

USER'S GUIDE

A. Introduction

- 1) The WOA *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (hereafter referred to as the *Terrestrial Code*) establishes standards intended for the improvement of terrestrial animal health and welfare and veterinary public health worldwide. The purpose of this guide is to advise the *Veterinary Authorities* of WOA Member Countries on how to use the *Terrestrial Code*.
- 2) *Veterinary Authorities* should use the standards in the *Terrestrial Code* notably ~~to set up to plan and implement~~ measures providing for early detection, internal reporting, notification, control or eradication of pathogenic agents, including zoonotic ones, in terrestrial *animals* (i.e. mammals, birds, reptiles and bees) and preventing their spread via *international trade in commodities, which includes animals and animal products*, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade. These measures may include the establishment and recognition of *animal health status* applied to countries, *zones, compartments or herds/flocks*.
- 3) The WOA *Manual of Diagnostic tests and vaccines for terrestrial animals* (hereafter referred to as the *Terrestrial Manual*) is a reference document to be read in conjunction with the *Terrestrial Code*. It provides technical standards on diagnosis and vaccines, as well as detailed epidemiological information for relevant diseases.
- 4) Notification of listed diseases and emerging diseases and related measures taken is a mandatory requirement for Member Countries. Other recommendations may be adapted to each Member Country's specific conditions, such as animal production or animal health situation, and domestic regulations.
- 5) Although only notification of listed diseases and emerging diseases as described in the *Terrestrial Code* is compulsory (hence the use of the term 'shall'), membership to WOA implies a general commitment to apply its standards (hence the use of the term 'should').
- 6) While the *Terrestrial Code* standards provide recommendations to be implemented, they do not prescribe a defined implementation process. This means that the standards should be adapted and incorporated into national laws, regulations or other official documents, thereby providing a basis for *Veterinary Authority* and other *Competent Authorities* to develop prevention and control measures. In practice, the way international standards are integrated into domestic legislations depends on each Member Country's legal system, disease status, and capacity, resulting in diverse implementation methods among Member Countries.
- 7) The *Terrestrial Code* provides standards that deliver essential sanitary information and technical guidance to its Member Countries, including for the negotiation and agreement of science-based import requirements, as reflected in international veterinary certification. All sections of the *Terrestrial Code* contribute together to support Member Countries in the safe trade of *commodities* and the improvement of animal health and welfare globally.
- 8) Member Countries may apply different measures than those recommended by specific standards in the *Terrestrial Code*. Regarding sanitary measures for international trade, such measures should be scientifically justified, as recognised by WTO's Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement. The *Terrestrial Code* provides methodologies for risk analysis to support this.

United States	Comment category: Editorial Proposed amended text: 8) ... <u>such measures should be scientifically justified, as recognised by World Trade Organization's Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement.</u>
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	Rationale: Recommend specifying “World Trade Organization” with its first use in this introductory section of the Terrestrial Code to clarify what future use of the acronym, WTO will represent. Supporting evidence: n/a
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- 39) WOAHA standards comprise recommendations that are based on the most recent scientific and technical evidence information. Correctly applied, they protect animal health and welfare and veterinary public health during production of and trade in *commodities*, and in activities involving the use of animals.

- 410) The absence of chapters, articles or specific recommendations on particular pathogenic agents, surveillance strategies, *animal health status* or trade in *commodities* does not preclude the application of appropriate *sanitary measures* by the *Veterinary Authorities*, provided they are based on *risk analyses* conducted in accordance with the *Terrestrial Code*.
- 544) The year that a chapter was first adopted and the year of its last revision are noted at the end of each chapter.
- 612) The complete text of the *Terrestrial Code* is available on the WOAHA website and individual chapters may be downloaded from: <https://www.woah.org/>. Additional guidelines relevant to the application of certain aspects of the *Terrestrial Code* may also be available on the WOAHA website.

