Enhance Members participation in the Standard-setting process



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32nd Conference of the Regional Commission for Europe
Riga, Latvia, 20 – 25 September 2026

Agenda

1. WOAH International Standards
2. Standard-Setting Process
3. Member Commenting figures
4. Other Developments



What are WOAH international standards?

- Framework to facilitate discussions between exporting and importing countries
- The role of WOAH:
  - Animal health, welfare and zoonosis
  - Standards for trade
    - live animals
    - animal products

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

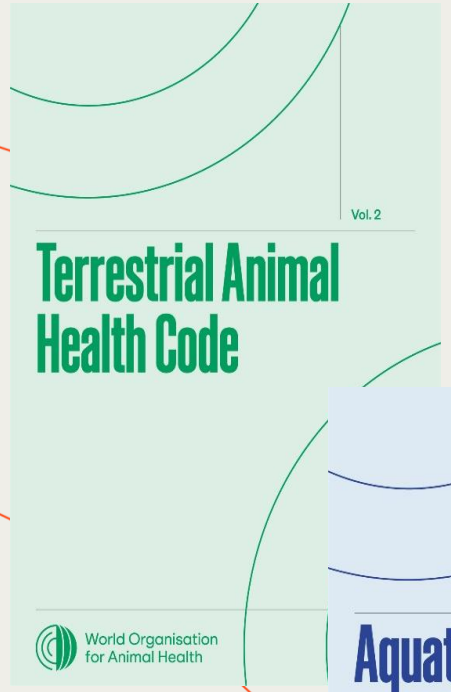
IPPC

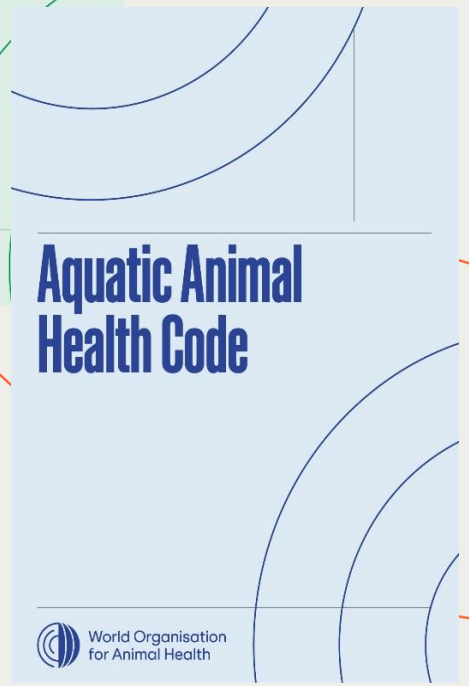
World Organisation for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

WOAH international standards

Access standards here:

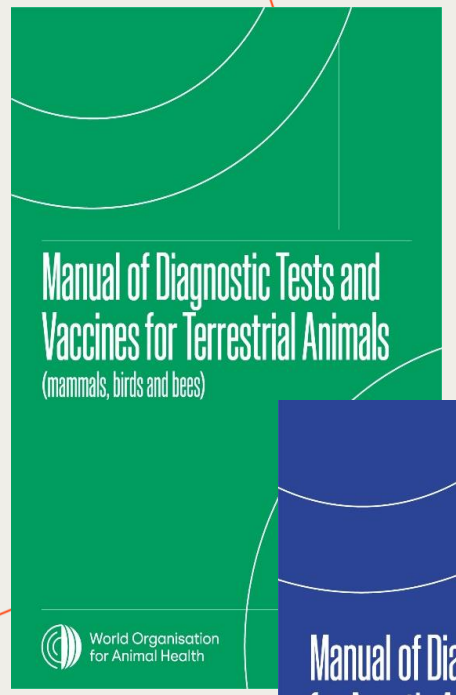
Codes

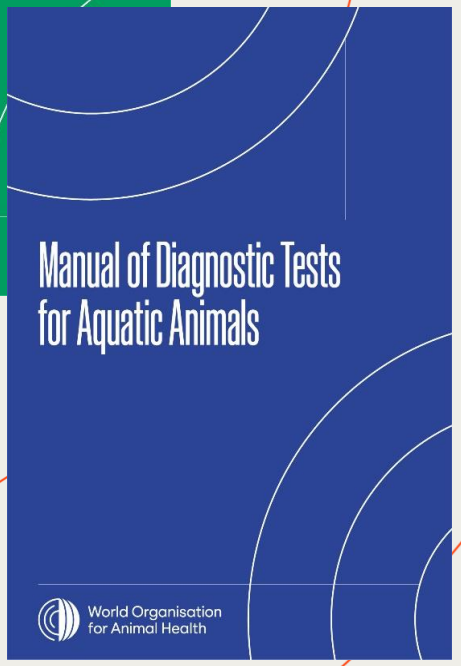




Standards to improve terrestrial animal health and welfare, and veterinary public health

