The WSAVA One Health Committee (OHC) held its inaugural meeting over two days preceding the NAVC meeting in Orlando, Florida, in January 2011. The OHC was launched officially at the 2010 Geneva WSAVA Congress.

‘One Health’ proposes the unification of the medical and veterinary professions with the establishment of collaborative ventures in clinical care, surveillance and control of cross-species disease, education, and research into disease pathogenesis, diagnosis, therapy and vaccination. The concept encompasses the human population, domestic animals and wildlife, and the impact that environmental changes (‘environmental health’) such as global warming will have on these populations. The WSAVA OHC was established to ensure that small companion animals have a prominent role in the global One Health agenda.
At the January meeting, the OHC agreed that there are three key areas of One Health with which it should engage:

- The human–companion animal bond
- Comparative and translational medicine
- Zoonotic infectious disease.

It was decided that the initial focus of the committee will be in the area of zoonotic infectious diseases. There are already many excellent initiatives related to key zoonotic diseases (in particular rabies) and the committee will endorse and support such initiatives.

The strength of the WSAVA lies in scientific education and communication, and an immediate output from this committee will be the provision of quality information for the global practitioner network. In order to disseminate the One Health message and such information, the OHC has established a web page (accessible from the WSAVA website) and has registered the first One Health Facebook page. WSAVA members should check the OHC website for such information, the OHC has established a web page (accessible from the WSAVA website) and has registered the first One Health Facebook page. WSAVA members should check the OHC website for the latest One Health information and are encouraged to interact directly with us through Facebook.

The WSAVA OHC has already had one review paper published (Veterinary Record 2010; 167: 847) and has another in press (Parasites and Vectors). The committee presented two papers at the 1st International One Health Conference in Melbourne, Australia, in February 2011, ensuring that companion animals are strongly represented in this first truly global discussion of One Health.

The committee also decided that, in order to raise the global profile of the One Health initiative, a WSAVA Global One Health Award will be established. This award will be given to an individual who is very prominent in One Health and will be presented at the WSAVA Congress accompanied by a One Health lecture. A second award will be made to the Congress presentation that best encapsulates the One Health philosophy. It is hoped that this will encourage younger members of the profession to engage with One Health.

The next meeting of the OHC will be held at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia, in the autumn of 2011. The work of the WSAVA OHC is made possible by a consortium of industry sponsors who have contributed to the WSAVA Foundation specifically to fund this project. The OHC is grateful to our sponsors who include at the time of writing (in alphabetical order): Bayer Animal Health, Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Intervet/Schering-Pfouigh Animal Health, Merial, Nestlé Purina, Novartis Animal Health, Pfizer Animal Health, Waltham and the WSAVA itself.

One Health conference

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) recently hosted the 1st International One Health Congress in Melbourne, Australia (14–16 February 2011).

Over the past few years, the One Health concept has brought together experts working in the areas of animal and human disease. One Health has provided a new synthesis for public health and veterinary communities, particularly in the United States, Europe and Australia. However, there is an urgent need and a growing interest to broaden the agenda to incorporate a truly global perspective and to include environmental issues.

This 1st International One Health Congress aimed to achieve these goals by focusing clearly on the risks and challenges brought about by the interactions between animal and human health and the environment. These were considered in the general context of the science and research being undertaken, but critically the focus was on the outcomes that need to be achieved to manage the growing risks to global health effectively.

Speakers included:
- Laureate Professor Peter Doherty
- Dr Alex Theimer
- Dr Henrik C. Wegener
- Professor Mark M. Reiyamarnu
- Dr David Heymann
- Professor John Mackenzie
- Dr Peter Daszak
- Dr Martin Jeggo

The Congress programme featured keynote plenary sessions, expert panel/debates, Out of the Box Sessions and the development of outcomes across the following themes that ran throughout the Congress:

- Setting the scene
- Disease emergence
- Environmental drivers
- Trade, food security and food safety
- Science, policy and political action
- Global survival

KEY DATES REMINDER

Early Bird: Ends 30 April 2011
Pre-Registration: 1 May–30 September 2011
Visit www.wsava2011.org to register or find more information.

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