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The interim after-action review on the OIE's response to COVID-19

KEYWORDS

#communication, #COVID-19, #emergency preparedness, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



A discussion with Dr Monique Éloit, Director General of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

Interview by Tianna Brand, Advisor - Foresight, Deputy Directorate General 'International Standards and Science', OIE.

'To say that 2020 was a difficult year, is both a cliché and an understatement. As someone who has managed numerous animal disease outbreaks, including zoonotic disease outbreaks and food safety issues throughout my career, I should not have been taken aback by COVID-19, but I was.'

'There were warning signs, robust data, and both thoughtful scientific discourse and conspiracy theories on when, how, what, from where and why a pandemic was coming towards us like a high-speed train. And yet, with all the information and possibilities before us, as an organisation – a collective of individuals – we were caught off guard. There is a sense of responsibility for our initial less than adequate response especially given that as an organisation we provide a lot of advice and guidance on preparedness, emergency management, and more specifically on risk management and risk communication.

'One could dwell on what we could have done or should have done better, but that would be in vain. We want to

focus on how we can improve. Thus, when the idea of undertaking an after-action review on the OIE's response to COVID-19 was proposed, the aim was to use it as a plan from which to move forward based on the assessment of our strengths and weaknesses. The after-action review allowed us to take stock of what worked well, what needs to be improved (both urgently in the short term and gradually over the medium and long terms) and what we should examine based on the possible futures before us. These are now sources of motivation and rallying points for the OIE, as well as proof of the Organisation's maturity for its Members, partners and supporters.

Methodology of the review

'In June 2020, a term of reference for an internal team was put together identifying the scope of an interim after-action review (iAAR) with the aim of improving our preparedness and resilience to events that will have an impact on business continuity as well making the most of the lessons we have learned over the course of this past year. In essence, we wanted to determine what worked well and what needed improvement.

'From June to September 2020, the team reviewed four key components of the OIE's response – technical aspects, event management, institutional communication, and human resources (HR) and logistics – through interviews with several OIE Delegates, Presidents of the Specialist Commissions, experts from the *Ad hoc* groups, OIE staff across the globe, and key partners. Over 90 people from those categories were targeted, with over 60% of them responding either by e-mail to the team's questions or through virtual face-to-face discussions.

'[The interviews were conducted using a pre-established question grid](#) to ensure consistency in the review and analysis of responses. However, depending on the core component addressed by the interviewers, the questions were customised for the participants depending on their role within and/or external to the Organisation.

Results of the review: roses and thorns

'[The compilation and analysis of the opinions expressed has made it possible to identify recommendations](#) to be implemented in the short, medium and long terms. While some of the challenges were foreseeable, such as how guidance is interpreted and implemented for sanitary measures and for disease reporting, others related to the timing of internal management decisions on staff health and safety felt like a setback to our otherwise collegial spirit. Reviewing the positive aspects covered in the report, our ability to adapt has been highlighted and the pandemic did not have a dampening effect on our presence and responsiveness to OIE Members, experts, staff and partners.

Management responses

'Overall, some 30 recommendations have resulted from the after-action review and management responses with links to current activities, initiatives and the 7th Strategic Plan have been developed for progressive implementation.

'Our response to COVID-19 has revealed some undeniable lessons. The OIE needs to:

- practice its own advice in terms of emergency and risk management and communication;

- keep its eyes open for emerging futures;
- anticipate changes to its work (e.g. how and where staff work, and how the OIE engages with its stakeholders);
- drive ahead with its digital transformation (while being mindful of the digital divide).

‘Even if some recommendations have already been addressed, these first lessons learned from 2020 will be taken into consideration when operationalising the 7th Strategic Plan, and when designing the action cards for its implementation.

‘Keep in mind that we refer to this review as an ‘interim after-action review’, which means that this is only the beginning of our learning journey. We have every intention of monitoring the recommendations, reporting on progress and seeking further feedback in the coming months.

‘I would like to thank all the participants in the review for their active engagement and responses, and the review team for their efforts.’

■ February 2021

[OIE Web Portal on COVID-19](#)

ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES



The OIE Wildlife Health Framework

Protecting wildlife health to achieve One Health

KEYWORDS

#animal health, #COVID-19, #OIE Wildlife Health Framework, #One Health, #Veterinary Services, #wildlife, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)



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Wildlife contributes to crucial ecosystem services ⁽¹⁾, can be an important source of protein and income, and supports livelihoods in many vulnerable communities. Human activities and their interference with wildlife habitats are driving disease emergence. Therefore, ensuring that wildlife health is adequately monitored and managed with the same diligence as domestic animal health is vital for taking a One Health management approach by Veterinary Services.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of better understanding the roots of emerging infectious diseases and their complex transmission pathways among wildlife, domestic animals, and humans. It also sheds light on the need to improve global multisectoral efforts to better address wildlife health monitoring at the human-animal-ecosystem interface. In our interconnected and mobile societies, where interactions among humans, wildlife and domestic animals are on the rise, zoonotic diseases have serious consequences for human and animal health and can have significant economic and societal impacts. In addition, they can disturb whole ecosystems and lead to the loss of environmental integrity and biodiversity.