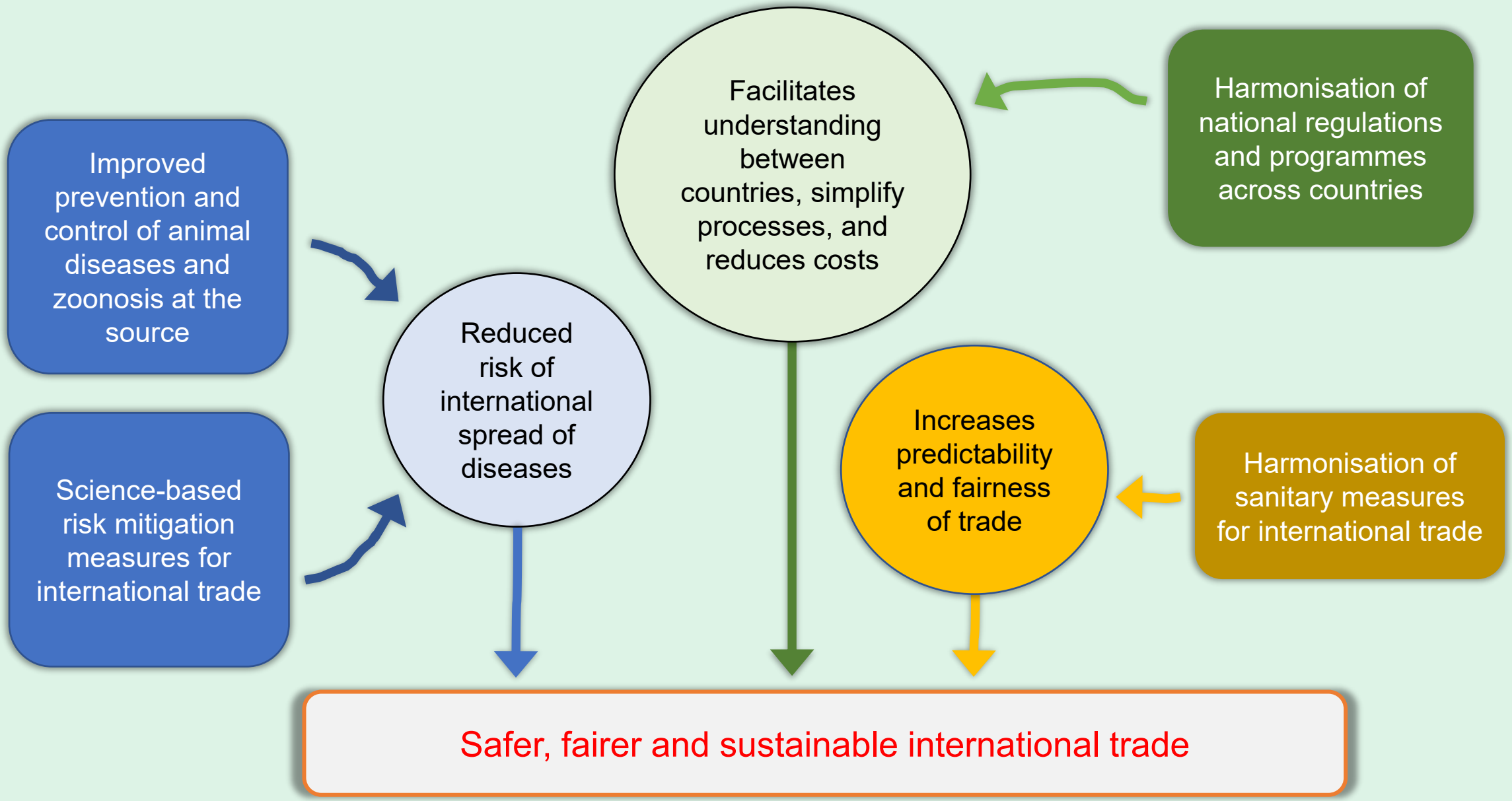
Manuals





Standards on diagnostic tests and vaccines

Impact of WOAH Standards Internationally

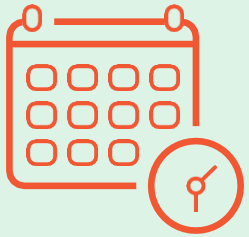




Standard-setting process

WOAH Specialist Commissions

- Four Specialist Commissions;
- Each Commission comprises six members;
- Each Commission meets twice a year to progress items on their respective work programmes (February and September).



3-year term

Elections at 2024 General Session (next one in 2027)

Elected by the World Assembly of Delegates

Experts Selection process

- Open call launched July-Sept. before election year
- Experts worldwide can apply
- Endorsement sought from WOAH Delegate
- Candidates reviewed by a Selection Committee and the WOAH Council
- Council endorsed list shared with Delegates before the election

Specialist Commissions













Specialist Commissions

Reports:

Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission

Code Commission

- Oversees amendments to the *Terrestrial Code*
- Oversees the work of relevant ad hoc Groups and Working Groups
- Advises the Director General on issues relevant to its work

Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases

Scientific Commission

- Assesses Member dossiers for the recognition of official animal health status and endorsement of official control programmes
- Supports disease-specific strategies for disease surveillance, prevention and control
- Oversees the work of relevant ad hoc Groups and Working Groups
- Provides technical advice to the Code Commission, where relevant

Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission

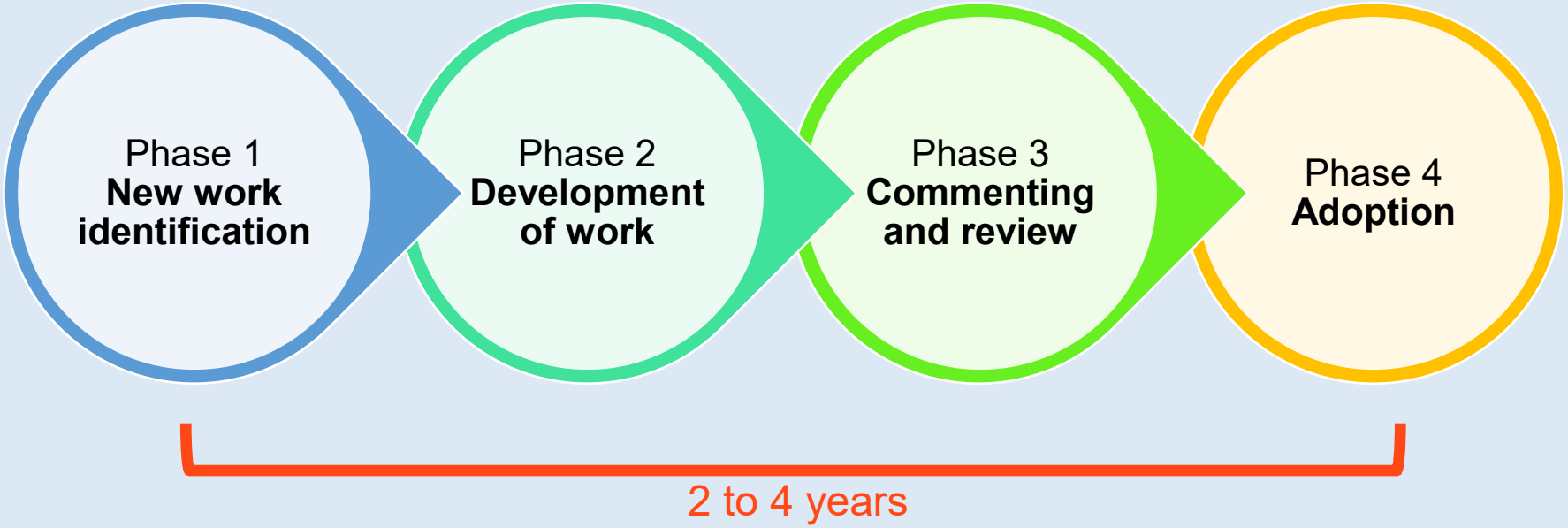
Aquatic Animal Commission

- Oversees amendments to the Aquatic Code and the Aquatic Manual
- Oversee the work of relevant ad hoc Groups
- Proposes the designation of Reference Centres relevant to aquatic animal health and monitors their performance

Biological Standards Commission

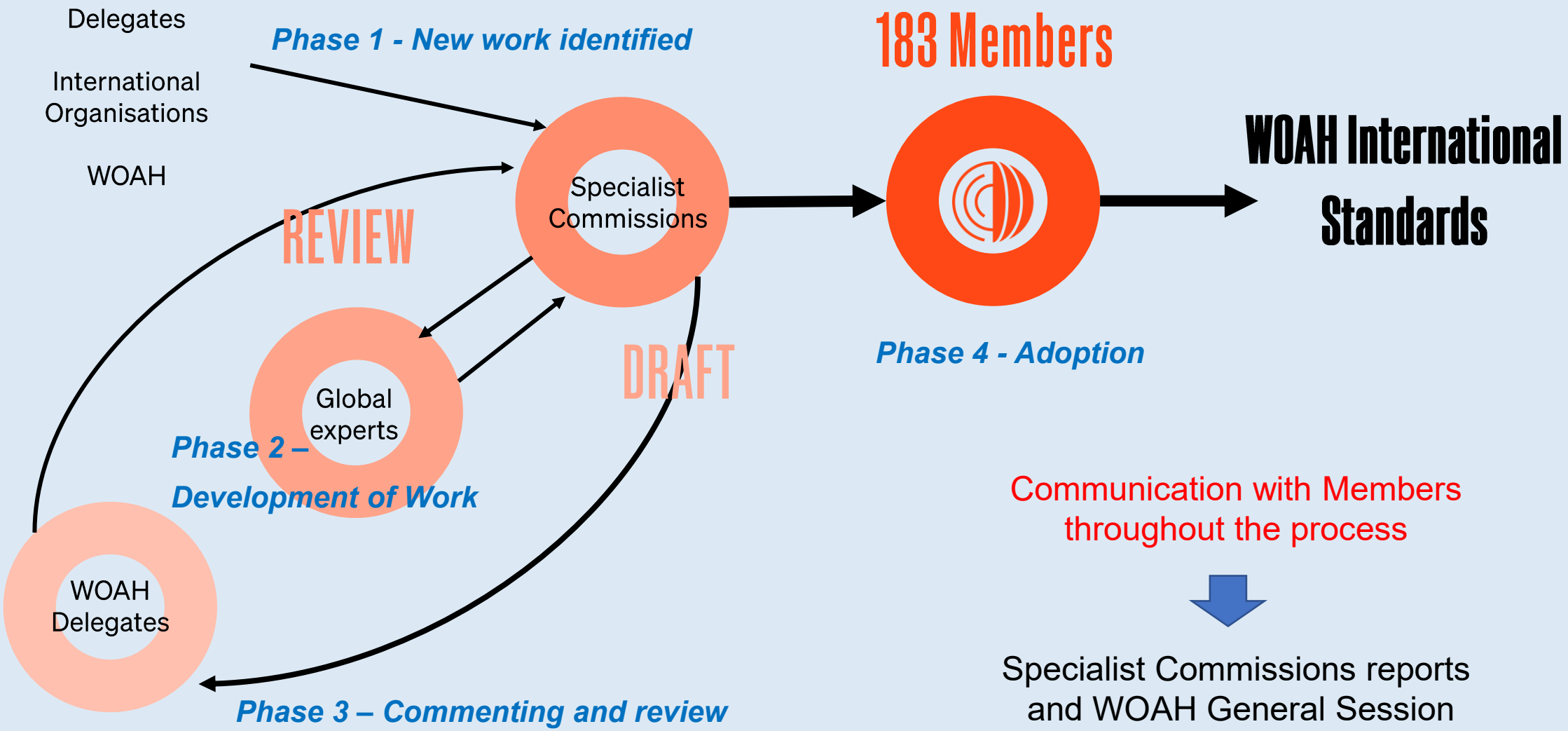
- Oversees amendments to the Terrestrial Manual
- Proposes the designation of Reference Centres relevant to terrestrial animal health and monitors their performance
- Provides technical advice to the Code Commission, where relevant

