

# WOAH International Standards

Dr Etienne Bonbon  
President of the Terrestrial  
Animal Health Standards  
Commission

Regional Conference for the Middle East  
Larnaka, 25 November 2025



World  
Organisation  
for Animal  
Health

Organisation  
mondiale  
de la santé  
animale

Organización  
Mundial  
de Sanidad  
Animal



# Agenda

1. Introduction to WOAH Standards
2. WOAH Standard-Setting Process
3. Submitting comments
4. Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission – Sept. 2025 report
5. Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission – Sept. 2025 report



# 1. Introduction to WOA Standards

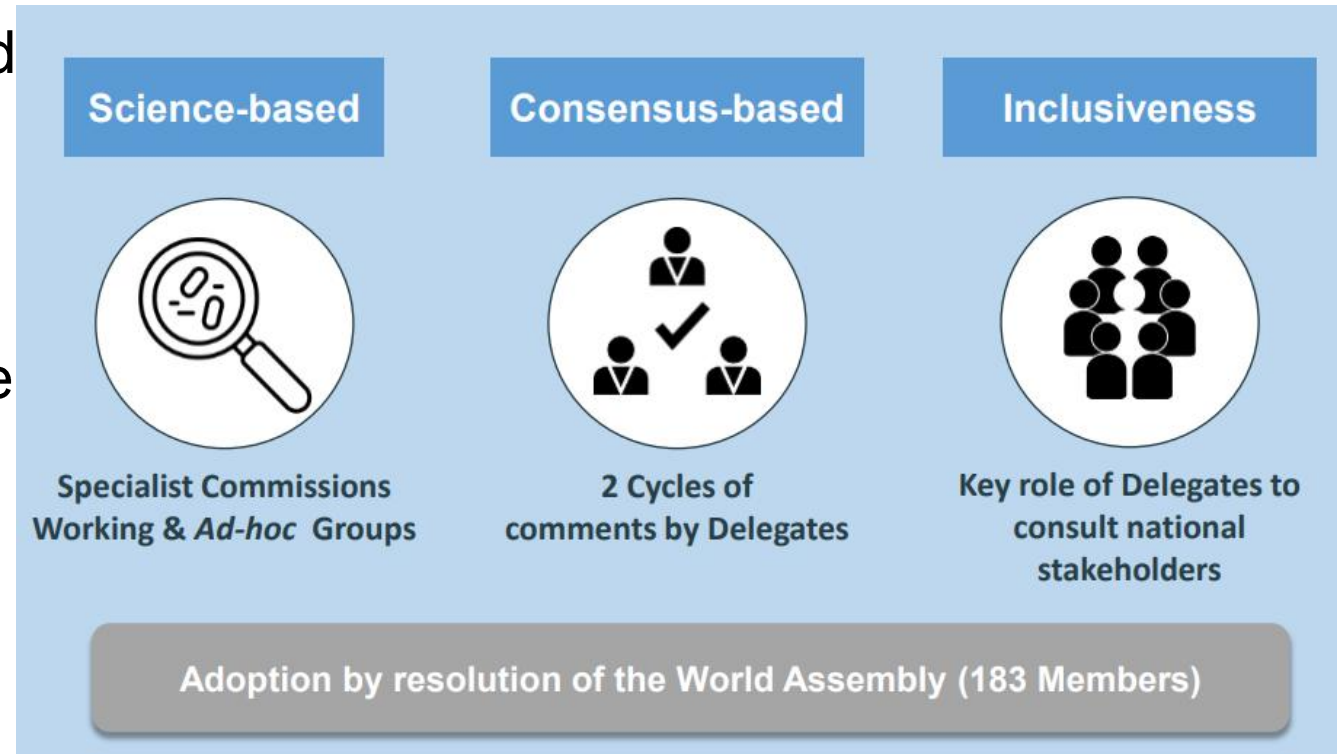


## WOAH international standards, the basis for ...





- Relevant Specialist Commission oversees development of new or revised standards.
- WOH convenes scientific expertise with subject-matter experts, e.g. *ad hoc* Groups, Working Groups, Reference Centre experts.
- Standard-setting process is a Member driven process.
- New or revised standards are adopted by consensus by the World Assembly of Delegates.





