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- the Commission will make the necessary resources available to ensure that real improvements are achieved, in particular by inviting applications from qualified staff with the relevant expertise to be seconded to the OECD Test Guidelines Programme (TGP) in the near future. It will look into possibilities of providing financial support to the OECD TGP Secretariat, concentrating specifically on regulatory acceptance of alternative test methods;
  - the Commission will monitor the OECD process closely in each individual case to make sure that following this route does not entail undue delays. This will include systematic stocktaking of the progress of each alternative method at regular intervals. Any unreasonable delays in relation to a particular method will result in the Commission launching the EU process for regulatory approval for the method in question;
2. Understands that the streamlining and acceleration of the internal procedures apply to the entire process from validation to regulatory acceptance with no gaps;
  3. Calls on the Commission to ensure full stakeholder participation throughout the process from validation to regulatory approval;
  4. Urges the Commission to come forward with a proposal for the first adaptation to technical progress of the Regulation by the end of 2008 as the litmus test for the implementation of the commitments indicated in paragraph 1;
  5. Calls on the Commission to report to Parliament by the end of 2008 on the implementation of those commitments;
  6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

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### **Animal health strategy 2007-2013**

P6\_TA(2008)0235

#### **European Parliament resolution of 22 May 2008 on a new animal health strategy for the European Union 2007-2013 (2007/2260(INI))**

(2009/C 279 E/20)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission Communication on a new Animal Health Strategy for the European Union (2007-2013) (COM(2007)0539) ('Animal Health Strategy Communication'), according to which 'Prevention is better than cure', and the Commission staff working documents (impact assessment and summary of the impact assessment) accompanying that communication (SEC(2007)1189 and SEC(2007)1190),
  - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and the opinion of the Committee on International Trade (A6-0147/2008),
- A. whereas animal health is closely linked to human health, owing to the possibility of direct or indirect transmission of certain diseases,
  - B. whereas animal health is important in economic terms because animal diseases lower animal production and lead to animal death, culling and consequential economic loss,

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- C. whereas animals are living, sentient beings and their protection and correct treatment is one of the challenges for a cultured and civilised 21st Century Europe,
  - D. whereas major outbreaks of animal disease can often result in social dislocation and social problems in rural areas,
  - E. whereas animal welfare is one factor, but not the only one, which contributes to animal health and is justified on ethical, social, moral and economic grounds, and must be based on solid scientific foundations,
  - F. whereas trade is becoming increasingly globalised and the trade in animal products is on the increase, both within the EU and internationally,
  - G. whereas there is a need for coordinated cooperation on animal health issues at EU and global level,
  - H. whereas the effectiveness of action on animal health depends not only on the administrative measures taken but also on informed and committed cooperation between all stakeholders,
  - I. whereas the best means of combating animal diseases is to prevent them from occurring in the first place, in accordance with the principles that 'prevention is better than cure' and 'vaccination is better than unnecessary culling',
  - J. whereas there is no difference between the quality of products derived from (emergency) vaccinated animals and products derived from unvaccinated animals, but markets in and outside the EU may not accept products derived from (emergency) vaccinated animals and livestock farmers, and other operators need sufficient guarantees that markets would be ready to receive those products without price cuts,
  - K. whereas more open borders, increased global demand for food, global trade, global mobility of persons, global warming and illegal trade lead to increased animal health risks,
1. Welcomes the development of a strategic approach to EU animal health policy and supports the overall aims, objectives and principles set out in the Animal Health Strategy Communication, which will enable the EU to reinforce its prevention mechanisms and preparedness in the face of the onset of new epizootic diseases;
  2. Invites the Commission to present an action plan, as envisaged in its Animal Health Strategy Communication;
  3. Alerts the Council and the Commission to the fact that it is impossible to comply with the 2007-2013 time frame laid down in Animal Health Strategy Communication given that the discussions relating to the Communication are still on-going and the basic legislation required for its implementation will not be in place until 2010 at the earliest;
  4. Calls, in this respect, for greater ambition and for a longer-term view from the Commission when bringing forward its legislative proposals, which will enable benefits to be derived from other discussions that will affect the EU's budgetary resources and political priorities in the future;
  5. Approves the expressed desire to build the new strategy/policy on a single legal framework for animal health in the EU that takes due account of the standards and guidelines of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE);
  6. Stresses that farmers, breeders and owners play an essential role in monitoring, maintaining and promoting the health of farm animals, and in the prevention and detection of disease;

