

THE APPLICATION OF ZONING AND COMPARTMENTALISATION FOR FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE CONTROL

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The establishment and maintenance of a disease free status in a territory can be difficult, especially for diseases where entry is difficult to control through national boundary measures, like in the case of foot-and mouth disease virus. This difficulty is especially important in countries which have a large expansion of land and huge regional differences in animal production. In this situation, there may be benefits in establishing and maintaining a sub-population with distinct health status, within a territory separated by natural or artificial geographical barriers - or when pertinent - by the application of appropriate management practices.

According to Chapter 4.3 (volume I) of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, Zoning and compartmentalisation are procedures that may be implemented with a view to defining sub-populations of distinct health status within a territory for the purposes of disease control and/or international trade. While zoning is applied to an animal sub-population defined primarily on a geographical basis (using natural, artificial or legal boundaries), compartmentalisation applies to an animal sub-population defined primarily by management and husbandry practices related to biosecurity.

The containment zone is a particular application of the zoning concept in the event of a limited outbreak of a specific disease, within an otherwise free zone or country, for the purposes of minimizing the impact on the entire zone or country.

Zoning and compartmentalisation can also assist disease control. While zoning encourages more efficient use of resources within certain parts of a country, compartmentalisation allows the functional separation of a sub-population from other domestic or wild animals through biosecurity measures, in circumstances where a zone is not able. Following a disease outbreak, the use of compartmentalisation may allow a Member to take advantage of epidemiological links among sub-populations or common practices related to biosecurity, despite diverse geographical locations, facilitating disease control and/or the continuation of trade.

Zoning and compartmentalisation cannot be applied to all diseases but separate requirements will be developed for each disease for which the application of zoning or compartmentalisation is considered appropriate. The concept of compartmentalisation has recently been proposed for the Chapter on foot-and-mouth disease in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*.