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Veterinary Services are responsible for ensuring animal health and welfare and are often at the forefront of zoonotic disease management. They play a central role in reducing the risk of disease emergence and spread at the human-animal-ecosystem interface, yet many lack the capacity and resources, and the appropriate regulatory and multisectoral collaboration frameworks, to support efforts to prevent spillover events involving wildlife. A recent survey of OIE Members shows that 143 (150 respondents) Members think that Veterinary Services should be involved in wildlife health surveillance and 149 Members think that they should be involved in monitoring wildlife health along the wildlife trade supply/value chain. These results indicate that Veterinary Services are interested in playing an active role in wildlife health management and that they are in favour of the OIE initiative to promote wildlife health worldwide.

The [Wildlife Health Framework](#), which is aligned with the mandate of the OIE and with the objectives of its 6th and 7th (draft) Strategic Plans, provides a set of wildlife-related objectives that the OIE will work towards by integrating wildlife health into all areas of its activity. These wildlife-related objectives are designed to ensure that OIE Members are supported in improving:

- I. their ability to reduce, anticipate and manage the risk of pathogen emergence and transmission at the human-animal-ecosystem interface;
- II. early detection, notification and management of wildlife diseases.

The design of the Framework relied on an iterative series of contributions from the OIE Wildlife Working Group, from OIE Members (gathered through a survey), from OIE staff worldwide and from external partners.

The OIE should be ready to take on the challenge, along with its Members, of ensuring that animal health as a whole is fully addressed to maintain healthy ecosystems.

OIE WILDLIFE HEALTH FRAMEWORK

OIE MANDATE

The World Organisation for Animal Health aims to improve animal health worldwide

OVERALL GOAL OF WILDLIFE HEALTH FRAMEWORK

Protect wildlife health worldwide to achieve One Health

OBJECTIVE 1

OIE Members improve their ability to manage the risk of pathogen emergence in wildlife and transmission at the human-animal-ecosystem interface, whilst taking into account the protection of wildlife

OBJECTIVE 2

OIE Members improve surveillance systems, early detection, notification and management of wildlife diseases

OUTCOME 1

One Health, multisectoral collaboration and capacity for wildlife health management, monitoring and surveillance systems Strengthened

OUTCOME 2

A political, policy and scientific environment that allows Veterinary Services to implement effective wildlife health monitoring and management promoted

OUTCOME 3

Awareness and knowledge of risks pathways and best practices in wildlife health and One Health management increased



[Top](#)

(1) Ecosystem services are the direct and indirect contributions of ecosystems to human well-being. They support, directly or indirectly, our survival and quality of life. Ecosystem services can be categorised into four main types: Provisioning, Regulating, Habitat, and Cultural. [[The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity \(TEEB\)](#)]

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ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES



OIE

Launch of the Global Burden of Animal Diseases (GBADs) programme

KEYWORDS

#animal health, #Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, #Global Burden of Animal Diseases (GBADs), #socio-economic impact, #statistics, #United Kingdom, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



Do you know what the impact of animal diseases is on small- and large-scale producers? Can emerging new technologies help animal health decision-making for vulnerable people and the Veterinary Services that support them?

Addressing these questions will provide clarity on where animal health investments can improve human nutrition and address zoonoses, pandemic threats and food-borne diseases. In 2016, Members of the the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) adopted Resolution no. 35, asking the OIE to 'develop and test a methodology to determine the global burden of animal diseases in order to address deficiencies in economic information on national and world impact of animal diseases' [1, 2]. Consequently, the OIE is supporting the development of the GBADs programme, which is a consortium of organisations and universities, co-led by the OIE and the University of Liverpool, United Kingdom, that works across public policy, private-sector strategy and academia.

| GBADs commenced its pilot phase

In late August 2020, GBADs officially commenced its pilot phase (2020–2022) with financial support from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) and the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom](#). Additional financial support will be sought to build upon and expand the programme's reach.

Animals are kept in a social and economic context, and the provision of animal health needs has to be placed in a

socio-economic context that takes into account the resources used and produced at farm, sector and national levels. GBADs will generate information on farm-level net production losses due to animal health problems and diseases. In addition, it will produce data on expenditure on animal health products and services due to the presence or risk of disease. It will also look at the wider impacts on society in terms of economics and human health.

The programme will cover the main animal species and their associated diseases and health problems, gleaned data from systems such as [OIE-WAHIS](#), the [OIE PVS Pathway](#) and [FAOSTAT](#), from academic research and private-sector databases, as well as from other data collection and analysis programmes funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, such as the [SEBI](#) project and [GALVmed](#). Information will be generated and made available through a portal to allow users to examine animal disease and health burdens by species, production system, type of farmer and consumer, gender, geographical region, and time period. Societies will be able to monitor the burden of animal health and welfare problems, as GBADs provides a system that will give indications of the extent to which animal health interventions are successful. This will enable countries to take effective action to combat disease and, consequently, to contribute to the achievement of many of the sustainable development goals.