## Specialist Commissions

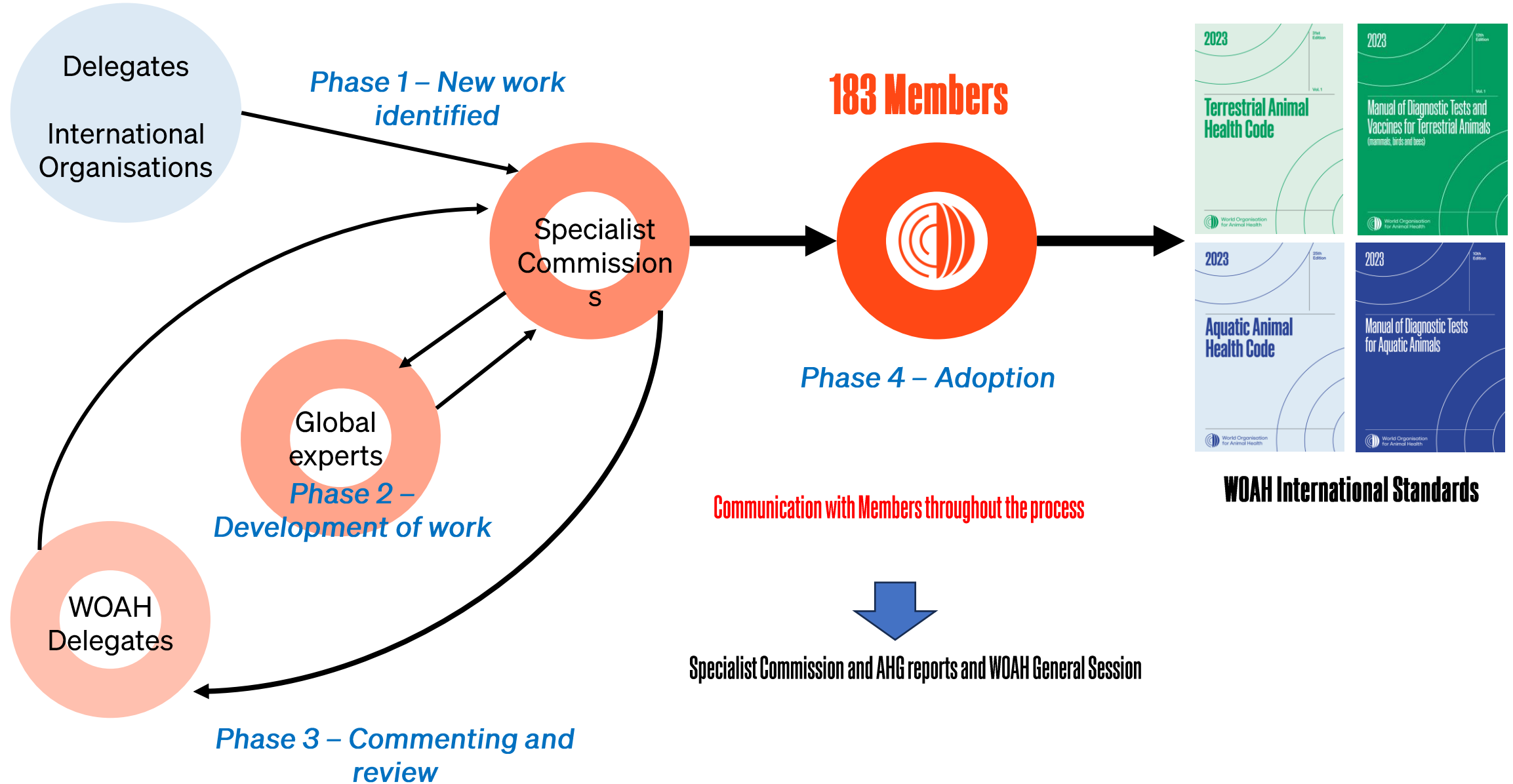
<b>Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission</b> <b>Code Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oversees amendments to the <i>Terrestrial Code</i></li><li>• Oversees the work of relevant ad hoc Groups and Working Groups</li><li>• Advises the Director General on issues relevant to its work</li></ul>
<b>Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases</b> <b>Scientific Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assesses Member dossiers for the recognition of official animal health status and endorsement of official control programmes</li><li>• Supports disease-specific strategies for disease surveillance, prevention and control</li><li>• Oversees the work of relevant ad hoc Groups and Working Groups</li><li>• Provides technical advice to the Code Commission, where relevant</li></ul>
<b>Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission</b> <b>Aquatic Animal Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oversees amendments to the Aquatic Code and the Aquatic Manual</li><li>• Oversee the work of relevant ad hoc Groups</li><li>• Proposes the designation of Reference Centres relevant to aquatic animal health and monitors their performance</li></ul>
<b>Biological Standards Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oversees amendments to the Terrestrial Manual</li><li>• Proposes the designation of Reference Centres relevant to terrestrial animal health and monitors their performance</li><li>• Provides technical advice to the Code Commission, where relevant</li></ul>



