

CHAPTER 4.3.

ZONING AND COMPARTMENTALISATION

Article 4.3.1.

Introduction

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, 'zoning' and 'regionalisation' have the same meaning.

Establishing and maintaining a *disease*, *infection and infestation* free status throughout the country should be the final goal for Member Countries. However, given the difficulty of establishing and maintaining a *disease* free status for an entire territory, especially for *diseases*, the entry of which is difficult to control through measures at national boundaries, there may be benefits to a Member Country in establishing and maintaining a *subpopulation* with a distinct health status within its territory for the purpose of disease control or international trade. *Subpopulations* may be separated by natural or artificial geographical barriers or, in certain situations, by the application of appropriate management practices.

Rationale: Here as noted above, and elsewhere, where the word "disease" is used, it should instead refer to "disease, infection, and infestation". The term "disease" is defined in the *Terrestrial Code* glossary as "the clinical or pathological *manifestation* of infection or infestation" (emphasis added). Thus, infection and infestation are distinct from disease (consistent with the use of all three terms together in multiple instances elsewhere in this document). For this chapter here, wouldn't the goal be to maintain freedom from disease, infection, and infestation, and not simply only from disease?

Similarly, in cases where the terms "animals" and "commodities" are used in this chapter, it should better be referred to as "susceptible animals and commodities".

Zoning and compartmentalisation are procedures implemented by a Member Country under the provisions of this chapter with a view to defining *subpopulations* of distinct health status within its territory for the purpose of disease control and/or international trade. While zoning applies to an animal *subpopulation* defined primarily on a geographical basis (using natural, artificial or legal boundaries), compartmentalisation applies to an animal *subpopulation* defined primarily by management and husbandry practices related to *biosecurity*. In practice, spatial considerations and good management, including *biosecurity plans*, play important roles in the application of both concepts.

A particular application of the concept of zoning is the establishment of a *containment zone*. In the event of limited *outbreaks* of a specified *disease* within an otherwise free country or zone, a single *containment zone*, which includes all cases, can be established for the purpose of minimizing the impact on the entire country or zone.

This chapter is to assist Member Countries wishing to establish and maintain different *subpopulations* within their territory using the principles of compartmentalisation and zoning. These principles should be applied in accordance with the measures recommended in the relevant *disease* chapter(s). This chapter also outlines a process through which trading partners may recognise such *subpopulations*. This process is best implemented by trading partners through establishing parameters and gaining agreement on the necessary measures prior to *outbreaks of disease*.

Before trade in *animals* or their products may occur, an *importing country* needs to be satisfied that its *animal health status* will be appropriately protected. In most cases, the import regulations developed will rely in part on judgements made about the effectiveness of sanitary procedures undertaken by the *exporting country*, both at its borders and within its territory.

As well as contributing to the safety of *international trade*, zoning and compartmentalisation may assist *disease control or eradication* within a Member Country's territory. Zoning may encourage the more efficient use of resources within certain parts of a country and compartmentalisation may allow the functional separation of a *subpopulation* from other domestic *animals* or *wild animals* through *biosecurity measures*, which a *zone* (through *geographical separation*) would not achieve through geographical separation. In a country where a disease is endemic, establishment of free zones may assist in the progressive control and eradication of the disease. Following a *disease outbreak in a previously free country*, to facilitate disease control and the continuation of trade, the use of zoning may allow a Member Country to limit the extension of the disease to a defined restricted area, while preserving the status of the remaining territory. The use of compartmentalisation may allow a Member Country to take advantage of epidemiological links among *subpopulations* or common practices relating to *biosecurity*, despite diverse geographical locations, ~~to facilitate disease control and/or the continuation of trade.~~ A Member Country may thus have more than one *zone* or *compartment* within its territory.

Zoning and compartmentalisation cannot be applied to all *diseases* but separate requirements will be developed for each *disease* for which the application of zoning or compartmentalisation is considered appropriate. ~~To regain free status following a disease outbreak in a zone or compartment, Member Countries should follow the recommendations in the relevant disease chapter in the Terrestrial Code.~~

The purpose of this chapter is to provide recommendations on the principles of zoning and compartmentalisation to Member Countries wishing to establish and maintain different subpopulations within their territory. These principles should be applied in accordance with the relevant chapters of the Terrestrial Code. This chapter also outlines a process by which trading partners may recognise such subpopulations.

Article 4.3.2.

General considerations

The *Veterinary Services* of an ~~exporting a Member country~~ Country which that is establishing a *zone* or *compartment* within its territory ~~for international trade purposes~~ should clearly define the *subpopulation* in accordance with the recommendations in the relevant chapters ~~in of~~ the *Terrestrial Code*, including those on *surveillance*, and the *identification* and *traceability* of live *animals*. ~~The Veterinary Services of an exporting country should be able to explain to the Veterinary Services of an importing country the basis for claiming a distinct animal health status for the given zone or compartment under consideration.~~

The procedures used to establish and maintain the distinct *animal health status* of a *zone* or *compartment* ~~will~~ depend on the epidemiology of the *disease*, ~~including in particular~~ the presence and role of susceptible *wildlife species*, and environmental factors, as well as on the application of *biosecurity* and *sanitary measures*.