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7. Emphasises the importance of the role to be played by the veterinary and the live-stock breeding profession, which should be at the forefront of the development and delivery of specialised and proactive services such as animal health planning; expresses its concerns about veterinary coverage of certain rural areas in the EU;
8. Emphasises, further, the role of humans in the spread of animal diseases as a result of increased mobility;
9. Agrees with the animal health strategy objective of investing more in preventive measures and a control system, thereby reducing the likelihood of disease breaking out; agrees with the principle that 'prevention is better than cure';
10. Underlines that there is no difference between goods produced from vaccinated animals and those produced from non-vaccinated animals;
11. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that products from vaccinated animals (protective vaccination) can be marketed throughout the EU;
12. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure the acceptance of products from vaccinated animals at international level;
13. Endorses the vision and purpose set out in the Animal Health Strategy Communication, under which 'extensive stakeholder consultation' and 'a firm commitment to high standards of animal health' will facilitate both the establishment of priorities consistent with the strategic goals and a review of what constitute acceptable and appropriate standards;
14. Welcomes the recognition in the Animal Health Strategy Communication of the crucial relationship between the health of animals and their welfare, and expects to see both matters interlinked in upcoming policy;
15. Awaits with interest the outcome of the preparatory project on animal staging posts and the findings of a survey that will cover the needs and necessary means to improve animal health during transport and stays at control posts;
16. Welcomes the fact that the strategy covers the health of all animals in the EU so that feral pets, which are not expressly referred to, are also covered if there is a risk that they may transmit diseases to other animals or to humans;
17. Welcomes the Commission's intention to adopt a communication strategy on risk managed by stakeholders and consumers; points out that although Europe's livestock production is safer than ever and subject to rigorous checks, the public's perception of the sector is far from satisfactory, which, in the case of some recent crises, has already created problems for the market owing to a loss of confidence;
18. Endorses the target population identified and addressed in the Animal Health Strategy Communication: animal owners, members of the veterinary profession, food chain businesses, animal health industries, animal interest groups, researchers and teachers, governing bodies of sport and recreational organisations, educational facilities, consumers, travellers, competent authorities of the Member States and the EU institutions, and considers it necessary to include representatives of the live-stock engineering profession;
19. Points out that the animal health strategy should also cover the activities of abattoirs, animal transport businesses and animal feed manufacturers and suppliers, while taking account of the need for administrative simplification;

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20. Points out that the animal health strategy, with its preventive approach, should develop the necessary legal and financial measures both to monitor pets and stray animals and to prevent the spread of zoonotic diseases and animal health problems; in particular, the strategy should include vaccination programmes and other preventive measures in connection with diseases transmitted by stray dogs and cats, especially where no vaccination is currently possible; urges the Commission to assess the possible economic and social consequences of the spread of zoonotic diseases and the mobility of people and their pets;
21. Points out that the proposed strategy can produce positive results if clear and transparent arrangements are laid down for the funding of the individual measures, something that the Animal Health Strategy Communication fails to do; criticises the Commission for making no reference to the funding requirements for its policy in the abovementioned Communication;
22. Underlines, with a view to ensuring a level playing field, the need to clarify the role of the EU, the Member States and the agricultural sector in financing animal health measures, such as ensuring biological security on farms, vaccination programmes, scientific research and higher animal welfare standards, and calls on the Commission to clarify those issues in its animal health strategy;
23. Draws attention to the fact that the common animal health policy is one of the most integrated EU policies and that most of its funding should be covered by the Community budget, which should not preclude the financial responsibility of the Member States and of farmers;
24. Acknowledges that markets inside and outside the EU are nonetheless not always willing to import vaccinated and protected meat; stresses that livestock farmers and other market operators require guarantees that they will be able to sell their products without price reductions; regards this as a crucial issue which the Community must resolve quickly in order to guarantee the free movement of goods;
25. Points to the growing problem of bacterial resistance to antibiotics in several animal farming sectors, which can also lead to problems in respect of public health; urges the Commission, therefore, to present an analysis regarding this problem, where necessary accompanied by proposals within the framework of the animal health strategy;
26. Voices its dissatisfaction at the indications that individual measures will be financed from existing funds, and calls on the Commission to advocate enhancing the possibilities of the current veterinary fund, preparing its arguments for the budget discussions that will be launched in 2009;
27. Points to the importance of EU-wide coordination of animal health measures and calls on the Commission to play a more active coordinating role than it has done hitherto;
28. Draws attention to growing animal health risks as a consequence of increasing global mobility, rising demand for food, growing international trade and climate change, and underlines the need for an adequate emergency vaccination strategy for both existing and emerging diseases;