B. *Terrestrial Code* content

- 1) Key terms and expressions that are used in more than one chapter and require precise interpretation for the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code* are defined in the Glossary, in the case where common dictionary definitions are not deemed to be adequate. The reader should be aware of the definitions given in the Glossary when reading and using the *Terrestrial Code*. Defined terms appear in italics, except in titles of chapters or articles. In the on-line version of the *Terrestrial Code*, a hyperlink leads to the relevant definition. In the *Terrestrial Code*, the term 'or' is used in the inclusive sense, meaning that it can be one, the other or both, except where 'or' is preceded by 'either'.
- 1bis) The expression 'for the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*' appears throughout the *Terrestrial Code*, including at the beginning of the Glossary and in chapters where diseases or their occurrences (cases), or other related terms, are defined. It means that those terms should be used as defined throughout the *Terrestrial Code*, notably for notification.
- 2) The term "(under study)" is found in some rare instances, with reference to an article or part of an article. This means that this part of the text has not been adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates and the particular provisions are thus not part of the *Terrestrial Code*, while they continue to be the subject of specific work, until they are amended or deleted.
- 3) The standards in the chapters of Section 1 are designed for the implementation of measures for the diagnosis, *surveillance* and *notification* of diseases, *infections* and *infestations*. The standards include procedures for *notification* to WOAHA and procedures for the recognition of the *animal health status* of a country, *zone* or *compartment*. Section 1 thus provides transparency to trading partners through WOAHA notification on their respective animal health status for *listed diseases*. This is fundamental baseline information for setting risk-based import requirements.
- 4) The standards in the chapters of Section 2 are designed to guide an the importing country in conducting import *risk analysis*, in particular in the absence of WOAHA recommendations on particular pathogenic agents or *commodities* to inform sanitary requirements and certification. The *importing country* should also use these standards to justify import measures which are more stringent than different to existing WOAHA standards. Section 2 also provides principles and guidance on *safe commodity criteria*.
- 5) The standards in the chapters of Section 3 are designed for the establishment, maintenance and strengthening evaluation of *Veterinary Services*, and the evaluation of their quality, including *veterinary legislation* and communication. These standards are intended to assist the *Veterinary Services* and *Veterinary Authority* of Member Countries to meet their objectives of improving terrestrial animal health and welfare and veterinary public health, as well as to They also assist Member Countries to establish and maintain confidence in their *animal health status*, their ability to deliver *international veterinary certificates* and the related capacity to meet import requirements as well as to provide operational assurances for trade.
- 6) The standards in the chapters of Section 4 are designed for the implementation of measures for the prevention and control of pathogenic agents within Member Countries' territories. Measures in this section include notably *animal identification*, traceability, zoning, compartmentalisation, disposal of dead animals, disinfection, disinsection, *biosecurity*, and general hygiene precautions, *vaccination* and disease official control programmes. Some chapters address the specific *sanitary measures* to be applied for the collection and processing of semen and embryos of *animals*. Standards in Section 4 reflect detailed information and capabilities including for safe trade.

- 7) The standards in the chapters of Section 5 are designed for the implementation of general *sanitary measures* for international trade. They address veterinary certification and the measures applicable at each stage of the trade process by the *exporting, transit and importing countries*. They also include recommendations for Member Countries to discuss and establish bilaterally agreed *sanitary measures* and *international veterinary certificates*, as well as define equivalence of *sanitary measures*. A range of model veterinary certificates is provided to facilitate consistent documentation in *international trade*.
- 8) The standards in the chapters of Section 6 are designed for the implementation of preventive measures in animal production and processing systems. ~~These measures are intended~~ to assist Member Countries in meeting their veterinary public health objectives. They include ante- and post-mortem inspection, control of hazards in *feed*, *biosecurity* at the animal production level, and the control of antimicrobial resistance in *animals*. Standards in Section 6 also provide recommendations that may be applicable to the international trade of non-human primates and other commodities such as food and feed.
- 9) The standards in the chapters of Section 7 are designed for the implementation of *animal welfare* measures. The standards cover production, transport, and *slaughter or killing of animals*, as well as the *animal welfare* aspects of free-roaming dog population control, working equids, and the use of *animals* in research and education. Detailed parameters provided in some recommendations are meant to guide Member Countries in choosing those that are most suitable to their situation.
- 10) The standards in each of the chapters of Sections 8 to 16, i.e. disease-specific chapters, are designed to inform of the occurrence of WOA *listed diseases* and to prevent the pathogenic agents of those listed diseases from being introduced into an *importing country*, from spreading within a country or having harmful consequences, while facilitating safe international trade of commodities, based on the relative *animal health status* of their country, *zone or compartment* of origin, or as a *safe commodity*. Some chapters include specific measures for *surveillance* and to prevent and control the *infections* and *infestations* of global concern. Sections 8 to 16 relate to the categories of diseases, *infections* and *infestations* of multiple species, Apinae, Aves, Bovinae, Equidae, Leporidae, Caprinae, Suidae and Camelidae respectively. Although WOA aims to include a chapter for each WOA *listed disease*, not all WOA *listed diseases* have been covered yet by a specific chapter. This is work in progress, depending on available scientific knowledge, and as prioritised the priorities set by Member Countries the World Assembly of Delegates.
- 11) A disease-specific chapter covers some or all of the following components:
 - Chapter title and number;
 - An introductory article, including a brief description of the disease, its context and the aim of the chapter, the definition for the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code* of the disease and the animal hosts, which play a significant role in the epidemiology of the disease, and the definition of its occurrence ('case definition'); the introductory article may also include the setting of incubation, infective period, and other aspects of the disease and its consequences in terms of surveillance, *animal health status* and trade;
 - An Article on *safe commodities*;
 - Articles on provisions for *animal health status* applied to countries, *zones, compartments*, ~~or~~ herds/flocks, *apiaries* or other *subpopulations*;
 - Articles on recommendations for safe trade of *commodities*;
 - Articles on inactivation of the pathogenic agents present in specific *animal products*, materials or fomites; ~~and~~
 - Articles on *surveillance* of the disease; and
 - Articles on the prevention and control of diseases including containment and protection zones.

