IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC OF GHANA

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND COCOA AFFAIRS

ON

REGULATION C/REG/22/11/10 ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY PROCEDURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF VETERINARY DRUGS OR BIOLOGICS

January 2018

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND COCOA AFFAIRS ON THE REGULATION C/REG/22/11/10 ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY PROCEDURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF VETERINARY DRUGS OR BIOLOGICS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Article 75(2) of the 1992 Constitution, the Deputy Minister for Food and Agriculture, Hon. William Agyapong Quaittoo on behalf of the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Hon. Dr Owusu Afriyie Akoto, on 13th June, 2017 laid before the House, the Regulation C/REG 22/11/10 establishing community procedures for management of veterinary drugs or biologics.

Pursuant to Standing Order 176 of the Parliament of Ghana, the Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Mike Aaron Oquaye referred the Directive to the Committee on Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs for consideration and report to the House.

2.0 DELIBERATIONS

The Committee met with the following to discuss the provisions in the Directive C/DIR1/11/10 on Ecowas Veterinary Pharmacy:

a. Hon. William Agyapong Quaittoo - Deputy Minister for Food and Agriculture,
b. Dr. Kingsley M. Aryee - Deputy Director Veterinary Services Directorate
c. Mr. Emmanuel Eshun - Chief Animal Health Officer (MOFA)
d. Mr. George A. Sarpong - Legal Consultant (MOFA)
e. Dr. Anthony Akunzule - Deputy Director (MOFA)

The Committee is grateful to them for the invaluable contributions they made during the discussions.

3.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Committee made reference to the following documents during deliberations:

i. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana
ii. The Standing Orders of Parliament of Ghana
iii. Cabinet memorandum on the ratification and gazetting of Ecowas Regulation C/REG/22/11/10
iv. Memorandum from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture for the ratification of Regulation C/REG/2/11/10
v. Diseases of Animals Act, 1961 (Act 83)
vi. The Regulation C/REG 22/11/10 Establishing Community Procedures for Management of Veterinary Drugs or Biologics
vii. The ECOWAS Agricultural Policy
viii. Revised ECOWAS Treaty on Agricultural Development and Food Security

4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Diseases of Animals Act, 1961 (Act 83) provides for the prevention and control of the spread of infectious and contagious diseases among animals in Ghana. It does not however cover veterinary drugs and biologics. It has therefore created a gap in addressing issues regarding management of veterinary drugs and biologics. There are also disparities in veterinary laws implemented by countries in the West African sub-region.

Having recognised the fundamental importance of inputs that help in the management of veterinary drugs and contribute to agriculture, Heads of States and Governments of ECOWAS states in 2008, approved a number of regional agricultural directives and regulations designed to facilitate the implementation of ECOWAS agricultural policy which were adopted in Accra, Ghana in 2005.

The general objectives of the regulations are to harmonise existing national regulations for enhanced agricultural production and productivity. They are also to promote regional trade in agricultural inputs and commodities as well as regional integration of which agriculture is an important component.

5.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE REGULATION

The general objectives of the Regulation are as follows:

a. Define the scope of application of veterinary drugs

b. Establishment of the Regional Committee of Veterinary Drugs and Biologics and Its Permanent Secretariat

c. Marketing of Veterinary Drugs and Biologics

d. Procedure for granting authorisation for marketing

e. Creating labels and instructions on veterinary drugs and biologics

f. Marketing monitoring and surveillance

g. Controlling of veterinary drugs and biologics

h. Instituting Fees

i. Creating Network of laboratories for quality control of veterinary drugs and biologics

j. Transitional arrangements

6.0 JUSTIFICATION

ECOWAS having realised the risks to human and animal health due to the absence of harmonious laws in the region for the operation of laboratories specifically assigned to the task of quality control, agreed to organise a network to harmonise operations of laboratories. The harmonious laws if implemented would maximise the effectiveness of laboratories and minimise the risks to animal and human health in the ECOWAS region.

At the Sixty-fifth Ordinary Session of the Council of Agricultural Ministers of ECOWAS Member States, held in Abuja, Nigeria on 23rd February, 2010, it was agreed that the ECOWAS Member States would operate regulations on harmonisation of the network of laboratories,

the rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of veterinary drugs and biologics in ECOWAS Sub-region.

The regulation shall enter into force upon its publication by each Member State in its National Gazette as indicated in Article 64 of the Regulations.

Many countries are now drafting new laws or revising existing legislations to align them with the Regulation C/REG 22/11/10 establishing community procedures for management of veterinary drugs and biologics.

7.0 STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

Seven (7) countries namely Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo within the sub region have gazetted the harmonized directives establishing the community procedures for management of the veterinary drugs and biologics. Ghana, Niger and Gambia are in the process of gazetting the harmonized directives. Ghana being a dualist State can only get its harmonized regulations gazetted after parliamentary approval of the Directives.

8.0 BENEFITS

The Directive if implemented, would benefit Ghana in several ways among which are:

i. Facilitate local production of quality veterinary drugs and biologics;
ii. Facilitate trade in veterinary drugs and biologics amongst Member States, through application of regionally agreed principles and rules that minimize trade barriers;
iii. Facilitate timely and convenient access by livestock farmers and veterinary authorities to quality veterinary drugs and biologics;
iv. Encourage private investment in the veterinary drugs and biologics industry;
v. Safeguard the interest of livestock farmers, veterinary authorities and the general public against anti-microbial resistant, adulteration, misleading claims and inappropriate use of these products.
vi. Ensure availability of good quality veterinary drugs and biologics and

vii. Determine the origin of veterinary drugs and biologics used within the sub-region

viii. Protect the West Africa natural environment and its population against the potential dangers associated with inappropriate veterinary drugs and biologics use

ix. Facilitate inter and intra-state trade in veterinary drugs and biologics through implementation of principles and rules mutual agreed at sub-regional level to dismantle trade barriers.

9.0 OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

a. It was realised that the Public Health Act, 2012 currently provides the Food and Drugs Authority power to vert veterinary drugs although the Authority has no laboratories or personnel to investigate veterinary drugs and biologics. When approval is given to the Regulations, the Veterinary Services Directorate of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture that has the laboratories and personnel to vert veterinary drugs and biologics would take over the function. The Committee recommends that all laws related to veterinary operations should be synchronised to ensure that the Veterinary Services Directorate plays its role as expected.

b. It was again observed that the Veterinary Services Directorate has well equipped laboratories in Kumasi, Koforidua, Techiman, Takoradi and Accra that are sparsely used for the production of vaccines because the Directorate is not adequately funded to do so. This has resulted in the outbreak of various animal diseases in the country. The Committee recommends that the Veterinary Services Directorate should be adequately funded after the adoption of this Regulations to ensure that its operations satisfy the requirements of the Regulation.

c. The Veterinary Services Directorate is also under staffed. The Committee was informed that a request for the employment of 579 veterinary officers was made six years ago but till date approval has not been granted. With the approval of the Regulation there would be the need to have veterinary officers in all the Districts. The Committee recommends

that approval should be given by the Ministry of Finance for the engagement of the veterinary officers to make the implementation of the Regulation effective.

10.0 CONCLUSION

The approval of the Regulation C/REG 22/11/10 establishing community procedures for management of veterinary drugs or biologics would ensure that all laws relating to the regulation of laboratories and biologics in the sub-region are harmonised to guarantee the safety of our veterinary drugs and biologics. The Committee therefore recommends the adoption and ratification of the Regulation C/REG 22/11/10 establishing community procedures for management of veterinary drugs or biologics.

Respectfully submitted

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