

**AFRICAN UNION
INTERAFRICAN BUREAU FOR
ANIMAL RESOURCES**



**UNION AFRICAINE
BUREAU INTERAFRICAIN
DES RESSOURCES ANIMALES**



**Reinforcing Veterinary Governance in Africa Programme
(VET-GOV)**

**“Regional Seminar for ECOWAS Member States on
Regional Harmonization of Legislation in the Veterinary Domain”**

**Lome, Togo
20-24th June 2016**



DRAFT COMMUNIQUÉ

I. INTRODUCTION

As part of the implementation of the VET-GOV Program, AU-IBAR in collaboration with OIE and FAO organized a regional Seminar on harmonization of veterinary

Legislation in the ECOWAS region from 20th to 24th June 2016 at Ibis Hotel, Lome, Togo. Participating countries were **Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo**. AU - IBAR was represented by the VET-GOV Technical Assistant and the VET-GOV Programme officer who represented the Director AU-IBAR. ECOWAS was represented by Dr Vivian Iwar. OIE team comprised of **Dr. Martial Petitclerc**, the OIE head of mission, and three legislation consultants **Dr. Hedi Mekni, Dr. Christian Rondeau** and **Dr. Xavier Roy**. FAO representative was **Wora Salami Ibrahim** of the FAO Sub – Regional Office for West Africa. The Government of the Republic of Togo for its part took all the necessary administrative arrangements to facilitate the Seminar organization in the best conditions. The list of participants is annexed (Annex 1).

The objectives of the regional seminar were to:

- identify an area of the veterinary domain for which ECOWAS member countries have a shared interest in harmonizing their regional legislation;
- review the international standards for veterinary legislation relative to the selected area of the veterinary domain;
- review existing representative legislation from within or outside the region which embodies the international standards relative to that area of the veterinary domain;
- provide veterinarians and lawyers from ECOWAS member countries with the opportunity to review the principles of quality legislative drafting;
- apply those principles to the critical evaluation of their existing legislation in the chosen area of the veterinary domain;
- identify gaps, overlaps and conflicts between the relevant laws of the ECOWAS member states; and,
- Initiate the group process among ECOWAS member states of developing a regional approach to legislation for the chosen area of the veterinary domain.

REGIONAL SEMINAR PROCEEDINGS

1. The Opening Ceremony

The Regional Seminar was addressed and officially opened by **Dr GBETOGBE Kolfi**, representing **H.E Hon Colonel Ouro-Koura AGADAZI**, the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Water Resources, the Government of the Republic of Togo. **Dr Daniel Batawui**, the Director of Veterinary Services, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Water Resources, Togo, **Dr Martial Petitclerc** on behalf of OIE, **Dr Wora Salami Ibrahim** on behalf of FAO, **Dr Baboucarr Jaw** on behalf of the Director of AU-IBAR and **Dr. Vivian Iwar** on behalf of the ECOWAS Commissioner of Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources made opening remarks before the official opening by **H.E the Minister's representative**.

2. The Seminar Process

The five days Seminar, which included plenary presentations, discussions and group works, deliberated on the following key issues:

- Objectives, results, structure, and activities undertaken by the VET-GOV Programme
- Activities undertaken by the FAO in the region dealing with veterinary legislation.
- The outcome and recommendations of the regional seminar on veterinary legislation, held in Cotonou, Benin 15th-17th January 2013
- Organization of veterinary bodies, overall strategy and activities undertaken by the ECOWAS in the field of veterinary legislation.
- International standards for veterinary Legislation: Chapter 3.4 of the OIE Terrestrial Code. Quality of legislation.
- Applying quality principles to the development of a set of legislation.
- The history of the development of legislation in the EU, building an animal health framework and policies for border control.
- Regional legislation that meets international standards.
- Regional mechanisms involving the veterinary domain: legislation, networks
- GROUP Works on
 - Analysis of existing animal disease control laws, law enforcement problems and its relationship with regional legislation of ECOWAS member countries in respect to animal diseases control.
 - Definition of regional objectives and strategies in respect to animal diseases control; pre-impact assessment and resources needed.