For more detailed information please visit the [GBADs website](#)

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ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES



PVS Pathway external evaluation

Towards greater impact

KEYWORDS

#OIE PVS Pathway, #Veterinary Services, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



Photo by [Thomas Evans](#) on [Unsplash](#)

*A comprehensive third-party independent evaluation of the Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway has been put in place by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) with the support of an external firm. First developed in 2007, the PVS Pathway has become the OIE's flagship programme, supporting the continuous **improvement of national Veterinary Services' capacities** and their greater **alignment with OIE Standards**.*

The OIE contracted an independent consulting firm to undertake the assessment of the programme following a first review of the programme's successes and gaps during the PVS think tank forum of 2017. The evaluation will support the OIE in maximising the many potentials of the PVS Pathway, addressing the deficiencies identified and meeting the evolving needs of Members. Robust and resilient Veterinary Services are key to improving animal and public health worldwide, and the evaluation will help ensure that the PVS Pathway continues to meet the needs of Veterinary Services and enables them to improve their performance.

The evaluation started in June 2020, with the aim of addressing the following key questions:

- **How relevant is the PVS Pathway to the needs of Members and how effective is its design and implementation?**

- *What are the short, medium and long-term impacts of the PVS Pathway?*
- *How appropriate were the recent 'PVS Evolution' missions for improving the programme and are there alternatives for improvement?*

Following a review of background documentation, 40 key stakeholders of the programme – Members across all OIE regions and wealth levels, staff of OIE headquarters and the regions, technical and resource partners and PVS experts – were offered the opportunity to provide their vision through semi-structured interviews.

The assessment process will capture the full spectrum of stakeholder perspectives regarding the PVS Pathway and its successes and shortcomings, and will include recommendations to ensure that the programme remains relevant and is leveraged to its full potential.

Last, but not least, the results of the evaluation will support the development of a **monitoring & evaluation framework** for the PVS Pathway – a way to systematically track progress, address weaknesses and achieve greater impact.

ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

► JOINT ACTIONS

United Against Rabies Forum

Partnering for success

KEYWORDS

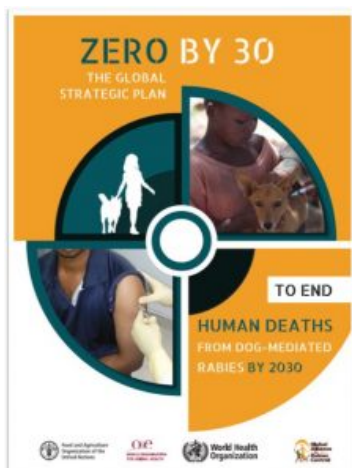
#Global Strategic Plan to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030, #rabies, #rabies eradication, #strategy, #United Against Rabies, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



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Rabies is entirely preventable, and yet it remains a major public health and animal health problem.

In 2015, in response to a global call to action for rabies elimination, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the World Health Organization (WHO), along with the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC), came together to establish the **United Against Rabies Collaboration**. Soon after, they created a comprehensive global strategy to eliminate rabies –



Zero by 30: The Global Strategic Plan to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030. This plan put countries at its centre, with renewed international support and global commitment.

In September 2020, to mark the progression from phase 1 of the Global Strategic Plan to phase 2, the **United Against Rabies Forum** was established, to expand the United Against Rabies Collaboration and create a more inclusive network of State and non-State actors who share a common vision for rabies elimination and wish to work together to achieve it. The purpose of the United Against Rabies Forum is to provide a mechanism for implementing the objectives of the Global Strategic Plan, while enabling participants to benefit from the sharing of knowledge, experience, ideas and information.

The Tripartite (FAO, OIE and WHO) will provide leadership and support the Forum to create an enabling environment for rabies elimination that will allow participants and countries to focus on activities that efficiently contribute to the Global Strategic Plan. Working Groups of Forum members will be formed to identify and progress priority action areas, reporting back to the wider membership via the Steering Group, with the Tripartite providing strategic direction. The combined efforts, political will and commitment of Forum members, together with the resources they provide, will help rabies elimination become a reality by 2030.

For more information, visit the [United Against Rabies Forum website](#)

ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES



OIE

Third OIE Global Animal Welfare Forum 2021

Animal welfare and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



At the 85th General Session of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), OIE Members unanimously adopted the OIE Global Animal Welfare Strategy [1, 2]. One of the main activities included in the Strategy was the establishment of a stakeholder forum, called the OIE Global Animal Welfare Forum.

The objective of the OIE Global Animal Welfare Forum is to provide a mechanism that brings together the animal welfare research community, global animal welfare movement and the global animal-source food sector to work with the OIE and its Members.

| The OIE is planning a third session of the Forum

The OIE has held two sessions of the Forum already. The first one, in 2018, covered the main challenges around the implementation of OIE animal welfare standards. The second one, in 2019, discussed stakeholder responsibilities for the welfare of animals during transport.

The OIE is planning a third session of the Forum in collaboration with the [Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare \(SCAW\)](#), which is the OIE Animal Welfare Collaborating Centre for the Region of Europe. The Forum will be held virtually (invitation-only event), over three days, i.e. on 26 April, 28 April and 4 May 2021. The theme will be 'Animal welfare and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'.

