CHAPTER 7.1.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Article 7.1.X.

Guiding principles for the use of animal-based measures to assess animal welfare

1) For the OIE animal welfare standards to be applicable globally, they should put more emphasis on good outcomes for the animals rather than prescribe specific conditions of the animals’ environment and management. Outcomes are generally measured by assessing animals’ enjoyment of the “five freedoms” described in Article 7.1.2. 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. Outcomes can be measured by an assessment of individuals or animal groups, or a representative sample of those, using data from establishments, transport or slaughterhouses/abattoirs.

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 relevant 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 showing that a welfare outcome is clearly linked to a resource such as adequate space, or to a management procedure such as pain mitigation.

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