Standard-setting process



A transparent process to ensure that WOAH International Standards address Members needs and are developed based in the latest science and taking into consideration the different contexts among Members to enable implementation.

How are WOAH standards developed?



Communication with Members throughout the process

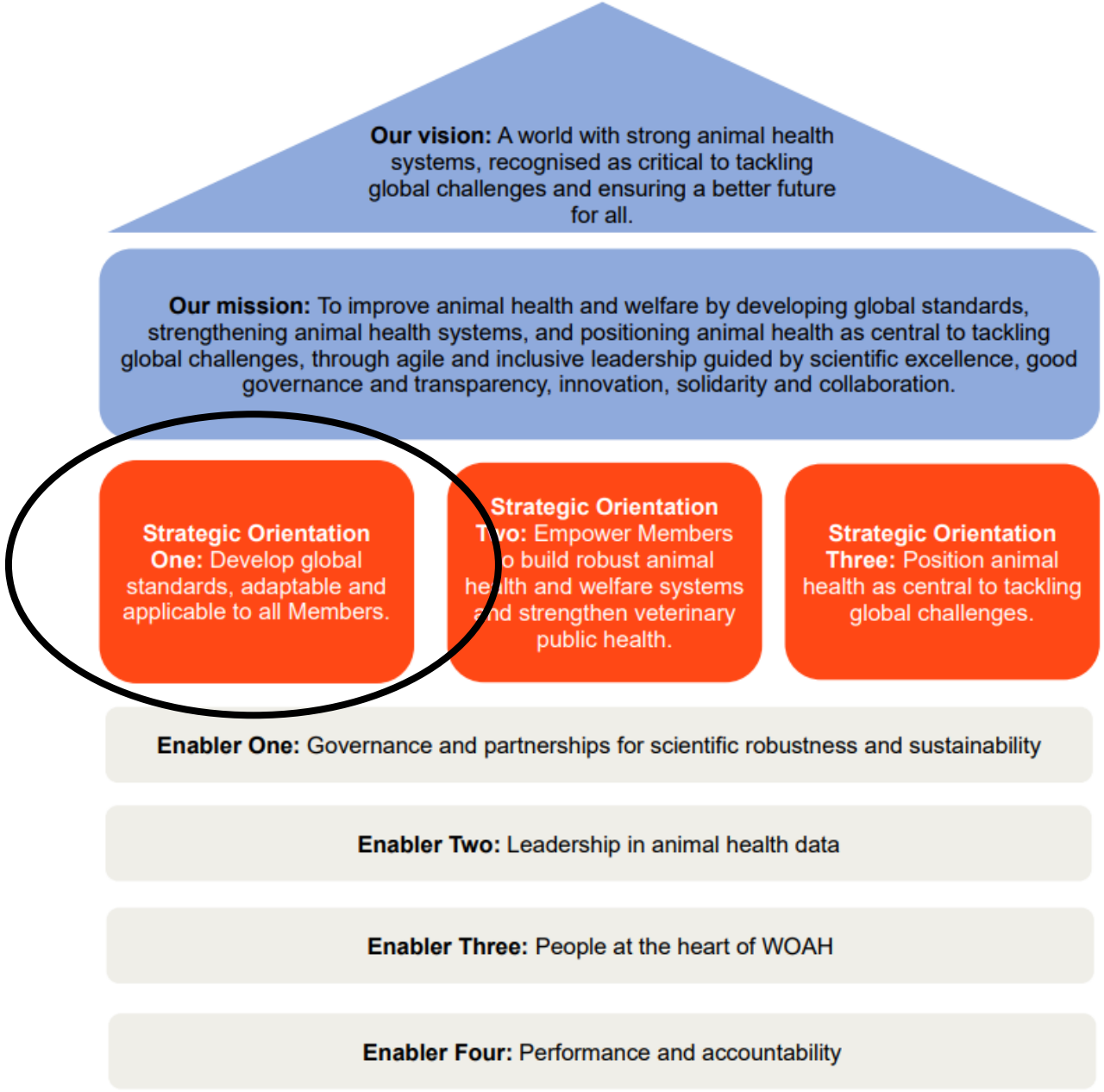
Specialist Commissions reports and WOAH General Session