In 2015, 17 Goals were adopted by all UN States to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They are a call to action for all countries to work towards a better and more sustainable future. It is intended that the Goals will be

achieved by 2030. These SDGs have a wide scope, but the role of both domesticated animals and wild animals,



including fish, is poorly covered and their welfare is not mentioned at all.

Efforts to implement the OIE Global Animal Welfare Strategy will also contribute to the achievement of the UN SDGs, and the Forum will provide an important opportunity to discuss a sustainable development paradigm, in which animal welfare could help to improve the living conditions of households globally.

This third session of the Forum will be based on the experience obtained at a workshop held in June 2018. The workshop, entitled 'Animal Welfare and the Sustainable Development Goals', was organised by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences as part of the Global Challenges University Alliance (GCUA) workshop series. The discussion and outcomes of this workshop were published [3].

Reports of the first two sessions of the Forum

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ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

► OIE MEMBERS

Meetings of the G20 Agriculture and Water Ministers

KEYWORDS

#G20, #Tripartite (FAO/OIE/WHO), #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) was honoured to attend the meetings of the G20 Agriculture and Water Ministers throughout 2020.

Participating as an observer, the OIE's contributions helped to increase commitment to improving food security and strengthening the resilience and sustainability of food systems (the need for these systems to be strong and resilient has been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic).

| The OIE echoes the call of the Ministers to implement the One Health approach

The OIE echoes the call of the Ministers to implement the [One Health](#) approach in order to reinforce preparedness for, monitoring of, response to, and control of global public health risks. In their communiqué, the Ministers also highlighted the importance of continuing the fight against transboundary animal diseases that have an impact on food security and losses.

As part of the [Tripartite Alliance](#), the OIE is dedicated to pursuing its collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), and it is continuing its efforts to enhance country capacity to respond to challenges at the human-animal-environment interface. Consequently, the OIE will continue to provide science-based international standards on animal health and welfare, sustainable animal production and trade, the prudent use of antimicrobials, preparedness for domestic and wild animal disease

outbreaks, and transparency in information sharing.

[Communiqué of the G20 Agriculture and Water Ministers, 22 November 2020](#)

ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

► PARTNERS

Tackling global challenges

Solutions can only come from strong international cooperation

KEYWORDS

#international organisation, #Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), #partnership, #resilience, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



International organisations have a key part to play in assisting countries to address global challenges, and they are currently playing an important role in supporting countries to tackle the COVID-19 crisis.

At the 7th Annual Meeting of International Organisations, which took place virtually on 3 September 2020, 50 heads of international organisations (IOs), including OIE Director General Dr Monique Éloit, endorsed a [joint statement](#) recognising the need for effective, impactful and co-ordinated international action through international rulemaking.

[Event webpage](#)

including a recording of the high-level panel discussion and the interventions of heads of the IOs

The COVID-19 crisis has underscored the need for international coordinated action to address global issues, and IOs have a critical role in providing international rules that are transparent, inclusive, effective and evidence-based. This crisis has confirmed the great value of the work undertaken by the Partnership of International Organisations for Effective International Rulemaking (known as the IO Partnership).

The IO Partnership, comprising 50 international organisations, was set up by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) within the framework of the work performed by its [Regulatory Policy Committee \(RPC\)](#) to promote international regulatory cooperation.

The IOs involved work together to exchange information, experiences, and best practices in the areas of

development of international instruments, implementation and evaluation of these instruments, stakeholder engagement and coordination across IOs. These efforts aim to support the greater use of international instruments, and strengthen the quality, evidence base and consistency of international rules.

The IO Partnership is currently developing a *Compendium of IO Practices for Effective International Rulemaking*. The aim is to provide detailed guidance on core features of international rulemaking and offer a toolbox to guide IOs in continuously improving the quality and impact of international rules. The *Compendium* is due to be released in September 2021.

The 7th Annual Meeting of International Organisations was structured as follows:

- A high-level webinar entitled 'International Organisations and their Members Facing the Global Crisis Together'

The webinar brought together 100 participants and was opened by United Kingdom Minister of State (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) Nigel Adams, and OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría. The opening was followed by remarks from leaders of the Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme (PIC/S), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM), the OIE, the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Remarks made by the Director General of the OIE

- A second webinar entitled 'The IO Partnership in Action: Towards a Compendium of IO Practices and Beyond – Self-reflection, Peer-learning and Adapting to a Changing World'

The purpose of the second webinar was to discuss the status of the *Compendium* of IO Practices, with interventions by Focal Points. The OIE is the Focal Point for the Working Group on Strengthening the implementation of IO instruments.

ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

► PARTNERS

Global control of African swine fever

A GF-TADs initiative. 2020-2025

KEYWORDS

#African swine fever (ASF), #disease control, #Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), #Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs), #Global Initiative, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



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Recognising the heightened global risk of African swine fever (ASF), and the significant impact of the disease on animal health, food security and national and global socio-economics, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), was asked to launch a global initiative to control ASF.

The aim of the global initiative is to tackle the strategic challenges posed by ASF, promote partnerships, strengthen prevention and preparedness measures, and minimise the adverse impacts of the disease.

