

Recommendation No. 2

**Addressing Challenges in the Middle East at the Human-Animal Interface
under the One Health Concept**

CONSIDERING THAT:

1. The One Health concept, which was initiated in the 2000s, recognises that the health of people is intimately connected to the health of animals and the environment;
2. The risks for pathogens to spread to new areas and evolve into new forms are growing stronger with globalisation, climate change and change in human behaviour;
3. Most of the newly emerging diseases are zoonotic in origin;
4. There is a lack of understanding on how the One Health Concept can be implemented at the global, regional and national level;
5. The OIE, FAO and WHO, under the Tripartite, have recently published a Commitment reconfirming their engagement to provide multi-sectoral collaborative leadership in addressing health challenges by maintaining the momentum the Tripartite has achieved in combating antimicrobial resistance (AMR), rabies, and zoonotic influenzas and in reinforcing collaboration across national public health, animal health and food safety systems;
6. As part of the International Health Regulations (IHR) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF), the WHO undertakes, at the request of countries, Joint External Evaluation (JEE) missions, during which three of the Technical Areas evaluated, namely AMR, zoonotic diseases and food safety, are considered as the ones most likely to require intersectoral collaboration at the human–animal interface, with other relevant partners of animal health and food safety, such as FAO;
7. The analysis of the JEE average score for these three Technical Areas obtained by 11 Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East indicates that, with the exception of two countries found to be in a state of critical challenge, the Region can generally be considered to be at the stage of establishing the One Health concept but not as yet having fully developed the required sustainable mechanisms to properly implement it;
8. The One Health concept, through collaboration with relevant stakeholders, has had a demonstrable impact on reducing the incidence of important zoonotic diseases, with examples in the region.

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

RECOMMENDS THAT:

1. Member Countries pursue their engagement in the OIE PVS Pathway by requesting PVS Evaluation or PVS Evaluation Follow-up missions and other missions of this programme and ensure not only that the results of these missions are made available and used during IHR Self-Evaluation, JEE missions and all other IHR MEF-related activities, but that the Veterinary Services also actively participate in these activities;

2. Member Countries establish and make fully active, if they have not already done so, a National One Health Committee(s) or equivalent as a forum to address the challenges at the human-animal-environment interface, and also consider intersectoral training, simulations or exchanges as part of implementing the One Health approach in all relevant fields;
3. Member Countries request the WHO and OIE to undertake IHR/PVS National Bridging Workshops in the Middle East Region as a process to map, support and strengthen intersectoral collaboration at the human-animal-environment interface, in priority areas such as anti-microbial resistance, zoonotic diseases and animal production food safety;
4. Member Countries advocate and communicate on the One Health concept among all relevant national stakeholders, and especially veterinary and human medical students, practitioners and officials, the private sector and communities. This communication should support early detection and response to zoonotic diseases and issues (e.g. AMR) of public health interest, and Member Countries are encouraged to reflect the One Health concept in legislative, institutional and implementation frameworks;

AND THAT:

5. The OIE, in collaboration with FAO and WHO, communicate widely on the recent Tripartite Commitment Note and, through this renewed collaboration, ensure that future activities undertaken under the Tripartite collaboration, effectively support countries in strengthening the implementation of the One Health concept;
6. The OIE, in collaboration with WHO, strengthen connections between the PVS Pathway and the IHR MEF so to ensure that Veterinary Services are systematically considered as key actors and leading partners in global health security, supported by other key partners such as FAO as well as donors;
7. The OIE consider working with all its One Health partners to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Global One Health Awareness Week or similar to promote the important activities under the One Health approach;
8. The OIE continue training regional PVS experts and explore providing PVS Pathway training in the region, with the opportunity to develop new PVS experts, including as part of One Health capacity building, and include them in the relevant missions, pending a merit based selection process.

(Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for the Middle East on 6 October 2017 and endorsed by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE on 24 May 2018)