Not all disease-specific chapters include all these components and some chapters may include only one article on the definition of occurrence for the purpose of *notification* to WOA. Each chapter includes only those provisions considered, at the time of adoption, relevant to address WOA Members' needs with regards to the specific disease; and that are supported by sound scientific and technical knowledge.

The recommendations in these chapters that are related to *international trade* assume that the pathogenic agent is either not present in the *importing country* or is the subject of a control or eradication programme. The *sanitary measures* recommended in the standards take into account the nature of the moved or traded *commodity*, the *animal health status* of the *exporting country*, *zone* or *compartment* of origin, and the *risk* mitigation measures applicable to each *commodity*.

C. Specific issues

1) Notification

Chapter 1.1. describes Member Countries' obligations under Organic Statutes of the Office International des Epizooties. Listed diseases, as defined and described in their relevant disease-specific chapters, and emerging diseases, as prescribed in Chapter 1.1., are compulsorily notifiable, either immediately or routinely every six months depending on the disease situation. Member Countries are encouraged to also provide information to WOA on other animal health events of epidemiological significance, notably findings of pathogenic agents that do not comply with case definitions of the listed diseases.

Chapter 1.2. describes the criteria for the inclusion of a disease, *infection* or *infestation* in the WOA List and Chapter 1.3. gives the current list. *Listed diseases* are divided into categories based on the animal hosts. Recommendations for animal health surveillance in Chapter 1.4. are essential for early detection.

2) Diagnostic tests and vaccines

It is recommended that specified diagnostic tests and vaccines in *Terrestrial Code* chapters be used with a reference to the relevant section in the ~~WOA Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals~~ (hereafter referred to as the *Terrestrial Manual*). Experts responsible for facilities used for disease diagnosis and vaccine production should be fully conversant with the standards in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

3) Freedom from a disease, infection or infestation

Article 1.4.6. provides general principles for declaring a country or *zone* free from a disease, *infection* or *infestation* and which may be complemented by specific requirements in the listed disease-specific chapters, including for some diseases for which an official status is granted by WOA. Chapter 1.6. describes the procedures for free status recognition and self-declaration.

4) Prevention and control

Chapters 4.4. and 4.5. describe the measures that should be implemented to establish *zones* and *compartments*. Zoning and compartmentalisation are important tools to prevent and control diseases and to facilitate safe trade.

Chapters 4.6. to 4.12. describe the measures which should be implemented during collection and processing of semen and embryos of animals, including micromanipulation and cloning, in order to prevent animal health *risks*, especially when trading these *commodities*. Although the measures relate principally to WOA *listed diseases* or *infections*, general standards apply to all infectious disease *risks*. Moreover, in Chapter 4.8. diseases that are not listed are marked as such but are included for the information of Member Countries.

Chapter 4.15. addresses the specific issue of the prevention and control of bee diseases and some of its trade implications. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the specific bee disease chapters in Section 9.

Chapters 4.18. and 4.19 related to vaccination and disease control are applicable in endemic or epidemic situations, as well as in free countries or zones experiencing emergence or reemergence of diseases, or at increased risk of disease introduction. Chapters 4.13. and 4.14. related to the disposal of dead animals and to disinfection and disinsection are essential recommendations for complementary measures to control and eradicate diseases.

Chapter 6.5. is designed for the implementation of general *biosecurity* measures in intensive *poultry* production. Chapters 6.6., 6.13. and 6.14. provide recommendations for some specific prevention and control plans for the unlisted foodborne pathogenic agent *Salmonella* in poultry, bovine and pig production systems as part of the *Veterinary Services* mission to prevent, eliminate or control food safety *hazards* in animal production.

