

INTERNATIONAL EMBRYO TECHNOLOGY SOCIETY

TERMS OF REFERENCE¹ OF THE HEALTH AND SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HASAC)

1. Preamble

The Health and Scientific Advisory Committee of the International Embryo Technology Society is an advisory committee consisting of technically specialist in reproductive biotechnologies, animal health and food safety. It responds to the IETS members' questions and requests for advice related to those matters both at a national and international level. It submits recommendations based on current scientific knowledge to the IETS Board of Governors (the Board) to further provide guidance and advice to international agencies, such as those of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation or of the World Animal Health Organisation (OIE).

2. Mission Statement

To review regularly and extensively all the literature relevant to issues relating to the safe and sanitary activities associated with embryo technologies, in order to evaluate the potential risks at stake, based on evidence and science, for safe international trade of embryos and human consumption of animal or animal products derived from embryo transfer and related technologies.

To develop and provide guidelines such as codes of practice, recommendations and other information pertinent to the safe and sanitary movement of embryos and to their introduction into the food chain of animal or animal products derived from reproductive biotechnology without unduly restricting technological advance and commerce.

To communicate to the IETS members all its achievements and upon acceptance of the IETS Board, to all the relevant International Agencies.

3. Scope

The work of this Committee is wide ranging and includes the following:

- a. Maintaining an up-to-date understanding and knowledge of embryo transfer and of emerging reproductive biotechnologies, with a view to generate a database of the relevant literature in animal health and food safety,
- b. Develop an up-to-date analysis of the potential risks for animal health and food safety,
- c. Elaborate and implement codes of practice that allow by appropriate management, minimization of the potential risks of such technologies,

¹ Final version to be addressed to the Board of Governors – 2 November 2001 and updated version to Board of Governors June 2018 -

- i. to target those technologies as the "safest means for movement of animal "germplasm",
 - ii. to ensure that the introduction of animals/animal products derived from such technologies, into the food chain is at an acceptable level of risk to the consumers and in compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements.
- d. Develop, in full line with the Board strategy, a line of communication using modern communication tools, first to the IETS members and second, to the International Agencies.

4. STRUCTURE

The Committee is organized into five subcommittees:

- a. **Research subcommittee** which shall maintain and update literature relevant to the animal health implications of current reproductive technologies and emerging technologies. Science-based recommendations from the Research subcommittee will be given to the Regulatory subcommittee.
- b. **Regulatory subcommittee** which shall submit recommendations respecting the regulatory aspects of management of the risks potentially associated with embryos in terms of pathogen-embryo interactions. Any proposed modifications to alter text in regards to regulations and/or OIE recommendations will be discussed by the Regulatory subcommittee and then based on scientific recommendations may then be proposed to the Board of Governors. If alterations are determined to be relevant and approved by the Board of Governors these modifications can then be proposed to the OIE.
- c. **Manual subcommittee** which shall develop, elaborate, and publish a code of practice providing guidelines to practitioners for managing their operations so that pertinent quality assurance standards will be met.
- d. **Forms, and Certificates subcommittee** which shall create and maintain recording and identification systems of embryos to ensure adequate traceability.
- e. **Emerging Technologies and Issues subcommittee** which shall review and make recommendations regarding safe and sanitary activities and outcomes in new and emerging technologies (i.e. advanced reproductive techniques, cloning, genetic engineering, epigenetics, nanotechnology, stem cells, cryopreservation).

5. APPOINTMENT AND PROCESS

The Committee is led by a chairperson nominated from the IETS membership by the Board. Each of the five subcommittees is led by a chairperson designated by the HASAC chairperson and confirmed by the Board.

At the discretion of the Board, for the HASAC chairperson and of the Parent Committee chairperson for the sub Committee chairpersons, the chairpersons may serve for a period of 5 years, renewable.

All members of HASAC are volunteers, and do not receive any remuneration for their participation in the committee/subcommittees. Their membership is approved formally by a letter from the Committee chairperson.

To the extent possible, the committee membership will be balanced between geographical areas and continents, between the public and private sector and between the various fields of expertise, scientists, practitioners, administration, commerce etc.

Some co-opted non members with appropriate interests and expertise may also serve.

6. SUPPORTING STRUCTURE

The Committee is an instrument of the Board of Governors to which it reports prior to each of the Board's meeting. No public action nor initiative of the HASAC can be taken without the approval of the President of the Board.

Internal Communication to the members of the IETS, is the responsibility of the HASAC Chairperson. Committee members and subcommittee chairpersons should communicate only with the formal approval of the Parent Committee chairperson or via the HASAC Discussion Forum (<https://apps.fass.org/IETS/hasac-comm-forum/discussion.asp>).

External communication is the privilege of the Board and of its President. Only the HASAC Chairperson communicates externally and that with the formal approval of the President of the Board.

7. FREQUENCY AND LOCATION OF MEETINGS

HASAC will meet at least once annually at the time and location of the IETS Conference.

Meetings and discussions via the HASAC Discussion Forum will be held each year, whenever possible, to accelerate consultations and to respond efficiently to inquiries from the IETS membership and others.

In urgent cases, additional meetings via videoconferencing could be convened during the year upon acceptance of the President of the Board.

The HASAC Chairperson may entertain at the meetings any member of the IETS as observers.

All members of the subcommittees are *de facto* members of the Parent committee.

The HASAC Chairperson may invite non-IETS members to participate to the meetings when appropriate.

8. SUPPORT

A secretariat does not exist for the HASAC Committee but the IETS business office is at the HASAC disposal when necessary.

Financial support for travel expenses may be arranged by the chairperson, depending on the budget allocated to the Committee by the Board.