Biosecurity and *surveillance* are essential components of zoning and compartmentalisation, and the arrangements should be developed through active cooperation of industry and *Veterinary Services*.

The authority, organisation and infrastructure of the *Veterinary Services*, including *laboratories*, should be clearly documented in accordance with the Chapters ~~3.1. and 3.2.~~ ~~on the evaluation of *Veterinary Services* of the *Terrestrial Code*, to provide confidence in the integrity of the *zone* or *compartment*.~~ The final authority ~~of over~~ the *zone* or *compartment*, for the purposes of domestic and *international trade*, lies with the *Veterinary Authority*. The *Veterinary Authority* should conduct an assessment of the resources needed and available to establish and maintain a *zone* or *compartment*. These include the human and financial resources and the technical capability of the *Veterinary Services* (and of the relevant industry and production system, in the case of a *compartment*), including for *disease surveillance* and diagnosis.

In the context of maintaining the *animal health status* of a *population* or *subpopulation* of a *country, zone* or *compartment*, references to 'import', 'importation' and 'imported animals/ products' found in the *Terrestrial Code* apply both to importations into a the country as well as and to the movements of *animals* and their products into the zones and or compartments. Such movements should be the subject of appropriate *sanitary measures* to preserve the *animal health status* of the country, *zone* or *compartment*.

The *Veterinary Services* should provide movement certification, and carry out documented periodic inspections of facilities, *biosecurity*, records and *surveillance* procedures. *Veterinary Services* should conduct or audit *surveillance*, reporting and *laboratory diagnostic examinations*.

The *exporting country* should be able to demonstrate, through detailed documentation provided to the *importing country*, that it has implemented the recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* for establishing and maintaining such a *zone* or *compartment*.

An *importing country* should recognise the existence of this *zone* or *compartment* when the appropriate measures recommended in the *Terrestrial Code* are applied and the *Veterinary Authority* of the *exporting country* certifies that this is the case.

The *exporting country* should conduct an assessment of the resources needed and available to establish and maintain a *zone* or *compartment* for *international trade* purposes. These include the human and financial resources, and the technical capability of the *Veterinary Services* (and of the relevant industry and production system, in the case of a *compartment*) including *disease surveillance* and diagnosis.

Biosecurity and *surveillance* are essential components of zoning and compartmentalisation, and the arrangements should be developed through cooperation of industry and *Veterinary Services*.

Industry's responsibilities include the application of *biosecurity* measures, documenting and recording movements of *animals* and personnel, quality assurance schemes, monitoring the efficacy of the measures, documenting corrective actions, conducting *surveillance*, rapid reporting and maintenance of records in a readily accessible form.

The *Veterinary Services* should provide movement certification, and carry out documented periodic inspections of facilities, *biosecurity* measures, records and *surveillance* procedures. *Veterinary Services* should conduct or audit *surveillance*, reporting and *laboratory diagnostic examinations*.

Article 4.3.3.

Principles for defining and establishing a zone or compartment, including protection and containment zones

In conjunction with the above considerations, the The following principles should apply when Member Countries define a *zone* or a *compartment*.

- 1) The extent of a *zone* and its geographical limits should be established by the *Veterinary Authority* on the basis of natural, artificial and/or legal boundaries, and made public through official channels.
- 2) A *protection zone* may be established to preserve the health status of *animals* in a free country or *zone*, from adjacent countries or *zones* of different *animal health status*. Measures should be implemented based on the epidemiology of the *disease* under consideration to prevent introduction of the pathogenic agent and to ensure early detection.

These measures should include intensified movement control and *surveillance* and may include:

- a) *animal identification* and *animal traceability* to ensure that *animals* in the *protection zone* are clearly distinguishable from other populations;
- b) *vaccination* of all or at risk susceptible *animals*;
- c) testing and/or *vaccination* of *animals* moved;
- d) specific procedures for sample handling, sending and testing;
- e) enhanced *biosecurity* including cleansing *disinfection* procedures for transport means, and possible compulsory routes;
- f) specific *surveillance* of susceptible *wildlife* species and relevant *vectors*;
- g) awareness campaigns to the public or targeted at breeders, traders, hunters, *veterinarians*.

The application of these measures can be in the entire free *zone* or in a defined area within and/or outside the free *zone*.

