USA COMMENTS

CHAPTER 7.1.
INTRODUCTION TO THE
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Article 7.1.1. Definition General considerations

Animal welfare means the physical and psychological affective state of well-being of how an animal is coping with in relation to the conditions in which it lives and dies.

Rationale: While the terms “psychological”, “mental” and “affective” may be used interchangeability when referring to the state of an animal’s emotions, moods and other related feelings, the term “affective” would be more appropriate considering the broad range of animals encompassed by the OIE standards, including reptiles and fish.

An animal is in a good state of enjoys experiences good welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress and it is able to express innate behaviours that are important for its physical and psychological state well-being, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress.

Rationale: The United States understands that the word “enjoys” is intended to be understood in its legal sense; however, without a footnote indicating that term “enjoy” is used to mean “possess” and “benefit from”, most will interpret the term for its common meaning. In that case, the interpretation would be that the animal needs to experience positive emotional states (e.g. pleasure), which is in fact an active area of research in animal welfare. Indeed, when the term “enjoys” is interpreted to mean “pleasure” (which almost everyone will), then it does not make sense to talk about an animal “enjoying”, for example, freedom from fear or pain.

Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and appropriate veterinary treatment care, shelter, management and nutrition, a stimulating environment, humane handling and humane slaughter or killing. Animal welfare refers to the state of the animal, the treatment that an animal receives is covered by other terms such as animal care, animal husbandry, and humane treatment.

Rationale: The content of the recommended paragraph to be deleted is repetitive to the information in the second paragraph above, and is unnecessary.
Glossary

[...]

Animal Welfare

Means the physical and psychological affective state of well-being of how an animal is coping with in relation to the conditions in which it lives and dies. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well-nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter/killing. Animal welfare refers to the state of the animal, the treatment that an animal receives is covered by other terms such as animal care, animal husbandry, and humane treatment.

Rationale: While the terms “psychological”, “mental” and “affective” may be used interchangeability when referring to the state of an animal’s emotions, moods and other related feelings, the term “affective” would be more appropriate considering the broad range of animals encompassed by the OIE standards, including reptiles and fish.