The global initiative will effectively address the mandate given to the OIE and FAO by providing the structure through which to carry out the activities required to achieve the outputs and outcomes that will lead to the global control of ASF.

[[Download the document in English](#)]

The document is also available in [Chinese](#), [French](#), [Russian](#) and [Spanish](#) from the FAO website.

OFFICIAL ACTS

► OIE COUNCIL

The 88th General Session of the OIE will be held virtually

KEYWORDS

#OIE Council, #OIE Director General, #OIE General Session, #OIE Member, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



The 88th Annual General Session of the World Assembly of National Delegates to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) will be held virtually from Monday, 24 to Friday, 28 May 2021. The General Session will be conducted through a series of five virtual sessions of four hours each, from 10:00 to 14:00 CEST (Central European Summer Time, Paris time).

This decision was taken by the OIE Council in conjunction with the Director General in light of the ongoing global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. While the OIE *Basic Texts* do not make provision for holding the General Session virtually under unprecedented and exceptional circumstances, they do not rule it out.

Even in a virtual format, the General Session will still allow the Assembly to adopt administrative and technical resolutions and to elect the Director General, the members of the Specialist Commissions, and the members of the other governing bodies of the OIE (members of the Council and of the Bureaux of the Regional Commissions). The 7th Strategic Plan, which will guide the OIE work plan for the coming years, will also be proposed for adoption.

[More information about the general organisation of the OIE](#)

In anticipation of the General Session's new format, a series of virtual preparatory information seminars is scheduled to take place on 12, 14 and 16 April 2021 to provide an opportunity for the OIE Specialist Commissions to share information with OIE Members on the standards that will be presented for adoption at the 88th General Session.

Each seminar will target a specific set of Standards: i) *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, ii) *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*, and iii) *Aquatic Code and Manual*, and each one will be organised three times

in three different time zones for three distinct groups of Members. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in one or more of the official languages of the OIE, with the choice of language dependent on the language(s) most widely understood in the regions targeted by each virtual seminar. The virtual seminars will be addressed to OIE Delegates, their National Focal Points, and International and Regional Organisations that have an agreement with the OIE. While these seminars are not being considered part of the General Session itself, it is highly recommended that Delegates attend these preparatory sessions in person in order to have the opportunity to raise their comments or questions in advance. This will ensure that the usual principles of information-sharing and Member participation will be fulfilled, despite the limitations imposed by the new format of this General Session.

An annual General Session is a requirement of the OIE *Basic Texts*, and the OIE is working hard to adapt the event to the virtual context. Members are being asked to remain attentive to all communications related to the organisation of this important event.

[More information about the OIE General Session, 24-28 May 2021](#)

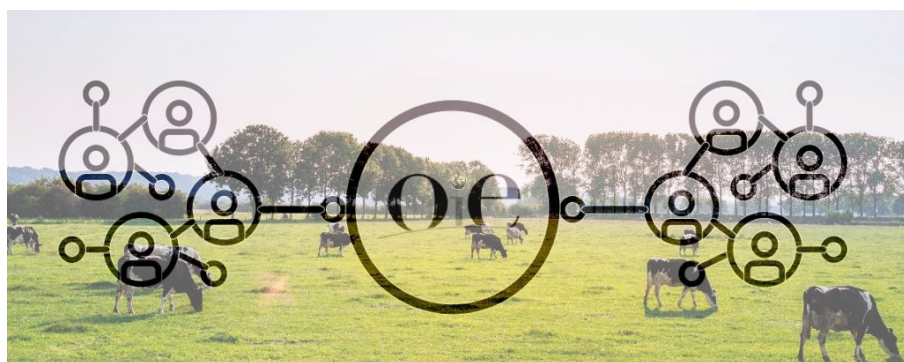
EXPERT REPORTS

► SPECIALIST COMMISSIONS

Activities of the OIE Specialist Commissions

KEYWORDS

#OIE Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission, #OIE Biological Standards Commission, #OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, #OIE Specialist Commission, #OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.



[Reports of the meetings of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission \(Code Commission\)](#) held from 4 to 13 February 2020 and from 1 to 10 September 2020.

[Reports of the meetings of the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases \(SCAD\)](#) held from 3 to 7 February 2020 and from 7 to 11 September 2020.

[Reports of the meetings of the OIE Biological Standards Commission \(BSC\)](#) held from 11 to 14 February 2020 and from 15 to 18 September 2020.

[Reports of the meetings of the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission](#) held from 19 to 26 February 2020 and from 26 August to 2 September 2020.

[More information about OIE Specialist Commissions](#)

EXPERT REPORTS

▶ WORKING GROUPS

Activities of the OIE Working Groups

KEYWORDS

#OIE Working Group, #OIE Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, #OIE Working Group on Wildlife, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



Photo by James Hammond on [Unsplash](#)

Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance

Following the adoption of [Resolution no. 14 of May 2019](#), a Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance was established to support the implementation of the [OIE Strategy on Antimicrobial Resistance and the Prudent Use of Antimicrobials](#) and the organisation's capacity to respond to global challenges according to its mandate.