- 3) In the event of limited *outbreaks* in a country or *zone* previously free of a *disease*, a *containment zone* may be established for the purposes of trade. Establishment of a *containment zone* should be based on a rapid response including:
 - a) Appropriate standstill of movement of *animals* and other *commodities* upon notification of suspicion of the specified *disease* and the demonstration that the *outbreaks* are contained within this zone through epidemiological investigation (trace back, trace forward) after confirmation of *infection*. The primary *outbreak* has been identified and investigations on the likely source of the *outbreak* have been carried out and all cases shown to be epidemiologically linked.

- b) ~~A stamping-out policy or another effective control strategy aimed at eradicating the disease should be applied and the susceptible animal population within the containment zones should be clearly identifiable as belonging to the containment zone. Increased passive and targeted surveillance in accordance with Chapter 1.4. in the rest of the country or zone should be carried out and has not detected any evidence of infection.c) Measures consistent with the disease-specific chapter should be in place to prevent spread of the infection from the containment zone to the rest of the country or zone, including ongoing surveillance in the containment zone.~~
- d) ~~For the effective establishment of a containment zone, it is necessary to demonstrate that there have been no new cases in the containment zone within a minimum of two incubation periods from the last detected case.~~
- e) ~~The free status of the areas outside the containment zone would be suspended pending the establishment of the containment zone. The free status of these areas could be reinstated, once the containment zone is clearly established, irrespective of the provisions of the disease-specific chapter.~~
- f) ~~The containment zone should be managed in such a way that it can be demonstrated that commodities for international trade can be shown to have originated outside the containment zone.~~
- g) ~~The recovery of the free status of the containment zone should follow the provisions of the disease-specific chapter.~~
- 42) The factors defining a *compartment* should be established by the *Veterinary Authority* on the basis of relevant criteria such as management and husbandry practices related to *biosecurity*, and made public through official channels.
- 53) *Animals* and *herds/flocks* belonging to such subpopulations of zones or compartments need to should be recognisable as such through a clear epidemiological separation from other *animals* and all things factors presenting a *disease risk*. ~~For a zone or compartment, the~~ The *Veterinary Authority* should document in detail the measures taken to ensure the identification of the *subpopulation* and the establishment and maintenance of its health status through a *biosecurity plan*. The measures used to establish and maintain the distinct *animal health status* of a *zone* or *compartment* should be appropriate to the particular circumstances, and will depend on the epidemiology of the *disease*, environmental factors, the health status of *animals* in adjacent areas, applicable *biosecurity measures* (including movement controls, use of natural and artificial boundaries, the spatial separation of *animals*, and commercial management and husbandry practices), and *surveillance*.
- 64) Relevant *animals* within the *zone* or *compartment* should be identified in such a way that their movements are traceable. Depending on the system of production, identification may be done at the *herd/flock* ~~or~~ or individual animal level. Relevant animal movements into and out of the *zone* or *compartment* should be well documented and controlled. The existence of a valid *animal identification system* is a prerequisite to assess the integrity of the *zone* or *compartment*.
- 75) For a *compartment*, the *biosecurity plan* should describe the partnership between the relevant industry and the *Veterinary Authority*, and their respective responsibilities. It should also describe the routine operating procedures to provide clear evidence that the *surveillance* conducted, the *live animal identification* and *traceability* system, and the management practices are adequate to meet the definition of the *compartment*. In addition to information on animal movement controls, the plan should include *herd/flock* ~~or~~ production records, feed sources, *surveillance* results, birth and *death* records, visitor logbook, morbidity and mortality history, medications, *vaccinations*, documentation of training of relevant personnel and any other criteria necessary for evaluation of *risk management*. The information required may vary in accordance with the species and *diseases* under consideration. The *biosecurity plan* should also describe how the measures will be audited to ensure that the *risks* are regularly ~~re-assessed~~ reassessed and the measures adjusted accordingly.

Article 4.3.4.

Free zone

A free zone is one in which the absence of a specific disease, infection or infestation in an animal population has been demonstrated by surveillance in accordance with the relevant requirements of the Terrestrial Code.

In conjunction with Articles 4.3.2. and 4.3.3., and depending on the prevailing epidemiological situation, the free status demonstration may require past or ongoing pathogen-specific surveillance, as well as appropriate biosecurity and sanitary measures, within the zone and at its borders. The surveillance should be conducted in

accordance with Chapter 1.4. or the relevant *disease-specific* chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*. The free status can apply to one or more susceptible animal species populations, domestic or wild.

So long as an ongoing *surveillance* demonstrates there is no occurrence of the specific *disease, infection or infestation*, the zone keeps its free status.

Article 4.3.5.

Infected zone

An *infected zone* is one in which a *disease, infection or infestation* either has been diagnosed, or the absence of which cannot be demonstrated. In the latter case, the *disease-specific* chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* contains an article describing the conditions for free and infected status.