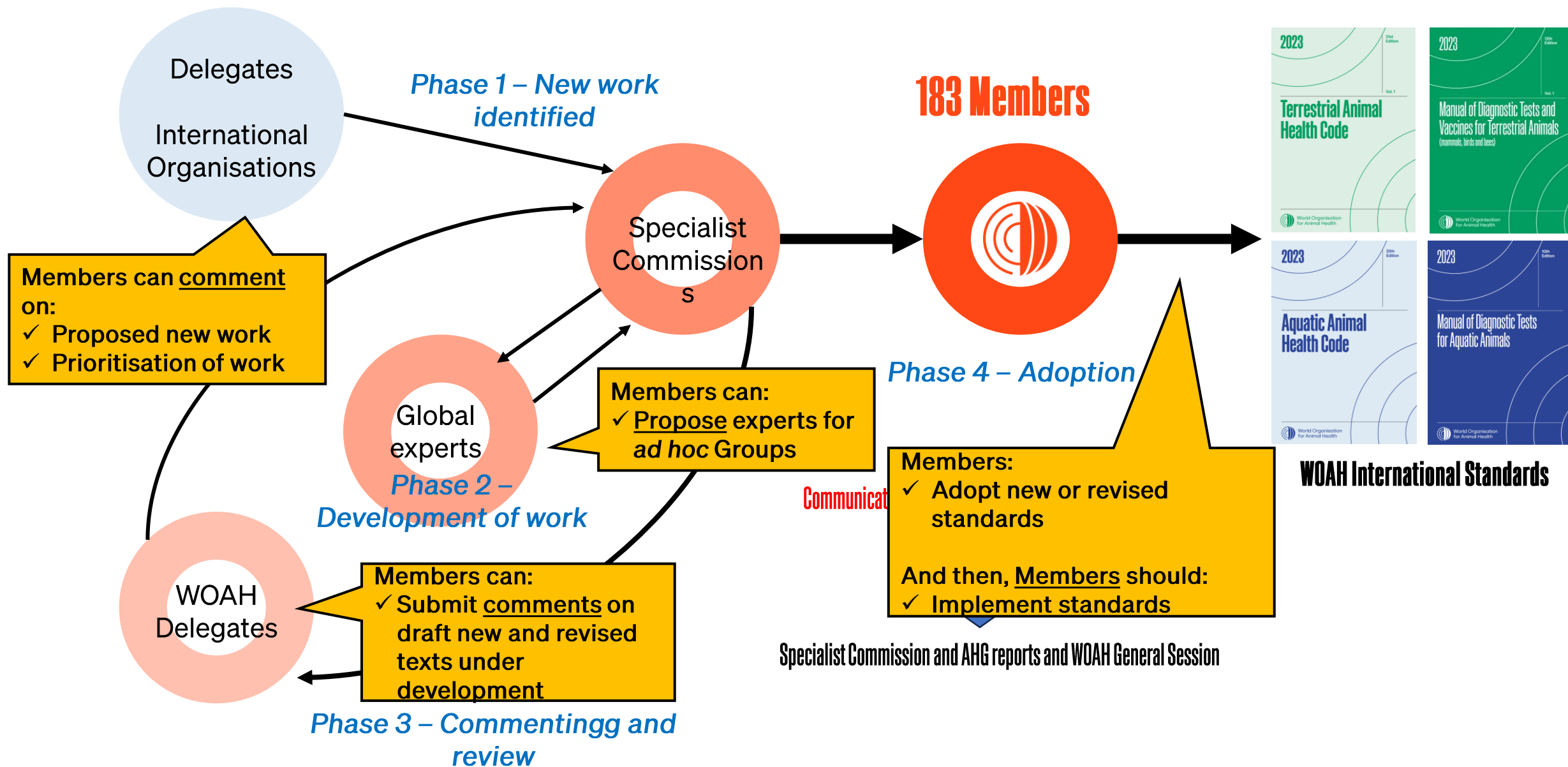
# 2. WOA Standard-Setting Process

Question:

How confident do you feel in your understanding of, and ability to engage with, the WOA Standard Setting process?