♦ [Reports of the meetings of the OIE Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance](#) held from 7 to 9 April 2020 and from 13 to 15 October 2020.

Working Group on Wildlife

Founded in 1994, this Working Group informs and advises the OIE on all health problems relating to wild animals, whether in the wild or in captivity. It has prepared recommendations and oversees numerous scientific publications on the surveillance and control of the most important specific wildlife diseases. The Working Group comprises world-leading scientific experts in their subject areas.

♦ [Reports of the meetings of the OIE Working Group on Wildlife](#) held from 10 to 13 March 2020 and from 1 to 4 December 2020.

[More information about OIE Working Groups](#)

EXPERT REPORTS

► AD HOC GROUPS

Activities of *ad hoc* groups

KEYWORDS

#OIE *ad hoc* group, #World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).



Photo: © François Diaz

Ad hoc groups are convened to support [the work of OIE Specialist Commissions](#).

The following are the most recent *ad hoc* group (virtual) meetings:

- Evaluation of classical swine fever (CSF) status of Members, 7–9 December 2020
- Evaluation of the endorsement of dog-mediated rabies control programmes, 17–19 November 2020
- Evaluation of foot and mouth disease (FMD) status of Members, 12 October – 4 November 2020
- Evaluation of peste des petits ruminants (PPR) status of Members, 27–29 October 2020
- Evaluation of contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) status of Members, 6–8 October 2020
- Poultry, 2 October 2020
- Evaluation of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) status of Members, 28 September – 2 October 2020
- Zoonotic tuberculosis, 29 September 2020
- Foot and mouth disease (FMD), 1 June – 31 August 2020
- Poultry – Antimicrobial Resistance team, 26 June 2020
- BSE standards – Risk assessment and surveillance, 16–26 June 2020
- Revision of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* Chapter 7.7., 17–18 June 2020
- Susceptibility of mollusc species to infection with OIE-listed diseases, 28–30 January and 3–5 June 2020
- Revision of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* Chapters 7.5. and 7.6., May–June 2020
- Sustainable laboratories, 27–30 April 2020
- COVID-19 and safe trade in animals and animal products, 9 April 2020

Meeting reports are available [here](#).

ANIMAL HEALTH

► OFFICIAL DISEASE STATUS

Malaysia – Suspension of ‘AHS-free country’ status

KEYWORDS

#African horse sickness (AHS), #disease status, #Malaysia.



Following an immediate notification received from the Delegate of Malaysia to the OIE regarding an outbreak of African horse sickness (AHS) in the State of Terengganu, the ‘AHS-free country’ status of Malaysia, as recognised by the OIE World Assembly of Delegates in Resolution No. 12 of May 2020, was suspended with effect from 6 August 2020.

According to the [standard operating procedure on suspension, recovery or withdrawal of officially recognised disease status and withdrawal of the endorsement of official control programmes of Members](#), the country has three years to recover its previously recognised AHS-free status by complying with the relevant requirements of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*.

[More information on the AHS situation in Asia](#)

Contact: [OIE Status Department](#)

OFFICIAL ACTS

► NEW DELEGATES

3 March 2021

SEYCHELLES

Dr Mark Naiken

Chief Executive Officer, National Biosecurity Agency, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

1 March 2021

TURKEY

Dr Harun Seçkin

Director General, General Directorate of Food and Control, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock



28 February 2021

ESTONIA

Dr Hele-Mai Sammel

Chief Veterinary Officer, Veterinary and Food Board, Ministry of Rural Affairs

17 February 2021

GUATEMALA

Dr María Eugenia Paz Diaz

Directora, Dirección de Sanidad Animal, Viceministerio de Sanidad Agropecuaria y Regulaciones, Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación



15 February 2021

KUWAIT

Dr Meshal Al Quraifah

Deputy of Director General, Animal Health Department, Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources

8 February 2021

PHILIPPINES

Dr Reildrin Morales

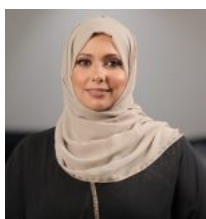
Officer in Charge, Director, Bureau of Animal Industry, Ministry of Agriculture

18 December 2020

RUSSIA

Dr Konstantin Savenkov

Deputy Head, Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance, Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation



14 December 2020

OMAN

Dr Samah Al Sharif

Head of Veterinary Quarantine, Muscat International Airport



3 December 2020

KYRGYZSTAN

Dr Aidarali Sarykov

Director, Chief State Veterinary Inspector (CVO), State Inspectorate of Veterinary and Phytosanitary Security

20 November 2020

KAZAKHSTAN

Dr Gulzhan Nurtazina

Deputy Chairman, Committee of Veterinary Control and Supervision, Ministry of Agriculture

17 November 2020

MALTA

Dr Paul Joseph Portelli

Director, Veterinary Regulation Directorate, Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Animal Rights



1 November 2020

SIERRA LEONE

Dr Mohamed Bah

Director, Livestock and Veterinary Services Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security



