Implementation of OIE standards by Member Countries: state of play and specific capacity building needs

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- Challenges to the implementation of OIE standards
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Introduction

OIE STANDARDS have the objective of improving animal health and welfare, and veterinary public health, worldwide.

Failure to implement the OIE standards means missed opportunities for safe trade and can lead to trade disputes.

Science-based
Adopted by resolution of the World Assembly (181 Members)
WTO references with respect to animal diseases and zoonoses
Questionnaire – objectives and scope

- To collect information on the use of OIE standards, analyse challenges and recommend solutions - in the context of international trade.

What are the challenges to the implementation of standards?

What solutions are available?

| Section 1. | General information on national veterinary and aquatic animal health systems |
| Section 2. | Use of OIE standards & importation |
| Section 3. | Use of OIE standards & export access |
| Section 4. | Challenges & capacity building needs |
Of the total 181 Member countries, 145 sent detailed replies.
Challenges to the implementation of OIE standards
The OIE standards in the context of the SPS Agreement

- 89% of respondents are WTO members.

- The SPS Agreement calls for participation in the development and the use of international standards (harmonisation).

- Measures that are more restrictive than international standards should be supported by scientific evidence & risk analysis.

55% reported that they DO NOT systematically provide scientific justification to trading partners when imposing measures stricter than OIE standards.
**Harmonisation**

- **International standards** are considered when developing sanitary requirements (99%)
  - **A legal requirement** (39%)
  - **By policy** (60%).

- Policies provide for **systematic review / evaluation** of sanitary measures (52%).

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**Does your country have a proactive policy to evaluate and revise sanitary measures periodically e.g. to take into account amendments to the OIE Codes?**

- **Yes**
- **If requested by stakeholders or trading partners**
- **No**
Countries **generally have the authority to use equivalence** as the basis for setting sanitary measures for the importation of commodities (92%), by law (52%) or policy (40%).

- **52%** Formal policies or procedures for determining equivalence
- **55%** Processes for determining equivalence conform with OIE recommendations

**Reported challenges**
- Exporting country lacks transparency or fails to provide information (60%)
- Inadequate capacity of human resources (49%)
- Lack of OIE guidance (30%)
Equivalence is a complex concept that is interpreted in various ways.

- Equivalence based on a set of measures: e.g. testing, treatment, isolation (75%, 109)
- Equivalence based on exporting country's system of animal health management: e.g. zoning, compartmentalisation (62%, 90)
- Equivalence based on exporting country's production system: e.g. meat, genetic material, aquaculture (55%, 80)
- Other (11)
Risk assessment (1)

93% Risk assessment is the basis for sanitary measures

86% Standardised procedures are used

Sources of information used SYSTEMATICALLY by importing countries when setting sanitary measures for importation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAHIS (90%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIE official disease status (90%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrestrial Animal Health Code &amp; Manual (86% &amp; 77%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic Animal Health Code &amp; Manual (63% &amp; 59%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-declared disease status (41%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIE Handbook on Risk Analysis Vol. I (41%) &amp; Vol. 2 (36%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit to exporting country (41%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire answered by exporting country (30%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIE PVS report published (21%) or direct request (17%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk analysis of another country (14%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Risk assessment (2) – OIE recognition of disease status

**Exporting country perspective**

92%

Very important to export market access

.. but ..

53%

Importing countries regularly request dossiers and/or make on-site visits to verify status

**Importing country perspective**

*Does your country consider whether the OIE has granted official disease freedom for the exporting country/zone?*

- Yes (n=92):
  - Developed Country: 6%
  - Developing Country: 38%
  - Least Developed Country: 19%

- Y + checks (n=51):
  - Developed Country: 21%
  - Developing Country: 10%
  - Least Developed Country: 4%

- No (n=2):
  - Developed Country: 1%

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Risk assessment (3) – Reported challenges

- 60 countries (41%) reported lack of expertise in risk analysis as a challenge.
- 108 (74%) identified it as a ‘high priority’ topic and 92% as ‘high or medium priority’ for training.

- Insufficient human resources
- Lack of competent staff
- Insufficient financial resources
- Difficulties in understanding of the principles of risk assessment
- Political or commercial considerations
- Other

![Bar chart showing the distribution of reported challenges among different regions.](chart.png)
Concepts linked to risk assessment
Recommendations are comprehensive for aquatic animal products, some scope for work on terrestrial animal products.
There is scope for more Member countries to apply these concepts

63%
- **Fully** consider OIE recommendations on safe trade

55%
- **Fully** consider the definition of safe commodities in the *Codes*

92%
- Training on “safe trade” is high or medium priority, especially for the OIE regions of Europe and the Middle East
Zoning and compartmentalisation – exporting country perspective

Challenges to use of these concepts as a tool to facilitate trade

- Lack of capacity to establish/maintain a disease-free zone or compartment
  - The private sector is not prepared to make the investment needed
  - The concept is not well understood/accepted by government or the private sector

- Political or commercial considerations
  - Failure to form public-private partnerships
  - Lack of OIE guidance on how to implement zones and compartments

Other

Africa | Americas | Asia, Far East and Oceania | Europe | Middle East
------|----------|-----------------------------|--------|------------
32 | 7 | 20 | 9 | 8
18 | 13 | 12 | 13 | 6
15 | 7 | 12 | 7 | 2
12 | 21 | 5 | 2 | 2
5 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 1
2 | 4 | 8 | 28 | 2
Zoning and compartmentalisation – importing country perspective

If an exporting country applies OIE recommendations on zoning for diseases, does your country authorize imports from these free zones?

