I am pleased to introduce the first newsletter of the OIE Observatory, a project to strengthen the implementation of OIE International Standards by Member Countries. Collecting and analysing data related to the use of OIE Standards can help understand how standards are implemented and how countries can be better assisted.

Supported by the G20 Agriculture Ministers at a meeting in Argentina, in July 2018, the OIE Observatory is expected to contribute to the strengthening of international harmonisation of national sanitary rules.

For such an ambitious project, the engagement of Member Countries and key stakeholders will be essential to ensure its success. To that end, the design phase of the project involves a specific collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the expertise of a Reference Group composed of Member Countries, Regional economic communities and partner International Organisations.

A specific collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

To explore the potential solutions for the design of the Observatory, the OIE signed, in June 2018, a partnership with OECD, specifically the Directorate for Public Governance. As part of its expertise in international regulatory cooperation, the OECD is in the process of conducting a study that will provide an analysis of key features of implementation of OIE standards and, as well as a review of the existing mechanisms supporting the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of OIE standards. Based on this, the OECD will propose recommendations for the design of the Observatory. The final report is expected to be published in early 2020.

The OIE Observatory project was presented at the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Partnership of International Organisations (IOs) for effective international rule-making, on 10 April 2019. During this meeting, OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría launched the Brochure: “The Contribution of International Organisations to a Rule-Based International System: Key results from the partnership of international organisations for effective international rulemaking”, which includes results of the IO Partnership’s work since 2014 on the quality of international rulemaking.

The OIE’s participation in this work has provided a very good opportunity for the OIE to learn from the experiences of other IOs. In particular, the IO Partnership’s work has highlighted that: “while IOs collect a wide range of information relevant to the implementation of their normative instruments, this information is mostly used to assess members’ assistance needs or promote the use of the instruments, rarely this information serves to evaluate the performance of the instruments themselves and whether they achieve their objectives. However, this kind of performance evaluation could be a useful step to improve these instruments over time.”

A multi-phased approach

Currently, the Observatory project is still a concept. Thus, the key question is: how can this idea be transformed into an operational reality? The OIE has developed a pathway for achieving this based on a multi-phased approach.

Argentina, Australia, Canada, France, Paraguay, Spain and United Kingdom have provided financial support to the OIE for the Observatory project. Thank you for your generosity!

With the support of the OIE Council and the Reference Group, the next steps of the design phase will be to focus on the key modalities on how the Observatory will operate:

1. The design and description of data collection
2. The description of the methodology and the analytical needs
3. The description of the outputs
4. The responsibilities and the role of the key actors (OIE bodies, Member Countries, experts)

Learn more about the Observatory project: [http://www.oie.int/en/standard-setting/overview/oie-observatory/](http://www.oie.int/en/standard-setting/overview/oie-observatory/)