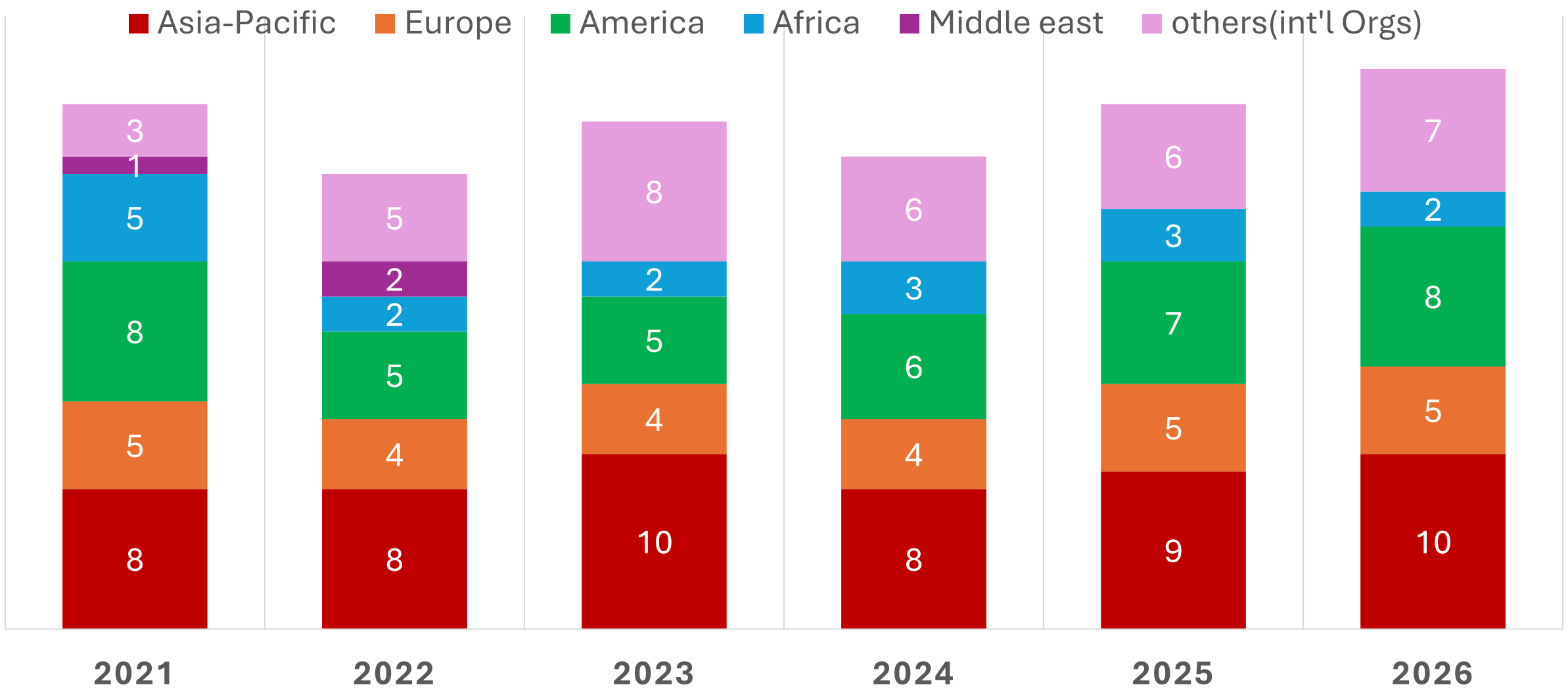
Member commenting

WOAH Eighth Strategic Plan (2027-2031)

*** Reinforce Member participation in the standard-setting process and enhance understanding of barriers to implementation*