***Pillar 1 — Prioritisation of EU intervention***

29. Acknowledges the crucial importance of risk profiling and categorisation, including the determination of an acceptable level of risk for the Community and of the relative priority for action to reduce the risk; believes that efforts must be made to define clearly the situations in which the risk of disease is heightened and exceeds the acceptable level, as well as the consequences thereof;
30. Points out that high stocking densities in intensive farming systems may increase the risk of disease spread and hamper disease control where inadequate disease control measures are in place, and that the same could happen in other farming systems if disease control measures are not well implemented;

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31. Points to the importance, in terms of controlling epidemic diseases, of the distance between farms;
32. Acknowledges that the EU has in place strict regulations on animal transport, which meet the need for high animal welfare standards and disease prevention and control measures; urges that those high standards be fully implemented by all Member States; believes that the standards should be met by countries exporting animal products to the EU in order to promote and ensure high standards of animal welfare and health globally; points to the potentially heightened risks involved in the long-distance transport of live animals, which has the potential to spread disease and which hampers disease control where inadequate disease prevention measures are in place; is therefore of the opinion that sanitary and animal welfare rules concerning the transport of live animals should be intensely controlled and tightened if deemed necessary; calls for the swift introduction of an integrated electronic European animal registration system, including GPS tracking of lorries; believes that the quality of transport is more important than its duration for animal welfare;
33. Believes that it is also necessary to take into consideration the fact that globalisation, climate change and the movement of people are factors favouring the spread of animal diseases, which makes controlling them more difficult;
34. Stresses the need for a coherent communication strategy in regard to the new animal health strategy, which should involve close cooperation among all stakeholder organisations at EU, national and local level;

#### ***Pillar 2 — EU legal framework***

35. Shares the view that the current EU animal health framework is complicated and fragmented and needs to be simplified; takes the view that the fundamental rules governing action on animal health should, where possible, be set out in a single legislative act;
36. Stresses, furthermore, that the replacement of the current set of inter-linked and inter-dependent policy measures with a single legal framework that takes particular account of the recommendations, standards and guidelines of the OIE and the World Health Organization/Food and Agriculture Organization Codex Alimentarius (the 'Codex') should be a central plank of the strategy, without disregarding European rules such as transparency and the involvement of all stakeholders and while avoiding any deterioration in health status in the EU;
37. Agrees that there is a need to ensure that unjustified national or regional animal health rules do not constitute an obstacle to the functioning of the internal market, and, in particular, that the resources deployed in response to the outbreak of disease are proportional to the threat posed and are not used for unjustified trade discrimination purposes, especially with regard to products derived from vaccinated animals;
38. Takes the view that the EU legal framework should clearly, and in an appropriately flexible manner, lay down the obligations of owners of animals, including animals kept for non-commercial purposes, in risk situations, in such a way as not to give rise to unwarranted conflicts and disputes; believes that curbing diseases among wild animals is also a significant element of the preventive strategy;
39. Agrees with the conclusions of the pre-feasibility study of 25 July 2006 on options for harmonised cost-sharing schemes for epidemic livestock diseases conducted by Civic Consulting in the context of the evaluation of the Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP) 1995-2004 and alternatives for the future, prepared on behalf of the Commission and as part of the pilot project on the financing of contagious animal diseases launched by Parliament in the 2004 budget, which called for the harmonisation of the cost-sharing systems established by Member States; notes, furthermore, that since cost sharing goes hand-in-hand with the sharing of responsibility, such systems require the full participation and commitment of all parties, including animal owners, and that new mechanisms should be introduced to involve stakeholders in decision-making regarding significant policy issues;

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40. Acknowledges the need to revise the current co-financing instrument, so that it is possible to ensure that all players assume their responsibilities and play a part in detecting and eradicating disease, and to prevent distortions of competition between farmers in different Member States; calls for the categorisation of animal diseases in the framework of future co-financing arrangements on the basis of the nature of the combat measures to be applied, risks to public health and other external effects; notes that compensation funds for animal owners based on a reserve system strengthen individual and shared responsibility;