Chapter 6.12. deals specifically with the zoonotic risk associated with the movements of non-human primates and gives standards for certification, transportation and import conditions for these *animals*.

5) International Trade requirements

a) Generalities

Veterinary Authority should implement sanitary measures at the borders of their countries, in order to prevent the introduction of listed diseases, especially when the country or a zone of the country is free or when official control measures are being applied against those diseases. The general measures to be applied are described in Section 5 of the *Terrestrial Code*.

~~*Sanitary measures related to international trade should be based on WOAHS standards. A Member Country may authorise the importation of animals or animal products into its territory under conditions different from those recommended by the Terrestrial Code. To scientifically justify more stringent measures, the importing country should conduct a risk analysis in accordance with WOAHS standards, as described in Chapter 2.1. Members of the WTO should refer to the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement).*~~

Chapters 5.1. to 5.3. describe the general obligations and ~~ethical~~ responsibilities of *importing* and *exporting countries* in *international trade*. *Veterinary Authorities* and all *veterinarians* directly involved in *international trade* should be familiar with these chapters. Chapter 5.3. also describes the principles of equivalence of measures, the process of negotiation of bilaterally agreed measures, and the WOAHS informal procedure for dispute mediation. Chapters 5.4. to 5.7. describe the measures to implement at export, transit, and import of commodities. They are an essential pillar of prevention of international spread of animal diseases.

b) Safe commodities

WOAH aims to include an article listing the *commodities* that are considered safe for trade without the need for *risk* mitigation measures specifically directed against a particular *listed disease, infection or infestation*, regardless of the status of the country or *zone* of origin for the agent in question, at the beginning of each *listed disease*-specific chapter in Sections 8 to 16. ~~This is work in progress and some chapters do not yet contain articles listing safe commodities.~~ When a list of *safe commodities* is present in a chapter, *importing countries* should not apply trade restrictions to such *commodities* with respect to the agent in question. The safety of those *safe commodities* should be considered both when trading as well as for disease control regarding domestic movements. Chapter 2.2. describes the criteria for inclusion of a *commodity* in the list of *safe commodities* of a disease-specific chapter.

~~6)c)~~ International veterinary certificates

An *international veterinary certificate* is an official document that the *Veterinary Authority* of an *exporting country* issues in accordance with Chapters 5.1. and 5.2. It lists animal health requirements and, where appropriate, public health requirements for the exported *commodity*. The quality of the *exporting country's Veterinary Services* is essential in providing assurances to trading partners regarding the safety of exported *animals* and products. This includes the *Veterinary Authority's* ethical approach to the provision of veterinary certificates and their history in meeting their notification obligations.

International veterinary certificates underpin *international trade* and provide assurances to the *importing country* regarding the health status of the *animals* and products imported. The measures prescribed should take into account the *animal health status* of both *exporting* and *importing countries*, and *zones, herds/flocks or compartments* within them, and be based upon the standards in the *Terrestrial Code*.

The following steps should be taken when drafting *international veterinary certificates*:

- a) i) identify the diseases, *infections* or *infestations* from which the *importing country* is justified in seeking protection because of its own health status. *Importing countries* should not impose measures in regard to diseases that occur in their own territory but that are not subject to *official control programmes*;
- b) ii) for *commodities* capable of transmitting these diseases, *infections* or *infestations* through *international trade*, the *importing country* should apply the relevant articles in the *listed disease-specific* chapters. The application of the articles should be adapted to the *animal health status* of the country, *zone, compartment* or *herd/flock* of origin. Such status should be established according to Article 1.4.6. except when articles of the relevant *listed disease* chapter specify otherwise;
- c) iii) when preparing *international veterinary certificates*, the *importing country* should endeavour to use terms and expressions in accordance with the definitions given in the Glossary. *International veterinary certificates* should be kept as simple as possible and should be clearly worded, to avoid misunderstanding of the *importing country's* requirements;
- d) iv) Chapters 5.10. to 5.13. provide, as further guidance to Member Countries, model certificates that should be used as a baseline.

7)d) Guidance notes for importers and exporters

It is recommended that *Veterinary Authorities* prepare “guidance notes” to assist importers and exporters understand trade requirements. These notes should identify and explain the trade conditions, including the measures to be applied before and after export and during transport and unloading, and the relevant legal obligations and operational procedures. The guidance notes should advise on all details to be included in the health certification accompanying the consignment to its destination. Exporters should also be reminded of the International Air Transport Association rules governing air transport of *animals* and *animal products*.

[...]