



# Harmonising & Modernising of Fiji's Veterinary Legislation to Improve Veterinary Services

In November this year, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) funded the first ever Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP) Identification mission to Fiji.

During this period, two International consultants from Canada and Rome visited Fiji and successfully completed the mission on identifying the gaps in the current veterinary legislations of Fiji. The consultants also reviewed all other legislations directly and indirectly related to Veterinary domain.

Fiji's Veterinary Legislation dates back to 1973 and has not been reviewed for the past 43 years. With increased global trade and climate change, there is a grave need for the modernisation of the legislations. The modernisation of legislation is very important not only to meet with international standards and obligations as a World Trade Organisation (WTO) member country but to also meet the requirements of the Fiji's trading partners mainly while trading animal and animal products.

Fiji became member of WTO since 14 January 1996 and member of the OIE since 18 May 2007. OIE conducted the Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) in 2007 and 2014; however, country report was still in draft stage.

BAF has been representing Fiji in OIE since September 2015 with BAF Executive Chairman Mr Xavier Khan appointed as Permanent Delegate for Fiji to OIE.

BAF through assistance of the Fijian Government and the OIE Permanent Delegate to Fiji secured assistance by OIE for the Veterinary Legislation Support Programme (VLSP) and Gap Mission to Fiji mainly to improve the Fijian Veterinary Services.

The OIE VLSP Team emphasized on the importance of harmonization of the laws to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement, which includes aligning with OIE, International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) standards to strengthen and align the legislation to international standards for uniformity with the WTO member countries.

The OIE VLSP Team also stated that there has to be harmonization among related pieces of the legislation of respective Ministries in Fiji, such as Ministry of Health and Medical Services, Ministry of Agriculture

and other relevant agencies that fall under the veterinary domain to clearly outline their duties and responsibilities. The legislative framework should incorporate key international models and obligations for more transparency and good governance.

The following legislations are being looked into:

## Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF)

### 1. Biosecurity Promulgation 2008

- To prevent the entry of animal and plant pests and diseases into Fiji; to control their establishment and spread in Fiji; to regulate the movement of animal and plant pests and diseases and of animals and plants and their products; to facilitate international cooperation in respect of animal and plant diseases; and for related matters.

### 2. Animal Importation Act (Repealed)

### 3. Animal Contagious Disease Act (Repealed)

### 4. Plant Quarantine Act (Repealed)

## Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

### 5. Veterinary Surgeons Act

- An Act to make provisions for the Registration of the Veterinary Surgeons

### 6. Agricultural Land and Tenant Act

- An Act to Provide for the Relations between Landlords and Tenants of Agricultural Holdings

### 7. Agricultural Marketing Authority Act

- An Act to Establish the Agricultural Marketing Authority, to facilitate the purchase, sale and exportation of agro-produce and for related matters

### 8. Animals (Control of Experiments) Act

- An Act to provide for the control of experiments on animals and for purposes incidental thereto and connected therewith

### 9. Banana Export and Marketing Act

- An Act to establish a banana marketing board and to provide for controlling the export of bananas from Fiji and the supply of bananas in Fiji in connexion therewith

### 10. Birds and Game Protection Act

- An Act to make provision for the protection of Birds and Game

### 11. Brands Act

- An Act relating to the branding of the stock

### 12. Coconut Industry Act

- An Act relating to the growing of coconuts and the manufacture of copra, coconut oil and coconut products

### 13. Co-operative Dairy Companies Act

- An Act to establish Co-operative Dairy Company

### 14. Copra Industry Loans Act

- An Act to regulate loans to copra producers and copra millers

### 15. Crop Liens Act

- An Act to regulate the creation of Liens for advances on crops

### 16. Dairies

- An Act to regulate dairies

### 17. Dogs Act

- An Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to dogs

### 18. Drainage Act

- An Act to provide for the declaration of drainage to authorise the execution of drainage works and the establishment of drainage boards and to define their duties and prescribe their powers.

