

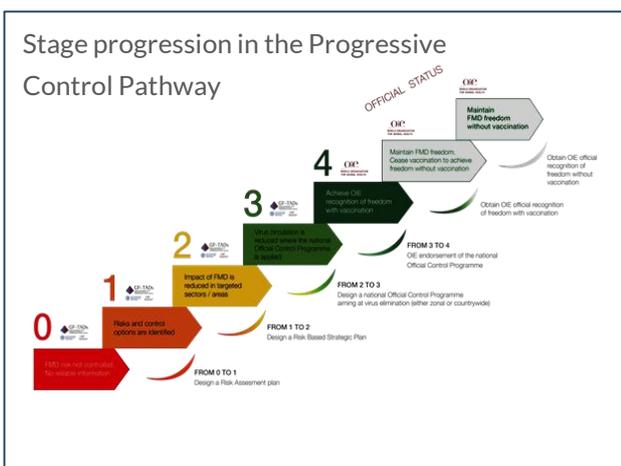
What progress has been made on the eradication of FMD in West Eurasia?

Ten years after the 2008 “Shiraz Declaration” on FMD, the founding meeting to develop a roadmap for the progressive control of FMD in 14 countries of West Eurasia, the city of Shiraz welcomed the 8th FMD Roadmap meeting for West Eurasia held from 4-6 March 2019. At the initiative of the OIE, FAO and EuFMD, representatives from West Eurasia were invited to present an update on their progress on FMD control. The countries involved in the implementation of this GF-TADs for West Eurasia Roadmap are as follows: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. In 2008 these countries committed to implement a stepwise roadmap to achieve disease control, and eventually, disease freedom.¹

The initial vision
“Regional cooperation among Eurasian countries for the progressive control of FMD through public and private partnerships leading towards freedom of clinical disease by 2020 for economic development, food security, and poverty alleviation”

The Progressive Control Pathway for FMD (PCP-FMD) is a set of FMD control activity stages, focusing first on identifying and then addressing the risks for FMD introduction and spread. In 2018, a new version of the PCP-FMD was developed, not intended to be compulsory or prescriptive.

The new PCP-FMD



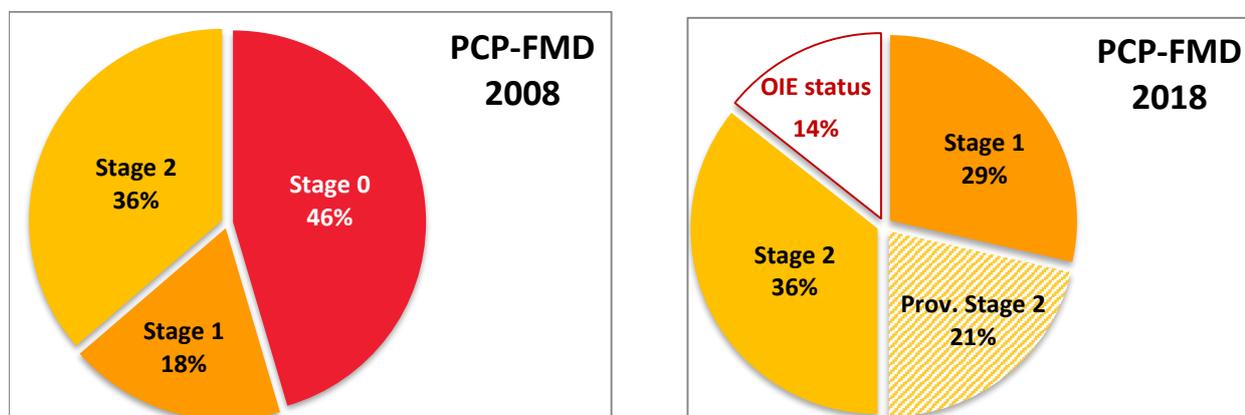
Stage 1	Risk Assessment Plan
Stage 2	Risk Based Strategic Plan
Stage 3	Official Control Programme
Stage 4	Endorsement of the Official Control Programme by OIE
Status	Status Recognition of FMD freedom with vaccination
Status	Status Recognition of FMD freedom without vaccination

¹ The Shiraz Declaration

OIE Reference Laboratories, providing regular technical support in diagnostics (proficiency testing), vaccine matching and FMD virus diagnosis, identified **A, O and Asia-1** FMDV types commonly circulating in West Eurasia throughout the years. The region had been faced with the incursion of new serotypes, lineages and strains of FMD viruses: serotypes *A/Asia/Iran-05*, *O/ME-SA/PanAsia2*, *O/ME-SA/PanAsia*, *A/Asia/Sea-97* and *A/Asia/G-VII lineage*.