- Development of a regional legal framework in respect to animal diseases control, identification of resources and programming.
- Development of a roadmap for completion of the harmonization of regional legislation on animal disease control in the ECOWAS region

3. The regional seminar results:

- Raised awareness of ECOWAS as a valuable platform for action in relation to both veterinary legislation reform and animal diseases control;
- Sensitized participants on international veterinary legislation standards;
- Raised awareness among veterinarians about the necessity of having a legal basis for their actions;
- Provided opportunities for vets and lawyers to work together as a team, learning each other's vocabularies, methodologies and expectations;
- Underscored the value and necessity of veterinarians and lawyers working together on the development of legislation;
- Sensitized participants on the importance of reaching out to and working with other experts and specialists, e.g., communication for development experts, media consultants, extension specialists, sociologists, economists, etc.;
- Improved skills of participants in analyzing the quality of veterinary legal texts;
- Improved understanding of the meaning of harmonization in relation to legislation;
- The seminar achieved its objectives and has provided a solid foundation for pursuing further efforts in regional harmonisation of legislation for animal disease control among ECOWAS member states.

Regional Seminar Recommendations

- Considering the need to build on the outcome and recommendations of the regional seminar on veterinary legislation, held in Cotonou, Benin 15th-17th January 2013

- Considering the urgent need to review the legislative and regulatory frameworks in force in most countries of the ECOWAS region, and the need to formulate new laws and regulations in accordance with OIE standards.
- Considering the need to develop a regional legislative and regulatory frameworks for animal diseases control in the ECOWAS region,
- Considering the complementarity between OIE, FAO and AU-IBAR in terms of expertise and their comparative advantages in the field of veterinary legislation,
- Considering the need to combine the efforts of these three organizations for better use of available resources to support harmonization of laws in the veterinary domain with regard to disease control in ECOWAS Member States;
- Considering the need apply the principles of relevance, acceptability, applicability and sustainability for quality legislation;

The Regional Seminar recommended:

To the Member States of ECOWAS

- To ensure implementation and follow up on the outcome and recommendations of the regional seminar on veterinary legislation, held in Cotonou, Benin 15th-17th January 2013
- To include in their strategic plans the strengthening of their veterinary legislation based on the PVS evaluation and gap analysis;
- To implement the national action plans and road map developed as an outcome of this Regional Seminar;
- MSs to ensure the formation and operationalization of the National SPS Committees.

To ECOWAS

- To work evaluate the impact of their regional regulations on animal disease control, cost its implementation, identify limiting factors and develop corrective measures;

- To develop appropriate strategies to support the implementation of regional and national veterinary legal frameworks;
- To support MSs to review their respective national veterinary legislations in accordance with the OIE standards;
- To prioritize animal diseases using the tool developed by the OIE to support the harmonization of regional veterinary legislation for better TADs control.

To OIE

- To lead further identification missions on veterinary legislation on the basis of requests sent by Member States of ECOWAS
- To provide technical backstopping to ECOWAS and MSs in veterinary legislation.

To FAO

- To assist Member States and ECOWAS on requests made within the VET-GOV programme to review national and regional livestock related policies and strategies;
- To advise Member States on the livestock sector policy and strategy implementation and monitoring arrangements.

To AU - IBAR

- To provide support to National and Regional Livestock Policy Hubs in the review and formulation process of veterinary legislation for regional harmonization;
- To support ECOWAS review its regulation on disease control
- To provide technical backstopping to MSs for implementation of the PPR eradication strategy.

III. CLOSING CEREMONY

The representatives of ECOWAS, AU-IBAR, OIE and FAO experts took the floor to thank the participants for their attendance and the quality of their involvement throughout the seminar. The Director of Veterinary Services, Ministry of

Agriculture, Livestock and Water Resources of the Government of Togo finally spoke to close the proceedings of the Regional Seminar.

Done at Lome, Togo 24th June, 2016