An *infected zone* may be:

= a zone of a country where the *disease* has been present [for a long period](#) and has not yet been eradicated, while other zones of the country have been free;

Rationale: how long a disease has been present in a zone or country is irrelevant – the area is either infected or not.

= a zone of a country or zone previously free, in which the *disease* has been reintroduced, while the rest of the country or zone remains unaffected.

To gain free status in an *infected zone*, or regain free status following a *disease outbreak* in a previously free zone, Member Countries should follow the recommendations in the relevant *disease-specific* chapters of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Article 4.3.6.

Protection zone

A *protection zone* may be established to preserve the *animal health status* of an *animal population* in a free country or a *free zone* from introduction of a pathogenic agent of a specific *disease, infection or infestation* from adjacent countries or zones of different status. *Biosecurity* and *sanitary measures* should be implemented based on the animal management systems, the epidemiology of the *disease* under consideration and the epidemiological situation prevailing in an adjacent infected country or zone.

These measures should include intensified movement control and *surveillance* and may include:

- 1) specific *animal identification* and *animal traceability* to ensure that *animals* in the *protection zone* are clearly distinguishable from other populations;
- 2) *vaccination* of all or at risk susceptible *animals*;
- 3) testing or *vaccination* of *animals* moved;
- 4) specific procedures for sample handling, dispatching and testing;
- 5) enhanced *biosecurity* including *disinfection* procedures for *vehicles/vessels*, and possible compulsory routes;
- 6) specific *surveillance* of susceptible *wildlife* and relevant *vectors*;
- 7) awareness campaigns aimed at the public or targeted at breeders, traders, hunters or *veterinarians*.

The *protection zone* may be a part of an *infected zone* or of a *free zone*.

Article 4.3.7.Containment zone

- **General Comment :** Although the chapter was simply reorganized, the chapter continues to include language that is of concern (text is highlighted below). By including this language in the chapter on zoning, it effectively applies to all diseases.
 - This means that, no matter how large the country or small the outbreak, the OIE recommends suspending the free status of the entire country for the purposes of international trade, until a containment zone is established. Providing clarity to the term “area” used in the second paragraph that is highlighted might help. Is this intended to refer to any and all free “areas” of the country that are outside the containment zone? If so, this provision would seem to serve as a strong disincentive to establishment of a containment zone
 - Further, an affected country cannot regain free status for areas outside the containment zone until at least 2 incubation periods after the last case within the containment zone.
 - These provisions are problematic for all countries—and particularly large countries—when faced with a limited foreign animal disease outbreak.
 - Finally for international trade purposes, what is the difference between loss of free status and suspension of free status?

In the event of limited outbreaks in a country or zone previously free from a disease, a containment zone may be established for the purposes of disease control or trade.

Establishment of a containment zone should be based on a rapid response, prepared in a contingency plan, including:

- 1) appropriate standstill of movement of animals and other commodities upon notification of suspicion of the specified disease;
- 2) epidemiological investigation (trace-back, trace-forward) after confirmation of infection, demonstrating that the outbreaks are epidemiologically linked and contained within the zone;
- 3) stamping-out policy or another effective emergency control strategy aimed at eradicating the disease;
- 4) clear identification of the susceptible animal population within the containment zone enabling its recognition as belonging to the containment zone;
- 5) increased passive and targeted surveillance in accordance with Chapter 1.4, in the rest of the country or zone demonstrating no evidence of infection;
- 6) sanitary measures, including on-going surveillance in the containment zone, consistent with the disease-specific chapter, to prevent spread of the infection from the containment zone to the rest of the country or zone.

For the effective establishment of a containment zone, it is necessary to demonstrate that there have been no new cases in the containment zone within a minimum of two incubation periods from the last detected case.

The free status of the areas outside the containment zone would be suspended pending demonstration of the effectiveness of the containment zone. The free status of these areas may then be reinstated, irrespective of the provisions of the disease-specific chapter.

The containment zone is an infected zone that should be managed in such a way that commodities for international trade can be shown to have originated from inside or outside the containment zone. Well managed, it may allow the rest of the country or zone to keep their free status.

Article 4.3.8.

Bilateral recognition by trading countries

Trading partners should exchange information allowing the recognition of different subpopulations within their respective territories. This recognition process is best implemented through establishing parameters and gaining agreement on the necessary measures prior to outbreaks of disease.

The Veterinary Services of an exporting country should be able to explain to the Veterinary Services of an importing country the basis for claiming a distinct animal health status for the given zone or compartment under consideration.

The exporting country should be able to demonstrate, through detailed documentation provided to the importing country, that it has implemented the recommendations in the Terrestrial Code for establishing and maintaining such a zone or compartment.

An importing country should recognise the existence of this zone or compartment when the appropriate measures recommended in the Terrestrial Code are applied and the Veterinary Authority of the exporting country certifies that this is the case.

— Text deleted.