20 October 2020

INDONESIA

Dr Nasrullah Nasrullah

Director General, Livestock and Animal Health Services, Ministry of Agriculture



14 October 2020

ITALY

Dr Davide Lecchini

Chief Veterinary Officer, Directorate General for Veterinary Health and Veterinary Medicinal Products (DGSAF), Ministry of Health

28 September 2020

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Dr Rafael Bienvenido Nuñez Mieses

Director, Departamento de Sanidad Animal, Ministerio de Agricultura

7 September 2020

BHUTAN

Dr Tashi Yangzome Dorji

Director, Department of Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests



2 September 2020

VANUATU

Dr Roger Phillips

Acting Principal Veterinary Officer, Biosecurity Vanuatu, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity



1 September 2020

COSTA RICA

Dr Germán Rojas Hidalgo

Director General, Servicio Nacional de Salud Animal (SENASA), Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería

17 August 2020

BOLIVIA

Dr Jorge Antonio Berrios Alvéro

Jefe Nacional, Servicio Nacional de Sanidad Agropecuaria e Inocuidad Alimentaria (SENASAG), Ministerio de Desarrollo Rural y Tierras

4 August 2020

PORTUGAL

Dr Susana Pombo

Director General, General Directorate of Food and Veterinary (DGAV), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development

OFFICIAL ACTS

► NEW MEMBERS COUNTRIES

OFFICIAL ACTS

► NEW REFERENCE CENTRES

NEW OIE REFERENCE LABORATORIES

African swine fever



Dr David Williams

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This new OIE Reference Laboratory has the expertise and resources necessary for laboratory-based African swine fever (ASF) diagnostics, research, test development and validation. It can perform multidisciplinary diagnostic investigations involving PCR, genotyping, whole genome sequencing, antigen detection, virus isolation, serology, histology, immunohistochemistry and electron microscopy. Diagnostic testing is performed under a quality assurance system certified to ISO/IEC 9001:2008 and accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2005. The Reference Laboratory can supply reference biological reagents and organises annual proficiency testing for swine diseases, including ASF. In addition, it can provide advice, training and capacity building for ASF laboratory diagnostics and techniques. The Reference Laboratory also has the capacity to perform *in vivo* studies on ASF in high containment large animal rooms at Physical Containment Level 3.

Acute hepatopancreatic necrosis disease, infection with infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus, and

infection with white spot syndrome virus



Dr Arun Dhar

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These three new OIE Reference Laboratories focus on diagnosis and research relating to three OIE-listed diseases of crustaceans – acute hepatopancreatic necrosis disease (AHPND), infection with infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus (IHHNV), and infection with white spot syndrome virus (WSSV). The laboratories have extensive resources and expertise in diagnosing these diseases using histopathology and molecular methods. These methods are accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2017. The Reference Laboratories also provide proficiency tests (also known as ring tests) for AHPND, IHHNV and WSSV and are accredited to ISO 17043:2010. The University of Arizona, Aquaculture Pathology Laboratory also hosts OIE Reference Laboratories for infection with *Hepatobacter penaei* (necrotising hepatopancreatitis) (NHP) and infection with Taura syndrome virus (TSV). The Reference Laboratories provide scientific and technical assistance, and disease diagnostic trainings to professionals from industry, academia, governmental and non-governmental organisations from OIE Members around the world.

Brucellosis (*Brucella abortus*, *B. melitensis* and *B. canis*) and Middle East respiratory syndrome



Prof. Ulrich Wernery

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Since 2009, the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory (CVRL), Dubai, has been operating as an OIE Reference Laboratory for glanders and for camelpox, and in 2020 it was designated for brucellosis (*Brucella abortus*, *B. melitensis* and *B. canis*) and for [Middle East respiratory syndrome](#). The CVRL is a diagnostic and research centre that provides animal owners, veterinarians and government entities with a testing facility ensuring excellent quality results for the benefit of animals. Apart from establishing all the necessary laboratory tools for diagnoses, the CVRL conducts various research projects on these diseases and supplies other laboratories with reagents, test kits and veterinary vaccines.

Classical swine fever



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This new OIE Reference Laboratory has the expertise and resources necessary for laboratory-based classical swine fever (CSF) diagnostics, research, test development and validation. It can perform multidisciplinary diagnostic investigations involving PCR, genotyping, whole genome sequencing, antigen detection, virus isolation, serology, histology, immunohistochemistry and electron microscopy. Diagnostic testing is performed under a quality assurance system certified to ISO/IEC 9001:2008 and accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2005. The Reference Laboratory can supply reference biological reagents and organises annual proficiency testing for swine diseases, including CSF. In addition, it can provide advice, training and capacity building for CSF laboratory diagnostics and techniques. The Reference Laboratory also has the capacity to perform *in vivo* studies on CSF in high containment large animal rooms at Physical Containment Level 3.

Dourine



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This new OIE Reference Laboratory is dedicated to diagnosis, research and surveillance relating to dourine. It is also a European Union Reference Laboratory for equine diseases, including dourine. It performs diagnostic tests for dourine in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 (complement fixation test) and produces standard sera and antigens available on request. This laboratory also organises inter-laboratory tests as well as training sessions. It develops and validates new methods for the diagnosis of *Trypanosoma equiperdum* infections and conducts studies on the different treatment approaches as well as on the links between dourine and other equine trypanosomoses.