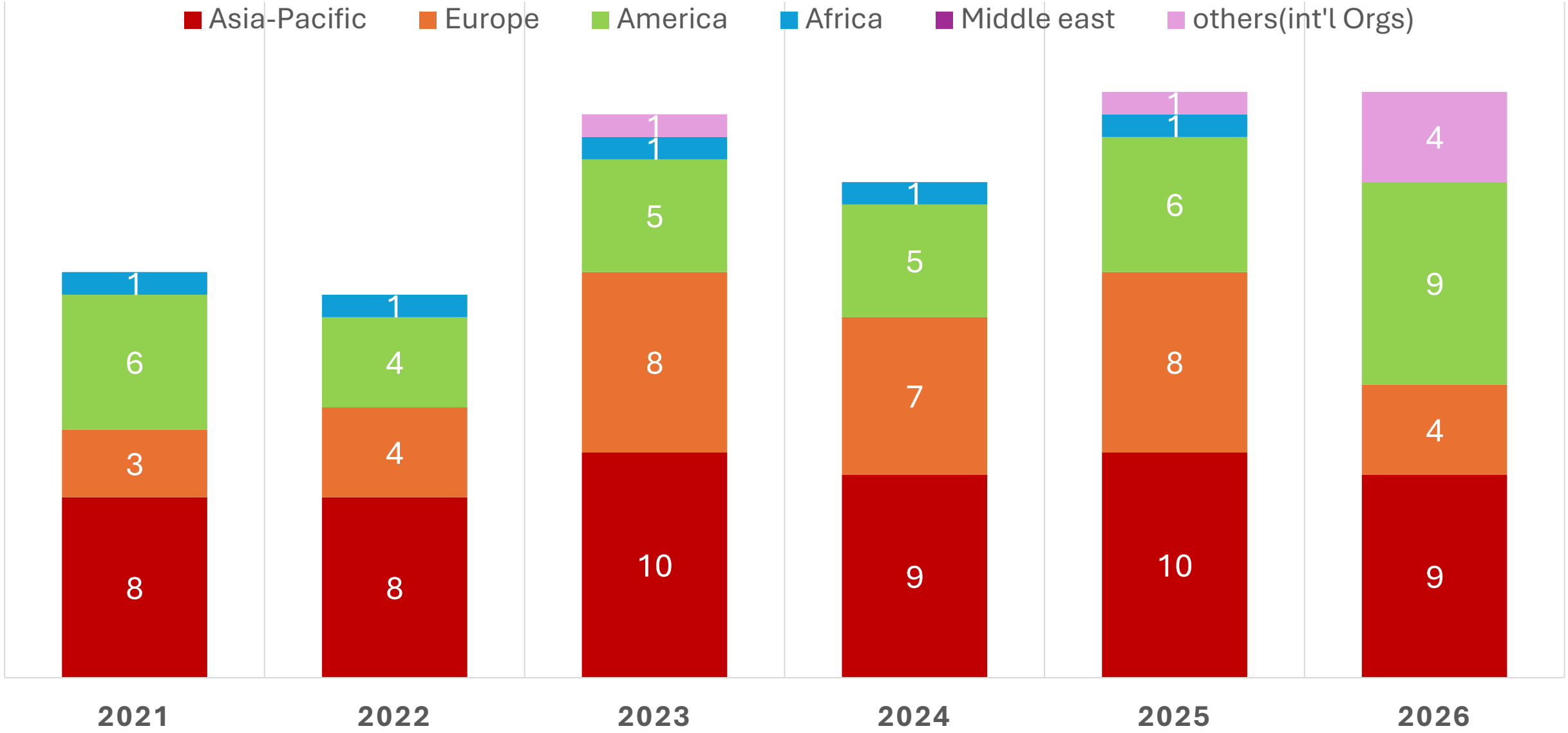


Number of Members that submitted comments on TAHC (2021 – 2026)



**Disclaimer: EU counted as one

Numbers of member submitted comments on AAHC (2021 – 2026)



**Disclaimer: EU counted as one

Terrestrial Animal Health Code of Interest by Regions (# Members commented, Sept 26)

Terrestrial Animal Health Code	Chapter	Total	Asia Pacific	America	Europe	Africa	Int'l groups
Notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information	**1.1.**	**11**	4	3	4		
Procedures for official recognition of animal health status, endorsement of an official control programme, and publication of a self-declaration of animal health status, by WOAH	**1.6.**	**8**	3	1	4		
Emergency management	**3.X.**	**11**	5	3	3		
Defining, establishing and maintaining populations and subpopulations of animals	**4.4.**	**9**	4	4	1		
Application of zoning	**4.Y.**	**9**	4	4	1		
Introduction to recommendations for international veterinary certification and export and import procedures	**5.X.**	**9**	5	2	2		
Animal welfare during transport	**7.2.**	**16**	6	5	3	1	1
Animal welfare at the time of killing for purposes other than slaughter	**7.6.**	**18**	8	4	4		2
Infection with foot and mouth disease virus	**8.8.**	**10**	4	3	2		1
Infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza virus	**10.4.**	**16**	8	6	2		
Infection with Newcastle disease virus	**10.9.**	**9**	2	5	1		1
Infection with lumpy skin disease virus	**11.9.**	**11**	6	2	2		1
Infection with I-AB and I-C variants of Venezuelan equine encephalitis virus (Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis)	**12.11.**	**11**	2	5	2		2
Infection with sheeppox virus (Sheeppox) and goatpox virus (Goatpox)	**14.9.**	**10**	5	1	3		1

Other: Glossary, User's Guide, Work programme, etc.

Aquatic Animal Health Code of Interest by Regions (# Members commented, Sept 26)

Aquatic Animal Health Code	Chapter	Total	Asia Pacific	America	Europe	Int'l groups
Ornamental Aquatic Animal' deffinition	Glossary	1			1	
definition 'Compartment	Glossary	4	1	1	1	1
Notification of diseases, and provision of epidemiological information	1.1	12	5	4	2	1
Aquatic Animal Disease Surveillance	1.4.	13	4	5	2	2
Application of compartmentalisation	4.3.	14	7	4	3	
Principles for responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals	6.2.	12	4	4	2	2
Welfare of farmed fish	Section 7	6	1	1	3	1
Infection with Aphanomyces astaci (crayfish plague)	9.2.	1			1	
Infection with Gyrodactylus salaris	10.3.	1			1	
Infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus	10.4.	1			1	
Update viral names of pathogenic agents for WOAH listed diseases	Taxonomy	1			1	
Compartment free from [pathogen X]' of the disease-specific chapters	Model Article X.X.7.	6	3	2	1	
Introduction to recommendations for international aquatic animal health certification and export and import procedures	Chapter 5Y	8	2	3	2	1

Aquatic Manual of Interest by Regions (# Members commented, Sept 26)

Aquatic Manual	Chapter	Total	Asia Pacific	America	Europe	Int'l groups
Infection with Tilapia lake virus	2.3.X.	8	4	3	1	
Infection with spring viraemia of carp virus	2.3.9.	6	2	3	1	
Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa* Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*	2.4.2., 2.4.3.	3	2		1	
Infection with *Marteilia refringens*	2.4.4.	2	1		1	

Terrestrial Manual

None for Sep 2026, but in Feb 2026 received comments from:

- Africa: 1
- Asia-Pacific: 5
- Americas: 3
- Europe: 3
- Int'l groups: 1



Other developments

The Commissions are listening

Article 14.9.20.

