

**Development of a framework to facilitate e-veterinary certification
for international trade on the basis of a single window system
(Project STDF/PG/609)**



On 19th and 20th July 2018, the OIE hosted the first meeting of the Steering Committee on the project “Development of a framework to facilitate e-veterinary certification for international trade on the basis of a single window system”, funded by the Standards and WTO Trade Development Facility (STDF). The project is being implemented by the OIE on behalf of the five applicant countries Cambodia, Nigeria, Paraguay, Swaziland, Zimbabwe.

The overall goal of this project is to assist developing countries by facilitating their understanding and potential use of e-veterinary certification to better engage in international trade of animals and animal products.

Increasing interest in the development of **electronic veterinary certification** (e-veterinary certification) was supported by several interventions from OIE members at the General Session in the past few years including the five applicant countries Cambodia, Nigeria, Paraguay, Swaziland, Zimbabwe.

Sharing experiences, terminologies and concepts of e-veterinary certification, could be the basis for facilitating the future development of a versatile e-veterinary certification scheme for use in a single window system with recommendations to Veterinary Authorities, the OIE and donor communities.

That is why the OIE established a Reference Group which includes other interested Member countries who wished to be kept informed of the progress and could provide additional information to support the activities of the Project.

The Reference Group consists of the applicant Members Countries and additional Member Countries interested in e-veterinary certification (Australia, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, New-Zealand, Singapore, The Netherlands, United-Kingdom, USA as well as the European Union).

The Steering Committee consists of six experts of the Reference Group (Australia, Japan, United-Kingdom, Paraguay, Nigeria, Malaysia) and five experts (including the OIE) on e-certification in SPS areas or trade facilitation from relevant international organisations (World Customs Organisation, UN/CEFACT, World Bank, FAOⁱ) and the European Union as an associate member.

The meeting of the Steering Committee was chaired by Dr Matthew Stone, Deputy Director General of International Standards and Science. He highlighted that the overall goal of the Project was to focus on the veterinary domain; but e-certification is a multi-disciplinary area therefore it needs to consider also the concept of single window; plant health and food safety; and better liaison between relevant competent authorities;

Dr Stone drew the Committee's attention to the expected outputs of the Project:

- 1) Identify the drivers and the challenges for e-veterinary certification
- 2) Description of basic features of currently operating systems
- 3) Analysis of e-certification in other SPS areas
- 4) Recommendations to:
 - Veterinary authorities
 - OIE and partners
 - Possible donors

The first day of the meeting was dedicated to presentations from the International Organisations that provided a useful overview to their work on e-certification and single window environment at international level. The discussions were focused on the challenges and opportunities of the development and implementation of e-certification and single window at national and international level in the context of trade facilitation.

The second day was dedicated to exploring in detail the activities required to support the implementation of the project which will include self-assessment by several countries of their current situation and a more detailed scan and analysis of existing work undertaken by other international organisations (including Codex and IPPC) in relation to sanitary and phytosanitary certification.

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ⁱ Including Codex and IPPC