# How Members and IOs can participate in the process?

## New requests

## Members & IOs

- Request new work, including a rationale and supporting evidence;
- Provide opinions on the prioritisation of work items;
- Provide relevant information or scientific evidence for consideration during development of relevant item.

## Commenting on proposed new or revised texts

## Members & IOs

- Propose additional or alternative science-based amendments, including a rationale and supporting evidence;
- Submit evidence-based concerns on potential challenges for the implementation of the proposed texts (e.g. national or regional level, production systems), including alternative amendments;
- Propose editorial amendments to improve the understanding or the meaning (in any of the three languages).

## Adoption

## Members

- Members can make interventions at the General Session to request changes to proposed amendments, express support or objections;
- If consensus is reached, the World Assembly of Delegates adopts the new or revised texts;
- If consensus is not reached, proposed text can return to the Commission for further work or exceptionally adoption could be subject to a vote.



# 3. Submitting comments

Question:

What are the main reasons why your country rarely comments on WOAHS standards?

## On draft texts

1. To propose additional or alternative science-based provisions to enrich or complement the proposed texts
2. To express evidence-based concerns on potential challenges for the implementation of the proposed texts under specific conditions or contexts (e.g. Members, regions, species); if possible, to provide a proposal for improvement of the text
3. To provide new or different science that contradicts the proposed texts (which has not been previously addressed by Commissions or experts)
4. To point out wording issues that could compromise the understanding or the meaning of the texts (in any of the three languages)

## On the work programme

1. To express the need for new work to be undertaken
2. To express the need to prioritise existing work items
3. To express points of interest for potential future work, as well as available information, evidence or expertise that could be taken into consideration for the development of the work





1. Through the WOAHA Delegate or Organisations with which WOAHA has a Cooperative Agreement
2. Follow the [Guide for WOAHA Members and International Organisations on submitting comments during the process for the elaboration of WOAHA International Standards](#)
  - In **Word format** (not in pdf format) and clearly noting the relevant annex and/or item of the report
  - Inserted within the annexes or report, under the text for comment
  - Propose **specific text changes**, supported by a [rationale](#) including scientific references, if relevant
  - Proposed deletions should be shown using 'strikethrough' and additions using 'double underline' (please do not use the automatic 'track-changes' function provided by Word processing software)
  - The AAHSC strongly encourages Members to provide feedback on its work programme, including submitting **justified** proposals!



# 4. Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission September 2025 Meeting Report



World  
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for Animal  
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Organisation  
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de la santé  
animale

Organización  
Mundial  
de Sanidad  
Animal



# Members of TAHSC (2024-2027)



**Dr Etienne Bonbon**  
(France)  
**President**



**Dr Salah Hamami**  
(Tunisia)  
**Member**



**Dr Gaston Funes**  
(Argentina)  
**Vice-President**



**Dr John Stratton**  
(Australia)  
**Member**



**Dr Kiyokazu Murai**  
(Japan)  
**Vice-President**



**Dr Caroline Dubé**  
(Canada)  
**Member**

## At September 2025 meeting

- **22** texts circulated for comments
  - **12** texts will be proposed for adoption in GS, May 2026
- **6** new work items added

## State of play

- Work programme currently includes **62** work items
- **50** items are ongoing (prioritisation order 1 or 2)
- Many items are in coordination with other Specialist Commissions



## Report includes:

- Annexes presenting new and revised texts in the *Code* for comments or to be proposed for adoption in the upcoming General Session
- The Commission's rationale for amendments
- The Commission's work programme
- Updates on other related activities
- The comments considered and the Commission's responses
  - All comments and responses of annexes are presented as Annex 3 only for ease of reference
  - Recommend to refer to Annex 3 in conjunction with Code Commission meeting report



