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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Leading Veterinarian to Support AFSCAN Rabies Control Work in Project for the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study**

One of the world's most distinguished veterinarians, Professor Emeritus Marian Horzinek, is to support the work of the African Small Companion Animal Network (AFSCAN) in rabies control as part of a project he is undertaking as a Fellow of the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS). He has also highlighted to STIAS the importance of involving veterinarians at a high level in human health projects, including those involved with rabies control.

Dr Horzinek has a distinguished career in veterinary virology and founded the Vaccination Guidelines Group of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA). He was made a Fellow of STIAS in 2014 - the first veterinarian to receive this honour. STIAS aims to nurture and encourage leading scholars and researchers to find innovative and sustainable solutions to global issues and, in particular, those affecting Africa. It was established in 2000 and is based in the Stellenbosch region of South Africa.

AFSCAN is an initiative run by the WSAVA's charitable Foundation to advance standards of veterinary care across Africa and to strengthen the fight against rabies. It supports regular rabies control projects, such as those run by Mission Rabies and its sister charity Worldwide Veterinary Services (WVS).

Fellows of STIAS are funded to undertake three month projects which support a range of themes relating to development in Africa. Dr Horzinek's project will support the theme 'Health in transition.' Commenting, he said: "Almost all human deaths from rabies occur in Asia and Africa with an estimated 59,000 fatalities annually worldwide. Dogs are the main source of infection, but other species also play a role in its continuation. There is already a

range of rabies-prevention initiatives in place, so my objective for STIAS is to research the situation in Africa, liaising with those already involved in rabies control; assessing the need for further study and addressing the conditions required to achieve regional or even global elimination. Through my project, I look forward to demonstrating the vital contribution of veterinary science in facilitating a true One Health approach."

He continued: "The AFSCAN project is already making great progress so I intend to assist its training and educational programmes, as well as supporting veterinary research projects in companion animals and wildlife in partnership with the Onderstepoort University of Pretoria Faculty of Veterinary Science."

Dr Gabriel Varga, Chairman of the AFSCAN Board and Director of Business Operations for Zoetis North Europe region, said: "AFSCAN has ambitious goals to transform the veterinary landscape across Africa and to make strides in controlling dangerous but preventable diseases, such as rabies. We are privileged that Dr Horzinek plans to support our work as part of his next STIAS project. His experience and understanding of rabies will undoubtedly be a huge asset to us for the duration of his project."

Zoetis is AFSCAN's major supporter but it is also supported by a range of other organisations which, together, form the AFSCAN Consortium.

## **Notes to editors:**

### **About AFSCAN**

The AFSCAN project has been developed by the WSAVA Foundation with the backing of the global animal health company Zoetis and a Consortium of other supporters. Its Project Board is chaired by Dr Gabriel Varga, President of the WSAVA Foundation and Director at Zoetis and includes Professor Michael Day (University of Bristol, UK, and WSAVA Foundation); Dr Theo Kanellos (Zoetis); Dr Remo Lobetti (referral practitioner, South Africa) and Dr Alex Thiermann (OIE).

Other supporters and sponsors of AFSCAN include the OIE, the North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) and veterinary digital content provider Vetstream; veterinary charity Worldwide Veterinary Services and its Mission Rabies Project; global veterinary equipment supplier KRUUSE; healthcare advertising agency Circa Health; the University of Veterinary Medicine in Kosice; BSAVA; Pet Plan Charitable Trust and the WSAVA.

### **About Zoetis**

Zoetis (zô-EH-tis) is the leading animal health company, dedicated to supporting its customers and their businesses. Building on more than 60 years of experience in animal health, Zoetis discovers, develops, manufactures and markets veterinary vaccines and medicines, complemented by diagnostic products and genetic tests and supported by a range of services. In 2014, the company generated annual revenue of \$4.8 billion. With approximately 10,000 employees worldwide at the

beginning of 2015, Zoetis serves veterinarians, livestock producers and people who raise and care for farm and companion animals with sales of its products in 120 countries. For more information, visit [www.zoetis.com](http://www.zoetis.com).

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**For further information:**

Rebecca George, George PR, Tel: 01449 737281/07974 161108