Principles of surveillance for sheeppox and goatpox

Articles 14.9.20. to 14.9.22. define the principles and provide guidance on *surveillance* for sheeppox and goatpox, complementary to Chapter 1.4. and Chapter 1.5.

The purposes of *surveillance* may be the early detection of *cases*, the measurement and gathering of data for

Article 14.9.21.

Surveillance for early warning of sheeppox and goatpox

An ongoing *surveillance* programme for sheeppox and goatpox should be in place and be designed to detect the presence of *infection* with SPPV or *infection* with GTPV in the country, *zone* or *compartment* in a timely manner.

Article 14.9.22.

Surveillance for demonstrating freedom from sheeppox and goatpox

In addition to the provisions in Article 1.4.6., the following strategies may be used by Member Countries seeking to demonstrate freedom in accordance with Articles 14.9.3. and 14.9.6.

Article 14.9.23.

Prevention and control programmes for sheeppox and goatpox

This article describes important components of prevention and control programmes, complementary to Chapter 4.19. Important components of a prevention and control programme for sheeppox and goatpox include a combination of *biosecurity*, *stamping-out policy*, *animal traceability*, movement controls, *vaccination*, *surveillance* and *risk communication*. These programmes should be used when Member Countries wish to attain a free status from sheeppox and goatpox.

Prevention of sheeppox and goatpox relies on *biosecurity*, awareness programmes and movement controls undertaken in accordance with the *sanitary measures* recommended in this chapter. Member Countries may also apply a *vaccination* programme in accordance with Chapter 4.18. in areas of high risk. *Protection zones* in accordance with Article 4.4.6. may be established.

- *Laboratory* capacity: Member Countries are advised to have systems in place for the collection and submission of samples to a *laboratory* that performs diagnostic testing to confirm suspected *cases*.
- *Biosecurity:* SPPV and GTPV are stable for long periods of time in the environment and on fomites and therefore *biosecurity*, as well as cleaning and *disinfection* and safe disposal of dead animals, by-products and waste are important. *Biosecurity* should apply to all actors in the production chain including service providers ~~like~~ such as *veterinarians* and shearers.
- *Stamping-out policy:* a *stamping-out policy* including the *killing* of all susceptible animals in the *flock* or *epidemiological unit* is useful for the rapid control of sheeppox and goatpox. Member Countries may choose to implement a *stamping-out policy* that only involves the removal of selected animals such as clinical or in-contact animals which could assist in progressively reducing the prevalence of disease. Zoning and movement controls are important in instances where a *stamping-out policy* is applied. Compensation should be considered to facilitate compliance.
- Movement controls: movement controls of animals and *animal products* are important to stop direct and indirect transmission, in particular animals, as they present the highest risk of virus transmission. *Animal identification* in accordance with Chapter 4.2. and *animal traceability* should be in place to support the application of movement controls. Movement controls may also be applied as part of zoning in accordance with Chapter 4.4. Attention should be given to management of common grazing and transhumance practices which represent an important route of virus transmission

Request to provide fit-for-purpose guidance to Members to **achieve surveillance objectives** > expanded surveillance sections to include early warning, demonstration of freedom and vaccination monitoring

In response for standards to be more inclusive and provide measures for disease prevention and control > new article on **prevention and control programmes**





The Commissions are listening

To meet contemporary needs as raised by Members, expanding horizontal chapters





CHAPTER 4.10.

EMERGENCY DISEASE PREPAREDNESS

Article.4.10.1

Purpose

To describe the essential elements of an emergency *disease* preparedness framework which a *Competent Authority* should develop in accordance with country priorities and resources to ensure that *outbreaks* of important *aquatic animal diseases* can be rapidly identified and efficiently managed, and which will guide a country, *zone* or *compartment*, towards a suitable path to recovery.

CHAPTER 4.11.

DISEASE OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT

Article.4.11.1

Purpose

To provide recommendations concerning the actions which should be taken by the *Competent Authority* and the *Aquatic Animal Health Services* to manage the emergency response to suspicion or confirmation of the presence of an important *aquatic animal disease*, and activate its *contingency plans* as described in Chapter 4.10.

CHAPTER 4.18.

VACCINATION

Article.4.18.1

Introduction and objectives

Vaccination is intended to prevent and control the occurrence of a disease and reduce the transmission of the pathogenic agent. Ideally, vaccines should induce immunity that prevents *infection*. However, some vaccines may only prevent clinical signs, or reduce multiplication and shedding of the pathogenic agent.

Vaccination may contribute to improvement of *animal* and human health, *animal welfare*, agricultural sustainability and to reduction of the use of *antimicrobial agents* in *animals*.

