

Terms of Reference and working mechanism of the Regional Core Group (RCG) of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe¹

Establishment of the RCG

During the 27th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, held in Lisbon, Portugal, in September 2016, Member Countries of the Region discussed the revitalisation of the Task-Force, which was created at the 25th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission, held in September 2012, in Fleesensee, Germany. During the second meeting of the Task-Force, held in Riga, Latvia, in April 2017, it was decided to rename it Regional Core Group (RCG).

The Regional Core Group is a communication mechanism established in the region to support the Regional Commission activities. Its main task is to better link and coordinate the work of the Bureau of the Regional Commission for Europe (the Bureau), the Council and the OIE Regional and Sub-Regional Representations to better address regional needs and facilitate regional inputs to the work of the OIE. Communication and coordination between the OIE Regional and Sub-Regional Representations and the Members in the Region will be enhanced by the establishment of this RCG.

Functions of the RCG:

The Regional Core Group mainly aims:

- To support the Bureau in specific areas of their responsibilities in accordance with the OIE Basic Texts and this ToRs;
- To act as a bridge between the OIE, its institutional governing bodies (Council and Bureau) and the Members of the Region to inform on relevant OIE issues; stimulate active participation of the region in OIE events and related activities, notably the biennial conferences of the OIE Regional Commissions, the annual OIE General Session, the annual meetings of the Regional Commission during the General Session and the Regional GF-TADs meetings; provide feedback to the region on issues of significance related to the OIE; collate and present input from the region to relevant OIE Forums and meetings;
- To improve regional participation in the OIE standard setting process for selected chapters of OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes (Codes) and Manuals of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial and Aquatic Animals (Manuals) of particular interest to the region and promote their adoption by the OIE World Assembly of Delegates. The RCG may help to facilitate regional common positions on

¹ Adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe during 29th Regional Conference, 9-10 November 2020

key areas of mutual regional interest and propose to support the adoption of these chapters on behalf of the 53 OIE Member Countries of Europe during the OIE World Assembly of Delegates. The mechanism for regional participation in OIE standard setting process is presented in Annex;

- To raise high-level authorities' awareness of OIE activities and the importance of active participation;
- To lead the regional contribution to the scientific expertise of the OIE. The RCG will prepare, based on the proposals received from the Members, a list of experts suitable to be proposed as candidates for the Specialist Commissions, Working Groups or *ad hoc* Groups and provide it to the OIE Regional Commission for Europe for final validation before submission to the OIE;
- To promote active formal and informal communication among all Member Countries of the region and international/regional organisations, using a regional website with a dedicated webpage for the RCG, regional conferences, *ad hoc* meetings, focal points seminars, social media, etc.

Regional Work Plan Framework

In order to better support the coordination of activities in the region, the OIE Regional Commission for Europe (through the Regional Core Group) will establish a work plan to guide prioritisation of activities within the Region, aligned to the OIE 7th Strategic Plan.

The Regional Work Plan Framework for the period 2021-2026, in compliance with the OIE-7th Strategic Plan, must be approved by the OIE Regional Commission for Europe and the following should be considered:

- The Regional Work Plan Framework aims at supporting the Bureau of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe in complying with its functions, as described in the OIE Basic Texts.
- It should cover OIE activities, including those supported by partners such as EC, EuFMD, REMESA, and FAO.
- The OIE Regional- and Sub-Regional Representations will support the Regional Commission in the implementation and follow up of the activities.

Composition and functioning of the RCG

Members of the RCG, OIE Delegates of Member Country (or their representatives), will be selected ensuring geographical balance. It is recommended to have five members of non-EU Member Countries and four from EU Member Countries. RCG Members should communicate regularly with the other OIE Member Countries in their geographical areas. The Members of the Bureau are *de facto* members of the RCG. The Members of the OIE Council representing the Region should be Members of the RCG and take part in its meetings. Delegates, other than the Members of the Bureau and the Regional Members of the Council, that are part of the RCG are selected during the meetings of the Regional Commission during the General Session, at the same time of the selection of Delegates to

be proposed for election, by the World Assembly, of the Members of the Bureau of the Regional Commission and the regional Members of the Council. They are selected for a period of 3 years, renewable.

The President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe is the chairperson of the RCG.

The European Commission and the representatives of the OIE Regional and Sub-Regional offices are invited to take part as observers.

The staff of the OIE Regional Representation based in Moscow acts as the secretariat of the RCG.

The RCG will hold two physical meetings prior to the General Session, hosted by one of the RCG members on a rotating basis. One Meeting will take place in December and a second one in April. A third meeting will be organised during the OIE General Session, prior to the meeting of the Regional Commission, to validate relevant positions, materials and coordinate activities during adoption of new standards. When necessary, the RCG can meet by e-mail or teleconference to discuss and provide inputs to the Regional Commission, the Regional- and Sub-Regional Representations and to the members of OIE Council of the Region.

The secretariat of the RCG will be in charge, upon agreement with the chair of the RCG, of organising all administrative matters pertaining to the RCG meetings including preparing draft minutes of meetings.

The working language in the RCG meetings is English, with simultaneous Russian interpretation when funding is available. All relevant documents will be made available in English and will be translated in Russian as needed. Alternatively, OIE technical and administrative staff from the Regional- and Sub-Regional Representations will provide *ad hoc* consecutive interpretation and translation into Russian as needed during RCG meetings.

Annex – Description of the mechanism for participation in the OIE Standard Setting Process by the Region of Europe, under facilitation of the Regional Core Group