41. Fully shares the view that the compensation system should not be limited to providing compensation to owners of animals that are culled in response to the outbreak of disease, but should be combined with risk-prevention incentives based on a reduction in contributions to national or regional animal health funds by farmers who take extra risk reducing measures and promoting the use of (emergency) vaccination instead of stamping out, acknowledging that this would constitute an income guarantee for the owner of the (emergency) vaccinated livestock; takes the view that the same principle should also apply to Member States, as an incentive to reduce risk levels;

42. Acknowledges, in view of the tight situation on the global market for animal feed, that European farmers have an urgent need of high quality, safe protein feed — in addition to fishmeal — at an affordable cost; at the same time, stresses the importance of the consistent application of the precautionary principle with respect to the reintroduction of animal protein into feed — other than for ruminants — and thus into the food chain, in line with the rationale behind the new animal health strategy that 'prevention is better than cure'; points out therefore the need for greater efforts to introduce effective control and monitoring mechanisms on the elimination of all pathogens during manufacture, to ensure traceability and to avoid the contamination and mixing of types of animal meal in imported feed or feed produced in the Member States;

43. Calls on the Commission to carry out a comparative analysis of existing compensation systems in the Member States and on that basis to draw up an EU-wide framework model; calls on the Commission further to create a legal framework for an efficient cost-sharing scheme in the Member States in order to ensure that the direct costs for eradicating an animal disease are also co-financed by the sector;

44. Points out the need for a substantial Community contribution in respect of major diseases in order to ensure equal treatment and opportunities where these are beyond the resources of the countries and producers concerned;

45. Welcomes the Commission's undertaking to submit a report setting out the possibilities for an effective system of financial guarantees for feed business operators;

46. Agrees that provision should be made in the EU legal framework for support for the possibility of covering indirect losses not resulting from disease-eradication measures alone; points out that indirect losses can, in some cases, be more severe than direct losses, and that provision should therefore be made for compensation for those losses; expresses its support, therefore, for more research into and Community support for the establishment of national insurance instruments by livestock farmers; notes, however, that private insurance might be a more efficient instrument for dealing with such losses in certain cases;

47. Stresses that EU legislation is already based to a significant extent on compliance with OIE/Codex standards and that there is good reason to strive to comply fully with those standards and for the EU to promote its own animal health standards with a view to their adoption at international level; supports therefore, with a view to increasing the EU's negotiating power within the OIE, a possible EU membership of the OIE; stresses, furthermore, the importance of safeguarding the input of stakeholders at OIE/Codex level;

48. Urges the EU to defend its high animal health and welfare standards at international level within the World Trade Organization, in order to increase animal health and welfare standards globally; acknowledges that EU producers face higher costs due to the higher EU standards in place and that they must be protected from imported animal products whose production is subject to lower standards;

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49. Welcomes the proposed steps towards an export strategy at Community level and stresses that the Commission should make every effort to improve access to third-country markets and to remove export barriers;

**Pillar 3 — Animal-related threat prevention, surveillance and crisis preparedness**

50. Points to the need to improve the level of biosecurity on holdings and to encourage all operators to raise standards, while acknowledging that infectious diseases can strike on both small and large farms, on holdings where animals are kept for leisure, in zoos, in nature reserves, in slaughterhouses and during animal transport and transit; considers that measures such as the isolation of new animals brought to farms, the isolation of sick animals, and regulating the movement of people can have a major impact in restricting the spread of disease;

51. Points out that keeping animals in the open is a defining feature of various production systems and is still particularly frequent in certain regions and for certain species; recognises that that practice is supported by the public and with public funds; points out that the practice may contradict the aims of biosecurity; takes the view that farmers should receive support from society in insuring against the higher risks for animal health associated with these types of livestock farming, and that the political objectives in the areas of animal health and animal protection should be aligned;

52. Points out that training for farm managers and staff working on farms is crucial for animal welfare and animal health; is in favour, therefore, of supporting training and further training measures;

53. Awaits the recognition of quality management systems for the categorisation of risk associated with different types of production systems; is convinced that stock-farming systems that are preferred by consumers and that pose certain problems with respect to biosecurity (free-range farming) can be made safer through appropriate management;