# *Terrestrial Code* texts for comment



## 12 annexes

1. Glossary (Annex 5)
2. Diseases, infections and infestations by WOAHP (Chapter 1.3.) (Annex 6)
3. Biosecurity (new Chapter 4.X.) (Annex 7)
4. Measures and procedures applicable to the exportation, transit and importation of commodities (Chapters 5.4. to 5.6.) (Annex 8 to 10)
5. Border inspection posts and quarantine centres (Chapter 5.7.) (Annex 11)
6. Animal welfare during slaughter (Article 7.5.30. of Chapter 7.5.) (Annex 12)
7. Infection with foot and mouth disease virus (Articles 8.8.3., 8.8.4. and 8.8.8. of Chapter 8.8.) (Annex 13)
8. Infection with classical swine fever virus (Articles 15.2.3. and 15.2.5. of Chapter 15.2.) (Annex 14)
9. Infection with Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever virus (new Chapter 8.X.) (Annex 15)
10. Infection with avian metapneumovirus (Turkey rhinotracheitis and swollen head syndrome of chickens) (new Chapter 10.X.) (Annex 16)

## 9 annexes

1. Glossary (Annex 17)
2. 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 WOA. (Chapter 1.6.) (Annex 18)
3. Emergency management (new Chapter 3.X.) (Annex 19)
4. Infection with Japanese encephalitis virus (Japanese encephalitis) (Chapter 8.10.) (Annex 20)
5. Infection with *Francisella tularensis* (Tularemia) (Chapter 8.20.) (Annex 21)
6. Infection with Venezuelan equine encephalitis virus (Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis) (Chapter 12.11.) (Annex 22)
7. Infection with peste des ruminants virus (Chapter 14.7.) (Annex 23)
8. Infection with sheeppox virus (sheeppox) and goatpox virus (goatpox) (Chapter 14.9.) (Annex 24)
  - Clean version is available only for reference
9. Infection with lumpy skin disease virus (Chapter 11.9.) (Annex 25)



- Members submit comments on Code Commission's report and relevant annexes before **26 December 2025.**
- Next Meeting of the Code Commission 3-13 February 2026

Send comments to WOAHO Standards Department at **[TCC.Secretariat@woah.org](mailto:TCC.Secretariat@woah.org)**