- **Yes, systematically**
- **Yes, for some diseases**
- **No**

**Africa**
- **Yes, systematically**
- **Yes, for some diseases**
- **No**

**Americas**
- **Yes, systematically**
- **Yes, for some diseases**
- **No**

**Asia, Far East and Oceania**
- **Yes, systematically**
- **Yes, for some diseases**
- **No**

**Europe**
- **Yes, systematically**
- **Yes, for some diseases**
- **No**

**Middle East**
- **Yes, systematically**
- **Yes, for some diseases**
- **No**
Transparency (1) – Notification to the WTO

68% Notification of sanitary measures is commonly practiced

- Member countries are aware of the OIE’s role & importance in the WTO context.
- **Training on ‘OIE standards and the SPS Agreement’** was reported as one of the top 4 priorities of all regions
  - The top priority of developed countries
  - The second highest of developing and least developed countries.
- **Joint training activities** (OIE + international, regional or WTO/STDF) were regarded as somewhat less useful than activities delivered solely by the OIE but still considered ‘very useful’ or ‘useful’ by 91% of countries.
Consultation on draft measures

To what extent are private sector stakeholders (e.g. producers, processors, consumers) consulted when establishing sanitary measures?

- Systematically (n=58)
- Occasionally, depending on the issue (n=69)
- Rarely (n=13)
- Never (n=5)

Transparency of measures in force

After entry into force, are sanitary requirements for importation and veterinary health certificates available to the public on an official web-site?

- Yes, systematically (n=59)
- Yes, sometimes (n=39)
- No (n=47)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exporting country perspective</th>
<th>Importing country perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importing countries do not use OIE standards</td>
<td>Exporting countries are not transparent or do not provide sufficient information in recognizing disease-free zones/compartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importing countries regularly check OIE official status by requesting dossiers and carrying out on-site visits</td>
<td>Exporting countries do not use OIE standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importing countries regularly check self-declared status by requesting additional information and carrying out on-site visits</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Private sector – challenges

**Market access**
- 48%: Private sector lacks capacity to comply with importing country requirements

**Zoning/compartmentalisation**
- 43%: Lack of required investment by the private sector
- 15%: Failure to establish public-private partnership
Solutions to facilitate the implementation of OIE standards
Need for continual strengthening of capacities to apply the key SPS principles

- Expand communication with Delegates & import/export staff
  Targeted communications with decision-makers

- Make standard setting process as open and inclusive as possible;
  Maintain scientific excellence.

- Develop / update guidance on equivalence, safe commodities and safe trade

- Use modern techniques and tools for information sharing
  Promote transparency

- Review and update procedures for granting an official health status

- Promote public-private partnerships

For consideration by the OIE (1)
Usefulness of OIE activities to understanding of the standards

- Guidelines on the OIE website
- OIE Workshops/training activities
- Seminars for OIE Focal points
- Seminars for OIE Delegates
- Veterinary Legislation Support Programme
- PVS Evaluation / Update missions
- Joint activities with international/regional organisations
- Joint activities with WTO/STDF

Very useful | Useful | Less useful
For consideration by the OIE (3) – regional priorities for training topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Africa (n=36)</th>
<th>Americas (n=22)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disease surveillance / Biosecurity - Terrestrial</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIE recommendations on safe trade</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterinary legislation</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>Import risk analysis</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>OIE standards and the WTO SPS Agreement</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disease surveillance / Biosecurity - Aquatic</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On farm food safety</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning / Compartmentalisation</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animal welfare</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asia, Far East and Oceania (n=31)</th>
<th>Europe (n=46)</th>
<th>Middle East (n=10)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Disease surveillance / Biosecurity - Terrestrial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoning / Compartmentalisation</td>
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<td>Animal welfare</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Participation in the OIE standard setting process

Does the OIE address the priorities of Member Countries when setting standards?

- Yes, fully
- Yes, in part
- No / Not sure

Africa (n=36)
Americas (n=22)
Asia, Far East and Oceania (n=31)
Europe (n=46)
Middle East (n=10)
For consideration by Member Countries (2)

- Prioritise participation in OIE training and other activities
- Apply Good Regulatory Practices (consultation, transparency, review and evaluation)
- OIE PVS Pathway, including Veterinary Legislation Support Programme
- Develop public-private partnerships
- Participate in WTO/STDF activities
- Contribute to networking and other regional initiatives
The future
**THE OIE OBSERVATORY**

**Monitoring**
- Collection of information on the implementation of OIE standards by Member Countries

**Analysis**
- Greater understanding of challenges to the implementation of standards
- Evaluate the effectiveness and the practicability of OIE standards

**Strategy**
- Enhancement of the standard setting process.
- Identification of tools to help Member countries overcome the challenges
- Help to ensure that OIE and donors’ investments in capacity building meet their goals.
Conclusions
Conclusions (1)

- The Questionnaire demonstrated that the relevance of OIE standards is well recognised and Member countries have made much progress in implementing the standards.

- Since the WTO was established, key SPS concepts have been embedded in national policies and national legal frameworks are increasingly making provision for relevant concepts. But there is still more work to be done.

- Governments should continue to be vigilant in relation to diseases and other health risks and apply sound approaches to risk management.

- There is an ongoing need for investment in the national veterinary and aquatic animal health services and the OIE will continue to show leadership and advocate for this.
Conclusions (2)

- The OIE provides standards and recommendations based on evidence and science, reflecting and supporting good regulatory practice.
- Member countries must prioritise their engagement with the OIE.
- Regional collaboration (with involvement of OIE regional offices) is beneficial to harmonisation of policies with international standards.
- Member countries should consider participation in the OIE PVS Pathway.
- The OIE Observatory is a very welcome initiative and all Member countries are strongly encouraged to participate.
For the kind support of the OIE Standards Department.

To the OIE Director General, the OIE Council and all Member countries.