54. Believes that tracing products, on the basis of identification and registration, is particularly important in animal health monitoring and disease prevention and food safety; supports, in this connection, action covering the compulsory electronic and DNA-based genetic identification and registration of animals at EU-level and the introduction of a comprehensive and secure animal movement monitoring system, but draws attention to the cost of such a system, particularly for farms working with economically unfavourable farm structures; calls on the Commission to help farmers cope with the high costs incurred through the procurement of the required equipment, by creating the possibility for Member States to incorporate such measures within their rural development programmes;

55. Points to the large differences between Member States in the amount of bovine animals destroyed as a result of non-compliance with EU rules on identification and registration; awaits the explanation of the Commission for these differences within the EU;

56. Shares the view that better border biosecurity is particularly important in view of the fact that the EU is the world's largest importer of food, including animal products; considers that, in view of the risk of infection-carrying or diseased animals being brought into the EU, veterinary and sanitary checks at EU borders need to be particularly thorough and stringent and should not be restricted simply to checking documents, but should also make it possible to ascertain whether animals have been reared in accordance with animal welfare standards laid down in EU legislation;

57. Stresses the importance of animal health inspections within third countries and asks for an increase in the financial resources of the Commission's Food and Veterinary Office;

58. Takes the view that veterinary and customs controls at EU borders should be particularly rigorous with a view to preventing the illegal importation of or trafficking in animals and animal products, given the major risk of spreading disease that such importation and trafficking entail; draws attention, in this connection, to the need for organisational, training and financial assistance to be provided to veterinary services at

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the EU's external borders, including its maritime borders, in particular in the new Member States, third countries neighbouring the EU, and developing countries; calls, furthermore, on the Commission and the Member States to draw up appropriate communication plans to inform people of the risks associated with the private import of animals and animal products;

59. Calls on the Council and the Commission to establish mechanisms to ensure better coordination between customs services, veterinary services and tour operators in order to facilitate cooperation between Member States and with third countries;

60. Calls on the Commission to step up significantly its cooperation with developing countries by providing them with technical assistance on the one hand to help them to meet EU sanitary standards and on the other hand to reduce the risk of spreading of animal diseases from those countries to the EU; believes that in veterinary cooperation with third countries priority should be given to countries bordering the EU;

61. Stresses the importance of veterinary surveillance in crisis situations and the prevention thereof, as regards providing early warning and the prompt detection of animal-related threats; calls on the Commission, in this context, to examine the possible introduction of a system of farm audits for farms that are not regularly visited by veterinary professionals;

62. Stresses the need for economic operators, members of the veterinary profession and their assistants, control bodies and other competent authorities to be provided with effective training to enable them to detect animal-related threats promptly, and for an update of EU minimum standards on veterinary training and support for such training at EU level, together with measures to ensure the implementation of those standards and the alignment, as swiftly as possible, of school and university programmes in this field; suggests, in this regard, that a European accreditation system of veterinary schools could help to achieve the objective of a high-level veterinary education;

63. Strongly supports action to increase the use of (both suppressive and protective) emergency vaccinations, which should result in more effective disease prevention and containment as part of disease-eradication operations; draws attention to the fact that the introduction of an effective vaccination system requires income guarantees for owners of vaccinated animals who may face problems selling products from vaccinated animals and the provision of appropriate financial support in order to encourage the use of such a system and to ensure that products from vaccinated animals are not subject to any restrictions; considers it essential, furthermore, for EU vaccine banks to be expanded; also considers it necessary to apply all measures that can help to reduce the number of healthy animals slaughtered and disposed of, such as tests to prove that animals are free from pathogens, thus making normal slaughter possible;

64. Supports the development of vaccination strategies for all relevant species and diseases;

65. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take measures in order to ensure the indiscriminate circulation of products derived from vaccinated animals, the absence of which has, to date, placed a major brake on the use of vaccination as a tool in combating the spread of contagious animal diseases; calls, therefore, inter alia, for a ban on consumer labelling of products derived from vaccinated animals, effective public communication strategies regarding the harmlessness of products derived from vaccinated animals and the conclusion of conventions on the free circulation of products derived from vaccinated animals between governments, farmers' organisations, consumer organisations and retail and trade operators;

66. Takes the view that, in connection with action in response to the threat of a crisis, it is essential to ensure the availability of specialist knowledge and humane means of carrying out any necessary culling of animals that will spare them unnecessary suffering, in recognition of the fact that they are living, sentient beings;

67. Points out that veterinary medicines and animal vaccines are an element of animal health, and responsibility within the Commission should be reorganised accordingly;



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**Pillar 4 — Science, innovation and research**