# 5. Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission

## September 2025 Meeting Report

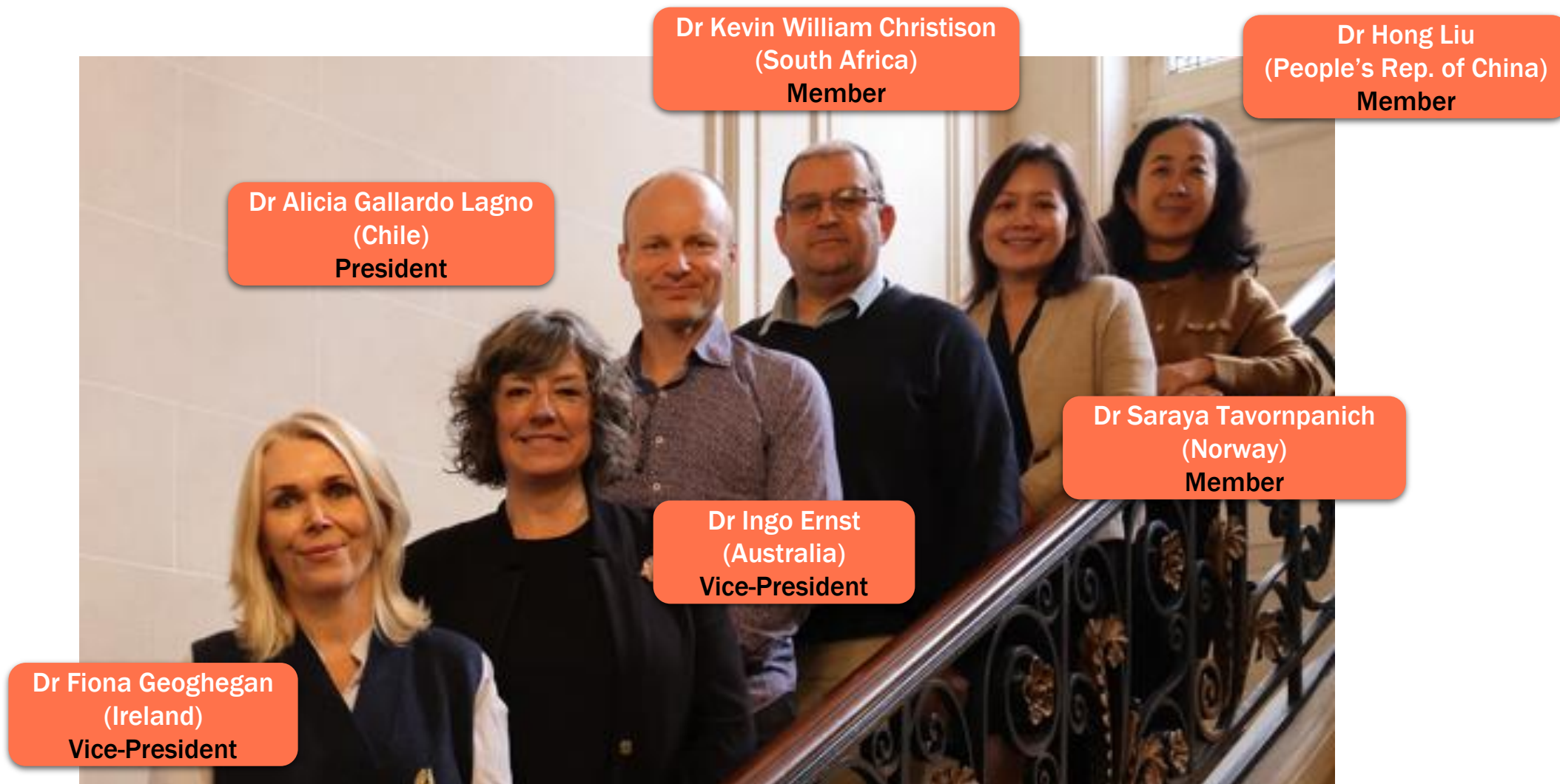






# Members of AAHSC (Term: 2024–2027)

23



Dr Kevin William Christison  
(South Africa)  
**Member**

Dr Hong Liu  
(People's Rep. of China)  
**Member**

Dr Alicia Gallardo Lagno  
(Chile)  
**President**

Dr Saraya Tavoranpanich  
(Norway)  
**Member**

Dr Ingo Ernst  
(Australia)  
**Vice-President**

Dr Fiona Geoghegan  
(Ireland)  
**Vice-President**



## Report includes:

- Annexes presenting new and revised texts from the *Aquatic Code* and *Aquatic Manual* for comment
- The Aquatic Animals Commission's rationale for amendments
- The Aquatic Animals Commission's work programme
- Updates on other related activities
- **NEW:** the comments considered and the Aquatic Animals Commission's responses to these comments
  - All comments and responses to comments are presented as one PDF file [Annex 3](#) for ease of reference
  - Recommend to refer to [Annex 3](#) in conjunction with the Aquatic Animals Commission's meeting report





# *Aquatic Code*Texts for comment



## Nine annexes

1. Glossary: Ornamental aquatic animals (**Annex 5**); compartment (**Annex 7**)
2. Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation' (**Annex 6**)
3. Chapter 4.7. 'Fallowing in aquaculture' (**Annex 8**)
4. Section 5. 'Trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification' (**Annex 9**)
5. Article 9.2.2. of Chapter 9.2. 'Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)' (**Annex 10**)
6. Article 10.3.5. and 10.3.6. of Chapter 10.3. 'Infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris*' (**Annex 11**)
7. Article 10.4.9. of Chapter 10.4. 'Infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus' (**Annex 12**)
8. Update to the viral names of pathogenic agents for WOAHL-listed diseases (**Annex 13**)



## Next steps

- Members submit comments on the Aquatic Animals Commission's report and relevant annexes before [5 January 2026](#)
- Next Meeting of the Aquatic Animals Commission [11–18 February 2026](#)

**Send comments to WOAH Standards Department at**  
**[aac.secretariat@woah.org](mailto:aac.secretariat@woah.org)**



# Some take-home messages (1)

Question:

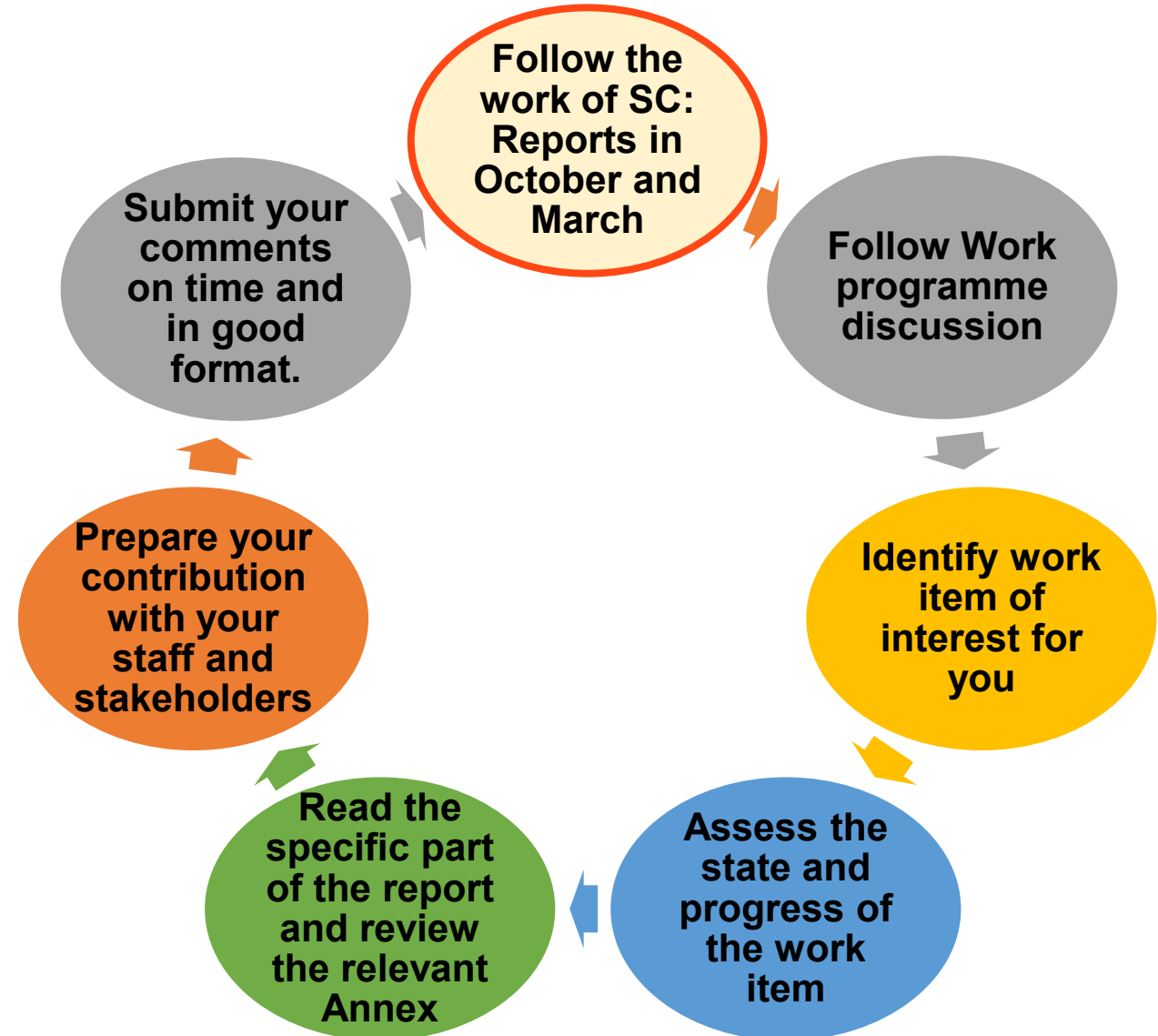
What would help your country participate more actively in the WOAHA standard setting process?



# Participation cycle

## Key points:

- Not all topics may be of the same interest
- Topics progress slowly but steadily
- Takes 2 to 4 years to adopt
- Intervene sooner rather than later
- All contributions help
- **Do not wait until the GS!**