B. DIAGNOSTIC TECHNIQUES

Table 1. Test methods available for the diagnosis of Aujeszky's disease and their purpose

Method	Purpose					
	Population freedom from infection[a]	Individual animal freedom from infection prior to movement[b]	Contribute to eradication policies[c]	Confirmation of clinical cases[d]	Prevalence of infection – surveillance[e]	Immune status in individual animals or populations post-vaccination[f]
Detection and identification of the agent[a]						
Virus isolation	☐☐☐	☐☐☐	☐☐☐	☑☑☑	☐☐☐	☐☐☐
Real-time PCR	☐☐☐	☑☐☐	☑☐☐	☑☑☑	☑☐☐	☐☐☐
Detection of immune response						
Latex agglutination	☑☑☑	☑☑☑	☑☑☑	☑☐☐	☑☑☑	☑☑☐
gB ELISA	☑☑☑	☑☑☑	☑☑☑	☑☐☐	☑☑☑	☑☑☐
gE ELISA	☑☑☐	☑☑☐	☑☑☑	☑☐☐	☑☑☐	☑☑☐
VN	☑☐☐	☑☐☐	☑☐☐	☑☐☐	☑☐☐	☑☑☑

Key: ☑☑☑ = recommended for this purpose; ☑☑☐ = recommended but has limitations;
☑☐☐ = suitable in very limited circumstances; ☐☐☐ = not appropriate for this purpose.
PCR = polymerase chain reaction; ELISA = enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay; VN = virus neutralisation.
[a] A combination of agent identification methods applied on the same clinical sample is recommended.
[a] See Appendix 1 of this chapter for justification table for the scores given to the tests for this purpose.
[b] See Appendix 2 of this chapter for justification table for the scores given to the tests for this purpose.
[c] See Appendix 3 of this chapter for justification table for the scores given to the tests for this purpose.
[d] See Appendix 4 of this chapter for justification table for the scores given to the tests for this purpose.
[e] See Appendix 5 of this chapter for justification table for the scores given to the tests for this purpose.
[f] See Appendix 6 of this chapter for justification table for the scores given to the tests for this purpose.

Terrestrial Manual include test validation data to help Members/ readers find information on the selection of tests justifying the scores in Table 1

The Commissions are listening

Aquatic Manual introduced host susceptibility sections and standard table matrix for methods and validation for better alignment with Aquatic Code + susceptibility tables

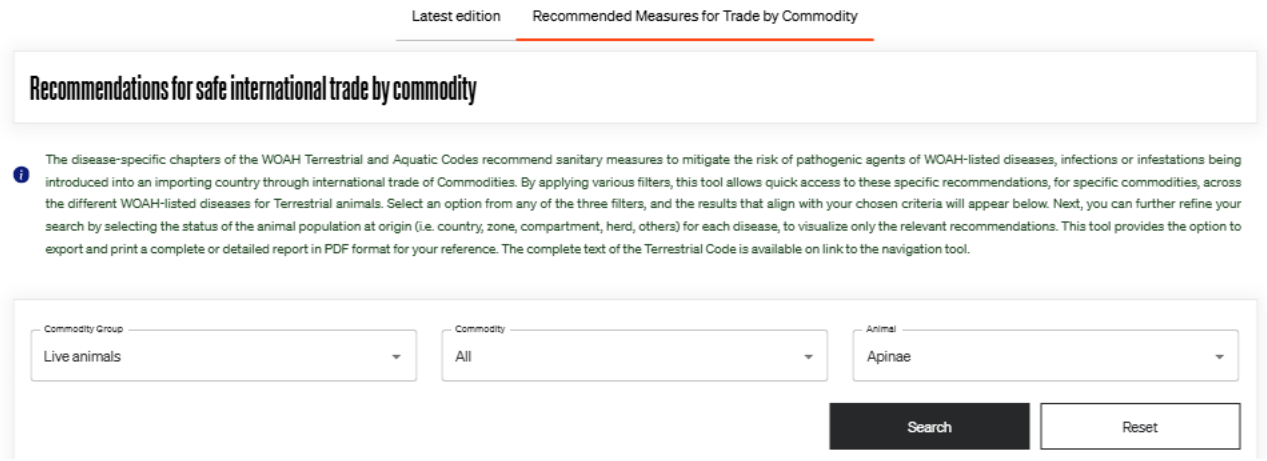
Table 4.1. WOAH recommended diagnostic methods and their level of validation for surveillance of apparently healthy animals and investigation of clinically affected animals

Method	A. Surveillance of apparently healthy animals				B. Presumptive diagnosis of clinically affected animals				C. Confirmatory diagnosis[1] of a suspect result from surveillance or presumptive diagnosis			
	Early life stages[2]	Juveniles[2]	Adults	LV	Early life stages[2]	Juveniles[2]	Adults	LV	Early life stages[2]	Juveniles[2]	Adults	LV
Wet mounts						+	+	NA				
Histopathology						+	+	NA				
Culture						+	+	NA				
Real-time PCR	++	++	++	1	++	++	++	1	++	++	++	1
Conventional PCR	+	+	+	1	++	++	++	1				
Conventional PCR followed by amplicon sequencing									+++	+++	+++	1
In-situ hybridisation												
Bioassay												
Immunohistochemistry												
Ab-ELISA												
Ag-ELISA												
Other methods[3]												

Standards online navigation tool



- Provides single access point for WOAH standards
- Latest adopted versions of Codes and Manuals
- Supports browsing and search by keyword
- Supports search by commodity *(for the moment, terrestrial only, stay tuned for aquatics)*



Take home message

1. Participate **actively** and **early** in standard-setting process, procedure here:

2. Comment on the work programme of the Specialist Commissions: submit requests on **priority** topics

3. Foster active **national consultation** (focal points, experts, key stakeholder groups) when preparing comments



Open to ideas – write to standards.dept@woah.org on how we can better support you in the standard setting process

Thank you

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