### 19. Fencing Act

- An Act relating to the erection and repair of dividing fences

### 20. Fruit Export and Marketing Act

- An Act to regulate the export and marketing of fruit

### 21. Ginger Council of Fiji Act

- To provide for the establishment of the Ginger Council of Fiji, its functions, structure, funding and related matters

### 22. Goats (Ear-Marks) Act

- An Act to make provision for the voluntary ear-marking of goats

### 23. Irrigation Act

- An Act to make provision for land irrigation and matters incidental thereto

### 24. Land Conservation and Improvement Act

- An Act to make provision for the conservation and improvement of the land and water resources of Fiji

### 25. Meat Industry Act

- An Act to provide for the establishment of a meat industry board and to regulate and control the slaughtering of livestock

### 26. Pesticides Act

- An Act to regulate the registration and sale of pesticides

### 27. Pound Act

- An Act relating to the trespassing of the animals

### 28. Protection of Animals Act

- An Act to amend the law relating to cruelty to animals

### 29. Rewa Rice Limited Decree

- A Decree to Authorise the Government to guarantee the letters of credit and working capital to be raised by the Rewa Rice Limited to an amount not one million and seven hundred and sixty thousand dollars from the National Bank of Fiji

### 30. Stock Improvement Act

- An Act for improving the breed of horses and cattle

### 31. Trespass of Animals Act

- An Act relating to the trespass and straying of animals

A report of the identification mission will be submitted by the OIE VLS consultants to OIE headquarters in Paris before it's disseminated to the OIE Permanent Delegate of Fiji through diplomatic channels.

Fiji will sign the second phase mission agreement once OIE has endorsed the endorsed the engagement and assistance.

Modernization of Fiji's veterinary legislations and harmonization with the international approach of Farm to Fork will not only improve the veterinary services but also improve the animal disease diagnostics; surveillance and response while also improve the animal welfare aspects. The improved veterinary services will indirectly improve human health as there will be better management of zoonotic diseases in the country and also meeting national obligations.

Veterinary legislation provides the powers and authorities necessary for Veterinary Services to efficiently carry out their key functions including epidemio-surveillance, early detection and reporting of diseases, including zoonosis, rapid response to and prevention and control of sanitary emergencies; animal products food safety; animal welfare and the relevant certification of animals and animal products for export.



Veterinary Services provided by BAF Animal Team

## The World Animal Health Organisation (OIE) Focal Points

Due to the fact that the responsibilities of the delegates have increased, since the 76th General Session in May 2008, the World Assembly of Delegates decided that the delegates could nominate National Focal Points to assist their delegates in their work on specific topics. Thus, one of the rights and responsibilities of Delegates, is the nomination of focal points, which should be under the authority of the OIE Delegate, this means that when the different Focal Points forward information to the OIE, they do so under the authority of the OIE Delegate.

This practice applies even if the Focal Points depend on other departments or ministries that are not part of the jurisdiction of the Veterinary Authority, since the OIE considers, from a legal perspective, the official delegate of the OIE is the sole representative of country.

To date, OIE has identified 8 focal points:

**Communication, Aquatic Animals, Animal Production Food Safety, Veterinary Products, Animal Welfare Wildlife, Animal Disease Notification to the OIE, Veterinary Laboratories**

The specific tasks for each Focal Point are indicated in their respective terms of reference. Additionally, in order to support countries OIE conducts specific training workshops for each of these 8 tracks around every two years in the five regions of the OIE.

(Source OIE)

## For Further Information Please Contact:

Biosecurity Authority of Fiji on **3312512**  
or Short Codes : General Enquiries -**5994** Giant Invasive Iguana (GII)-**5995**  
or Termites-**5996** or Animal Disease Surveillance-**5997**  
or email-[info@baf.com.fj](mailto:info@baf.com.fj) or visit BAF website [www.baf.com.fj](http://www.baf.com.fj)