The use of rapid test kits (Lateral Flow Device - penside test) for the early detection and rapid response to FMD outbreaks was proposed to the countries to speed diagnostic and simplify the samples shipment when the countries face limited access to advanced laboratory diagnostics. The meeting demonstrated that considerable improvement has been achieved in the quality of vaccines used to meet the international standards (*OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*) and in an increasing reference to SP/NSP tests to differentiate infected and vaccinated animals.

West Eurasian countries are on the right course towards a proper FMD control. With regular coordination, from the 46% of countries without any information on the FMD situation in their territory (stage 0) in 2008, now all countries have accessed at least stage 1 (gaining understanding on the epidemiology of FMD). Some even have progressed to stage 2, where the risk-based control measures are implemented to reduce the impact of FMD in one or more livestock sectors or achieved an FMD free status (with or without vaccination) recognised by OIE for part of their territory (Turkey and Kazakhstan).



Countries having accessed PCP-FMD Stage 1 in 2009 without further progress, were encouraged to develop their FMD Risk-Based Strategic Plan to reach at least the PCP-FMD Stage 2 by 2022, with a significant support of the GF-TADs FMD Working Group. New progressions on the PCP stages are expected in a near future after the Shiraz meeting, for countries having submitted their plans for RAG assessment.

The GF-TADs FMD Working Group, based on the current FMD situation in the region and the countries' information, came to the conclusion that the clinical freedom from FMD in West Eurasia is still achievable, however, since 2013, the initial date of achievement has been postponed from 2020 to 2025.

“Member Countries of the FMD Roadmap for West Eurasia continue to work towards clinical FMD freedom by 2025”

Despite the challenges to control FMD in the region, we should highlight the positive performances.

- In Turkey, the Thrace region in the North, clearly separated from Anatolia in the South by the Turkish Straits, officially received an OIE free status with vaccination in 2010. To test their national contingency plan, enhance awareness and train people, regular simulation exercises are conducted 5 times a year, each one in different regions, with one in the Thrace region.
- Kazakhstan shared its successful experience to obtain OIE-FMD free status. The country is currently recognised by OIE as free of FMD, with two distinguished parts: Northern zone covering nine regions, without vaccination since 2015 and the remaining five regions recognised as free of FMD with vaccination in 2017. The country has conducted several FMD simulation exercises to assess the capacity of the Veterinary Services to face an FMD outbreak and to identify potential shortcomings to improve the quality of these services. The Veterinary Services, taking into account the specialisation of animal husbandry, are now working on the possibility to extend the part without vaccination. This separation will allow more efficient use of the resources allocated for veterinary activities, control and surveillance functions, to carry out a more detailed risk assessment and management.
- In a near future, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Pakistan also plan to apply for an official OIE recognition of specific zones with FMD free status: the Absheron Peninsula in Azerbaijan, the Racha-Lechkhum Kvemo Svaneti and Mestia zones in Georgia, and the part of Pakistan South of the river Satluj.

In all cases, the Veterinary Services are taking advantage of existing veterinary check-points for zones clearly demarcated from the rest of the country, strengthening animal movement control measures, increasing sero-surveillance and focusing on public awareness.

West Eurasian countries have progressed in FMD control, with the help of the OIE, FAO and EuFMD. They have increased their scientific knowledge and management of FMD, improved their risk assessment, developed and implemented FMD contingency plans, held simulation exercises and updated the selection of vaccine strains and vaccine effectiveness studies.

West Eurasian countries expressed their strong commitment to make further progress in the FMD control in the region. We are pleased to witness this achievement.

■ April 2019