USA COMMENTS

CHAPTER 7.1.

INTRODUCTION TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Article 7.1.X.

Guiding principles for the use of animal-based measures

1) For the OIE *animal welfare* standards to be applicable globally, they should emphasise good outcomes for the animals rather than prescribe specific conditions of the animals’ environment and management. Outcomes are generally assessed by animal-based measures such as low mortality rate, low prevalence of injuries, ability to move freely, positive human-animal relationship, and a low incidence of aggression and stereotyped behaviour.

2) For each principle listed in Article 7.1.4., the most relevant measures, ideally animal-based measures, should be included in the standard. Any given animal-based measure may be linked to more than one principle.

3) End-users of the standard should select the most appropriate animal-based measures for their farming system or conditions, from among those listed in the standard.

4) Standards should, whenever possible, define explicit targets or thresholds that should be met for animal-based measures. Such target values should be based on available science and experience of experts. To guide end-users, Competent Authorities should collect data that can be used to set locally relevant target values.

5) In addition to animal-based measures, resource-based measures and management-based measures can be defined on the basis of science and expert experience, in cases where a welfare outcome is clearly linked to a resource such as adequate space, or to a management procedure such as pain mitigation.

Rationale: As this Article is titled “Guiding principles for the use of animal-based measures”, the statements within should be focused on guiding the use of said measures. Guiding principles for the use of other measurements should be proposed in a new Article.

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