

RESOLUTION No. XXVI

**Sharing of avian influenza viral material and information
in support of global avian influenza prevention and control**

CONSIDERING THAT

Avian influenza is a global problem that poses an ongoing threat to animal and human health.

Global control strategies must focus on controlling the disease at the animal source.

Avian influenza is a transboundary disease that has the ability to spread rapidly across continents. An outbreak of avian influenza in any one country is a threat to the whole international community.

It is paramount that any changes in the virological characteristics of avian influenza viruses resulting in increased risks to animal or human health are detected early.

Countries reporting outbreaks of avian influenza are responsible for sharing material and data with the international scientific community in a timely manner to ensure that this is freely available to formulate global control and preparedness strategies.

Genetic information about current circulating field viruses is needed for the early development and preparation of human influenza vaccines and to facilitate accurate laboratory diagnosis.

OFFLU is the joint OIE-FAO network of expertise on avian influenza. The objectives of OFFLU include encouraging members to exchange scientific data and biological materials (including virus strains) within the network and to share such information with the wider scientific community, and to collaborate with the WHO influenza network on issues relating to the animal–human interface, including early preparation of human vaccine.

All information about avian influenza viruses that can lead to the development of more effective prevention and control policies is a global public good and should be put into the public domain without delay.

THE COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDS THAT

1. OIE Members reporting outbreaks of avian influenza should agree to share animal avian influenza viral material and information about avian influenza viruses through OFFLU with the international scientific community.
2. OIE Reference Laboratories must actively encourage sharing of material and data with the international scientific community, and as a minimum deposit genetic data within 3 months of receiving an isolate into a public database designated by the OFFLU Steering Committee, which will manage scientific relations with the WHO.

3. To enhance cooperation and transparency, the actions taken by countries must be recognised in subsequent publications and other benefits arising from the use of biological material or data that they have submitted to OIE Reference Laboratories.
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(Adopted by the International Committee of the OIE on 29 May 2008)