- printing the preparatory documents for the Conference, subject to their being received at least one month before the Conference;
- an official dinner for the participants.

### ***Article 13***

For the Regional Conferences, the Host Country shall, on the basis of a list of requirements provided by the Director General of the OIE, be responsible for:

- reserving hotel accommodation and sending participants practical details about hotels and visas and any other useful information;

- contributing where possible to the cost of hotel accommodation and catering for representatives of Member Countries, by a decision of the Host Country or local authorities;
- rental of the conference hall and additional rooms, including for the secretariat, and installation of a simultaneous translation system;
- printing documents other than those referred to in Article 11;
- secretarial support (personnel and equipment);
- coffee breaks and refreshments during the conference;
- a professional or cultural visit;
- local transport to the conference venue;
- an official dinner for the participants.

***Article 14***

During Regional Conferences, the Regional Representations shall provide the Regional Commissions and the Host Country with logistic support.

***Article 15***

Financing of the Conferences of the Regional Commissions, except for items defrayed by the Host Country under the terms of Article 13, shall be covered by the OIE Regular Budget and, if necessary, by the eligible special accounts, including those of the OIE Regional Representations.

***Article 16***

Representatives of national, regional or international organisations and members of OIE Collaborating Centres and Reference Laboratories, designated by the Director General, may participate in the Conferences of the Regional Commissions and speak on topics within their field of competence. These representatives do not have the right to vote.

***Article 17***

The date, venue and choice of technical items for the following Conference may be established either during the Regional Conference or at the following General Session of the International Committee, on a proposal by the President of the Regional Commission in question.

***Article 18***

A draft report of the Regional Conference shall be presented on the last day of the Conference. The comments of participants will be recorded for inclusion in the final report, which will be established and distributed by the OIE Central Bureau.

***Article 19***

During the General Session of the International Committee, the President, Vice-President or Secretary General of each Regional Commission shall present the activity report of the Commission, and the recommendations and conclusions of the Regional Conferences held since the previous General Session. All these recommendations shall be submitted to the International Committee and, if approved, shall be implemented by the Director General. The vote shall be by a simple majority.

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