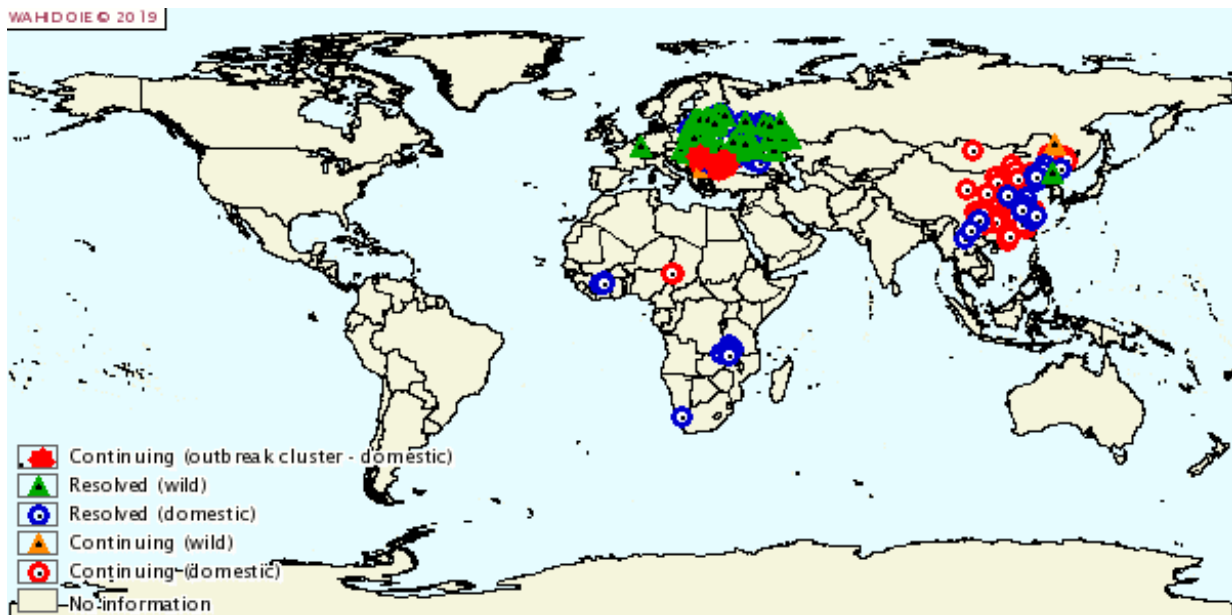


The latest update on African swine fever
in the Asia-Pacific region

Since August 2018, when the first outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) in the Asia-Pacific region occurred in the People's Republic of China (China), OIE Members in the region have significantly increased their efforts to prepare for and raise awareness of the spread of this disease, which is extremely difficult to control and prevent. Earlier this month, on 10 January, Mongolia confirmed an outbreak of the disease. Moreover, several Members throughout Asia and the Pacific have detected the virus in meat products carried by travellers at their borders, highlighting the ease with which the virus could be introduced, even where there is no movement of live, infected pigs.



ASF outbreaks January 2018 - January 2019

With the continued spread of the ASF virus in Europe since 2006, the risk to East and South East Asia, where more than half the world's domestic pig population is located, is recognised as significant. Pork is the main source of animal protein in many countries in the region and there is a large commercial pig industry, as well as smallholder pig farms, with complex value chains and trading practices.

With the Lunar New Year approaching, it is critical to increase public awareness in the region as soon as possible on the risks of spreading the virus through pig products, and the importance of biosecurity measures to prevent the introduction of the virus to a farm.



The OIE has organised workshops since 2010 in partnership with China and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), specifically related to swine diseases endemic to the region, in order to build capacity in

laboratories, epidemiology, field diagnosis and policy formation, and to prepare for ASF. Just prior to the confirmation of ASF in China in 2018, the OIE had organised a hands-on training session in Beijing, China, in partnership with the Chinese Animal Disease Control Center (CADC), on ASF diagnosis in the field and via laboratories.



The OIE held a regional workshop in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, in August 2018, to discuss emergency preparedness for transboundary animal diseases, with particular focus on ASF. Several European ASF experts were invited to share their experiences with Members from Asia and the Pacific. In the end, workshop participants decided that the Standing Group of Experts model used in Europe could be adapted and used in Asia for ASF.

The OIE continues to work with Member Countries, experts and partner organisations in Asia and the Pacific, and globally, to raise awareness, share information and strengthen the capacity of its Members to be prepared for and respond to this extremely challenging disease.

Representatives of the public and private sectors gathered together at the Third Regional Workshop on Swine Disease Control in Asia held in Cebu, Philippines, in October of last year, to develop preparedness plans for countries in the region for the prevention and early detection of and the response to ASF. Experts from Europe and China, also present, shared valuable lessons learned from their own experiences in responding to the disease.



At the South-East Asia and China Foot and Mouth Disease (SEACFMD) sub-commission meeting in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, last November, the OIE held a special session providing an update on the status of ASF in China, and the level of preparedness in other countries. A side meeting, held by members from East Asia, finalised the proposal to set up a Standing Group of Experts on ASF in the region, which would include experts on swine disease

from within Asia and international ASF experts on laboratory diagnosis, biosecurity, epidemiology and wildlife. This group of experts will gather for a technical meeting in March of this year.

Communication is one of the most important aspects for ASF prevention and control. OIE Members agreed to collect and share communication and awareness materials on ASF and the OIE has been compiling these items on its regional website, available at:

www.rr-asia.oie.int/news/read/article/situationl-updates-and-information

More information is also available from the OIE's webpage on African swine fever:

[/www.oie.int/en/animal-health-in-the-world/animal-diseases/african-swine-fever/](http://www.oie.int/en/animal-health-in-the-world/animal-diseases/african-swine-fever/)

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