Foot and mouth disease (FMD)



Dr Charles Nfon

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This new OIE Reference Laboratory provides diagnostic services, research, training and scientific consultation services for FMD and other vesicular diseases. The laboratory also performs research on emergency FMD vaccines, vaccine matching, disease transmission, host responses and pathogenesis. Through capacity-building initiatives and related projects, the laboratory has established international collaborations with FMD research groups and laboratories in FMD enzootic countries.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza and low pathogenic avian influenza (poultry)



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This new OIE Reference Laboratory provides diagnostic testing services and technical consultation for the prevention and control of avian influenza. Also, it is willing to offer diagnostic reagents/kits for the detection of avian influenza virus. Depending on the type of diagnostic reagents or kits requested, the time taken for preparation and dispatch may differ. The laboratory provides international technical support for OIE Members, including training workshops and advice on disease control.

Infection with *Hepatobacter penaei* (necrotising hepatopancreatitis)



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This new OIE Reference Laboratory focuses on diagnosis and research relating to an [OIE-listed disease](#) of crustaceans – infection with *Hepatobacter penaei* (necrotising hepatopancreatitis: NHP). The laboratory has

extensive experience in NHP diagnosis, including histopathology, PCR and real-time PCR-based diagnostic methods. These methods are accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2017. The Reference Laboratory also provides proficiency tests (also known as ring tests) for NHP and is accredited to ISO 17043:2010. The laboratory provides scientific and technical assistance and training to personnel from diagnostic laboratories in the United States of America and other OIE Members.

Rabies



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This new OIE Reference Laboratory will serve the needs of animal rabies research-related activities and act as a centre of excellence in animal rabies, with the main areas of focus being diagnosis of animal rabies and surveillance. It will undertake statutory diagnostic services and provide support to research projects for rabies in the region. The expertise available at the laboratory could provide international test and disease consultancy services. The laboratory is also committed to offering in-house or outreach training in diagnostics and epidemiology as a tool for designing and improving control measures. In addition to activities in the area of diagnosis and control of rabies in animals, the OIE Reference Laboratory will also offer consultancy and training, quality-assurance testing, inter-laboratory comparisons, and provide assistance for the development of quality standards in the region. Training can be provided on site or can be organised in the other regional laboratories or veterinary universities. Such training can cover various diagnostic approaches, including immunological, molecular and cell culture methods, epidemiology and to inform strategies for active surveillance followed by the evaluation of rabies control strategies. The laboratory may also collaborate with the public and private sectors in the field of the development and evaluation of diagnostic assays and applied research.

Rinderpest



Dr Wei Jia

USDA-APHIS-VS-NVSL

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This new OIE Reference Laboratory is the only laboratory approved to perform rinderpest monitoring and confirmatory diagnosis in the United States of America. The FADDL also manages an OIE/FAO Rinderpest Holding Facility (RHF). To support global rinderpest freedom efforts, FADDL developed non-infectious rinderpest positive controls and sample proficiency testing panels, which are not derived from live rinderpest virus (RPV) and distinguishable from wild RPV and can help diagnostic laboratories maintain rinderpest diagnostic capabilities without using live virus. The Reference Laboratory will further assist the OIE in maintaining global freedom from rinderpest by providing services such as RPV sequestration, rinderpest confirmatory testing, harmonisation and validation of testing methods, and proficiency testing to RHF and other laboratories in Members.

NEW OIE COLLABORATING CENTRES

Continuing education and veterinary capacity building



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The CNVZ is a public institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources of Tunisia. In addition to its animal disease watch and surveillance missions, it offers expertise in the field of postgraduate training and veterinary capacity building, particularly in training tools using a competency-based approach. The CNVZ is ready to promote continuing education for Veterinary Services and to provide technical and educational assistance in developing and managing training mechanisms for OIE Members. The OIE Collaborating Centre will support the activities of the [OIE Platform for the Training of Veterinary Services](#).

Quality management systems



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The ADAFSA Veterinary Laboratories Division is a government diagnostic and research laboratory with extensive experience in quality management systems. It is accredited and certified for several standards, including ISO/IEC 17025:2017 (laboratory management systems), ISO 22301:2012 (business continuity management systems), and PAS 99 (integrated management systems). In addition to its work on quality management systems in veterinary laboratories, ADAFSA Veterinary Laboratories Division participates in national and international activities in the field of animal health. As an OIE Collaborating Centre, the ADAFSA Veterinary Laboratories Division will share its experience and knowledge of quality management systems and business continuity and will provide training to other laboratories and institutes to implement OIE standards related to quality management systems and sustainability. It will also use its expertise to support the OIE effort to implement its strategic goals related to the capacity and sustainability of veterinary laboratories.

The OIE is an international organisation created in 1924 with a mandate from its 182 Members to improve animal health and welfare. Its activities are permanently supported by 323 centres of scientific expertise and 13 regional offices with a presence on every continent.



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