# Where can I find information on the Standard Setting Process?

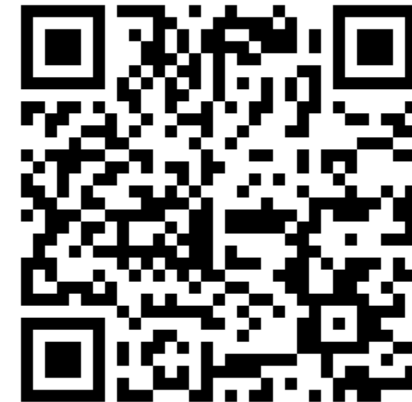
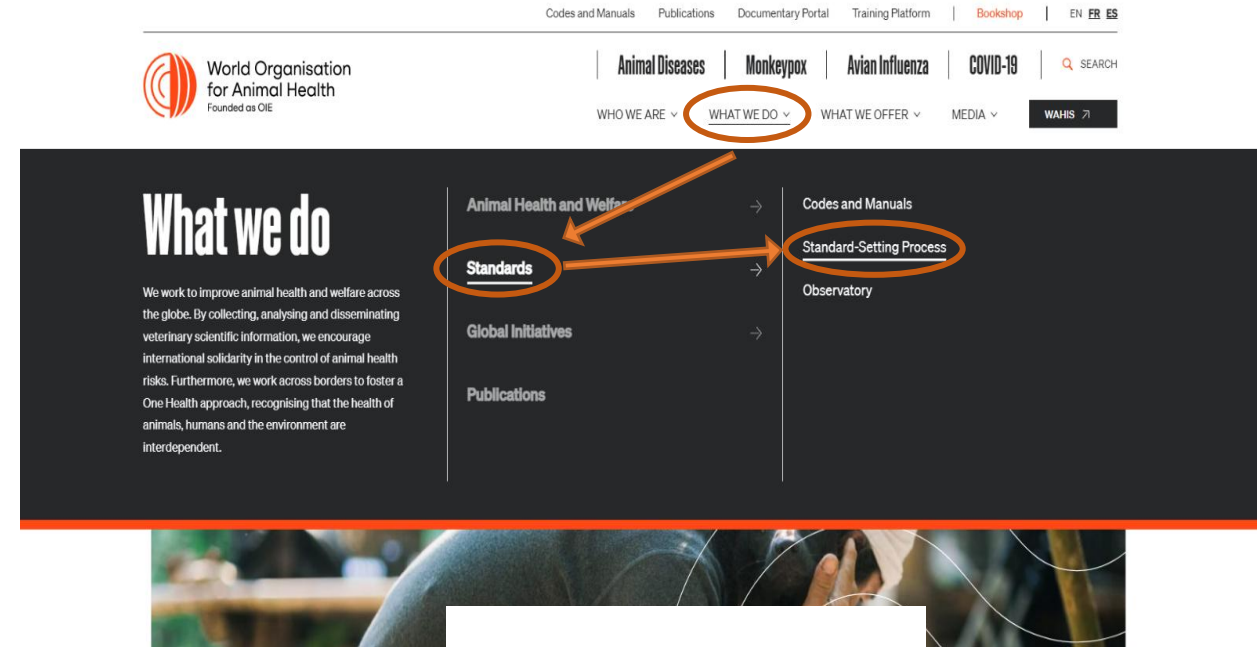
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## Only for WOAH Delegates: WOAH Delegates Website

- Report and annexes in MS Word Format
- Comments considered by Specialist Commissions and their responses (**for information**)

## Publicly available

- Report and annexes in PDF Format
- Comments considered by Specialist Commissions and their responses (**for information**)
  - started from Sep 2024 meeting
- Format easier to share







# Where can I find complementary information?

31

- The Specialist Commission reports often refer to topics discussed by other Specialist Commissions, Working Groups (WG) or *ad hoc* Groups (AHG).
- Members should read the report of the specific Specialist Commission in conjunction with these other reports.
- All reports are available on the WOAH Website.

## Specialists Commissions

The relevant *Specialist Commission* consider requests to develop new standards or review existing standards received from a range of stakeholders including from Members, partner international organisations, and its scientific network. These requests are reviewed, prioritised and included on its respective work plans.

### Calendar of the upcoming Specialist Commission meetings

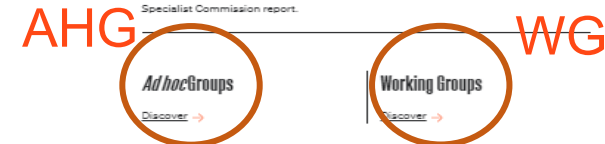
Commissions*	September 2022	February 2023
Terrestrial Code Commission	13-22	7-16
Biological Standards Commission	5-9	6-10
Scientific Commission	19-23	13-17
Aquatic Animals Commission	14-21	15-22

Projected dates of the next meetings of the four Specialist Commissions



## *Ad hoc* Groups and Working Groups

The *ad hoc* Groups and Working Groups may be requested to address specific topics to ensure that new or revised standards are based on the latest scientific evidence and knowledge. The views of the Members and partner international organisations are routinely sought through the circulation of draft and revised texts in the relevant Specialist Commission report.





# Some take-home messages (2)

Question:

After this presentation, how likely are you to participate or encourage your country to actively participate in the WOAHA standard setting process?

# Thank you Merci Gracias شكراً

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