68. Stresses that scientific research plays an essential role in animal health systems, since it enables advances to be made, in particular in monitoring the diagnosis and control of animal disease, risk analysis, development of vaccines and tests and efficient treatment methods, which must be based on scientific knowledge; recalls, in this context, Parliament's amendment to the 2008 EU budget, increasing appropriations for the development of (marker) vaccines and testing methods; calls on the Commission to make effective use of those increased appropriations;

69. Draws attention to the need for more detailed scientific research into the impact of feed on animal health and, indirectly, on human health;

70. Believes that research into animal health and welfare conducted under the seventh framework research programme and other research conducted at national and EU level contributes to more effective action on animal health;

71. Points to the need to strengthen the network of Community and national reference laboratories dealing with animal diseases, highlighting the networks that already exist, and agrees that scientifically uniform test methods which are 'trade compatible' (validated and accepted by the OIE and third country trade partners) should be applied;

72. Emphasises the importance of pooling scientific information on animal health and welfare and points to the need for the development of the ERA-NET and European Technology Platform for Global Animal Health information platforms; suggests that the advantages and disadvantages of new and further developed diagnostic methods, such as for example Polymerase Chain Reaction, must be better communicated and used to benefit animals and humans, with a view to both animal protection and the worldwide supply of safe food for people, especially in the newer Member States;

73. Stresses the importance of communicating with consumers in order to ensure that they understand the means by which animal diseases are spread and their enormous impact on, and thus their significance for, the supply of safe food;

74. Strongly believes that the cloning of animals for economic purposes should be banned;

75. Is concerned that European standards could be undermined by imports from third countries whose farmers do not face the same obligations with regard to animal health and welfare; asks the Commission to investigate ways in which to safeguard against such third country competition, including by considering import measures and raising the matter for debate in the relevant WTO fora;

76. Considers that the delay in taking measures to ensure that imports of Brazilian beef come only from cattle that are free of foot-and-mouth disease risks undermining public confidence in the EU animal health regime;

77. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the outcome of WTO negotiations does not undermine the ability of European farmers to maintain and enhance animal health and welfare standards; considers that the possibility of subjecting imported products to the same requirements as European products is a major factor in ensuring a balanced outcome to the negotiations;

78. Invites the Commission to ensure that eggs are designated as a sensitive product as an outcome of the WTO negotiations in order to protect the progress made on animal health and welfare in that area of farming;

79. Is concerned at the growing evidence that links the increasing international trade in live birds and poultry products with the development and spread of diseases such as avian flu; asks the Commission to investigate this evidence and to bring forward appropriate policy proposals as necessary;

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80. Welcomes the Commission's intention to respect WTO commitments regarding sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, but considers that this should not preclude the possibility — specifically admissible under the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures — of introducing measures that lead to higher standards of protection where this is sufficiently scientifically justified; considers, in addition, that it is important to encourage the adoption of such measures at international level in order to ensure upward convergence;

81. Believes that the new generation of Free Trade Agreements with India, Korea and the countries of south-east Asia should have a balanced chapter on SPS measures and animal welfare;

82. Calls on the Commission to integrate animal health and welfare in all its development programmes, in order to achieve consistency with the internal approach and extend the benefits of those policies to partner countries;

83. Urges the Commission to conclude veterinary protocols with potential export markets, such as China;

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84. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

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## EU strategy for third Aarhus Convention meeting

P6\_TA(2008)0236

### European Parliament resolution of 22 May 2008 on the EU strategy for the third Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention in Riga, Latvia

(2009/C 279 E/21)

*The European Parliament,*

— having regard to the Aarhus Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters of 25 June 1998, and to the forthcoming third Meeting of the Parties (MOP-3), to be held in Riga, Latvia, from 11 to 13 June 2008,

— having regard to Oral Question B6-0157/2008 by its Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety,

— having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the Aarhus Convention entered into force on 30 October 2001,

B. whereas the Convention celebrates its tenth anniversary in June 2008,

C. whereas the Aarhus Convention was ratified by the European Community on 17 February 2005 <sup>(1)</sup> and has been ratified by all but one of its Member States,

D. whereas at present there are 41 parties to the Aarhus Convention,

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<sup>(1)</sup> Council Decision 2005/370/EC of 17 February 2005 on the conclusion on behalf of the European Community of the convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters (OJ L 124, 17.5.2005, p. 1).