October 2026

Workshop on "Towards Better Collaboration to Improve Cross-Regional Trade and Address Trade-Sensitive Disease Threats"

6-8th October 2026, Abhu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



Navigating Benchmarks: Practical Insights on applying WOAH Standards to Mobilize Southern African livestock animal trade (Turning compliance from a regulatory hurdle into a definitive competitive advantage).

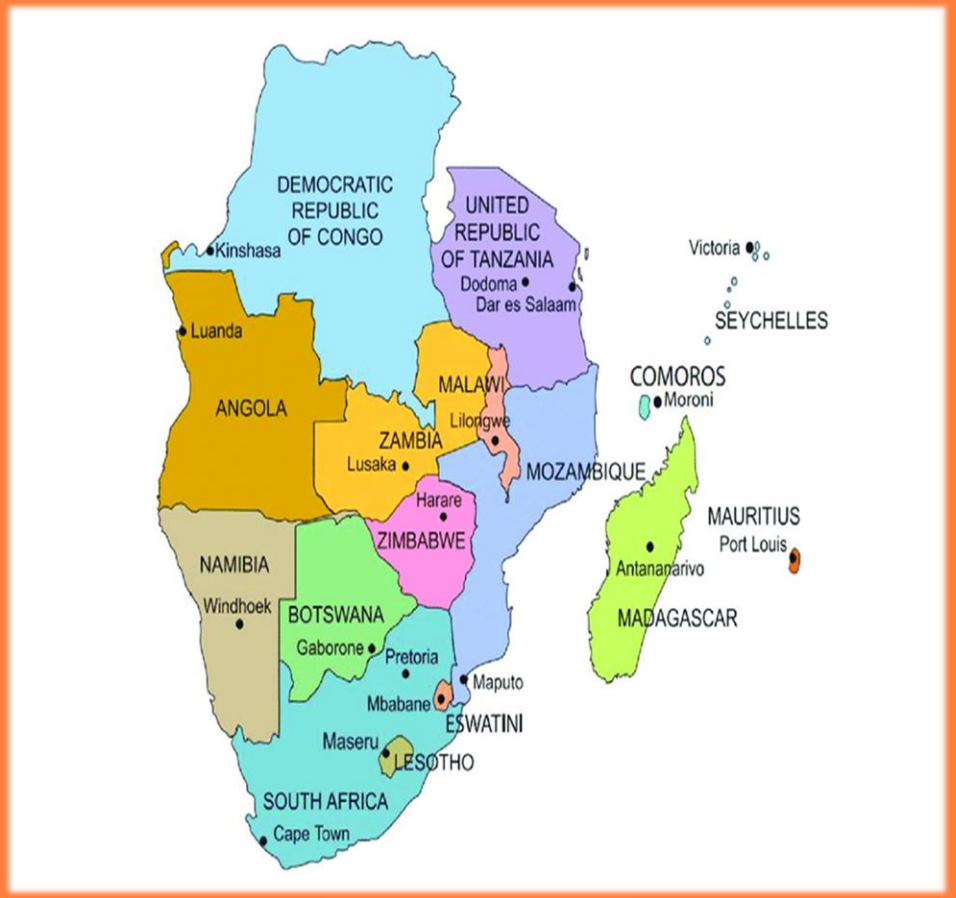
Presented by: Moetapele Letshwenyo,
Sub-Regional Representation for Southern Africa

Presentation Layout

- Importance of Livestock in southern Africa (used interchangeably with SADC region)
- WOAH Standards as a Backbone of Safe International Trade in Animals and Animal Products
- A Case in Point: FMD Control in Southern Africa
- Conclusion

Importance of Livestock In Southern Africa

- **diverse animal population** (livestock, wildlife, aquaculture, etc)
- Livestock constitute an **important natural resource**;
- < 60 % region's total **land area suitable** for livestock farming;
- Contributes significantly to **Food Security across SADC** region
- farm animals are a **source of food, skins, fertiliser, traction draught power, raw materials for industry**, etc..
- An estimated 75% out of the above livestock population is kept under **smallholder traditional farming systems.**
- **livestock populations** estimated at; 64m cattle,39m sheep, 38m goats, 7m pigs, 1m horses, & 380m poultry *(Source: SADC Website)*
- **Diseases presents one of the most important constraints** to sustainable livestock production and disrupts trade.
- WOAH Develops **standards on AH, AW and VPH** – important in disease prevention, control and ultimately safeguards trade in animals and animal products.
- For the purposes of this presentation Foot and Mouth Disease will be used as an example.



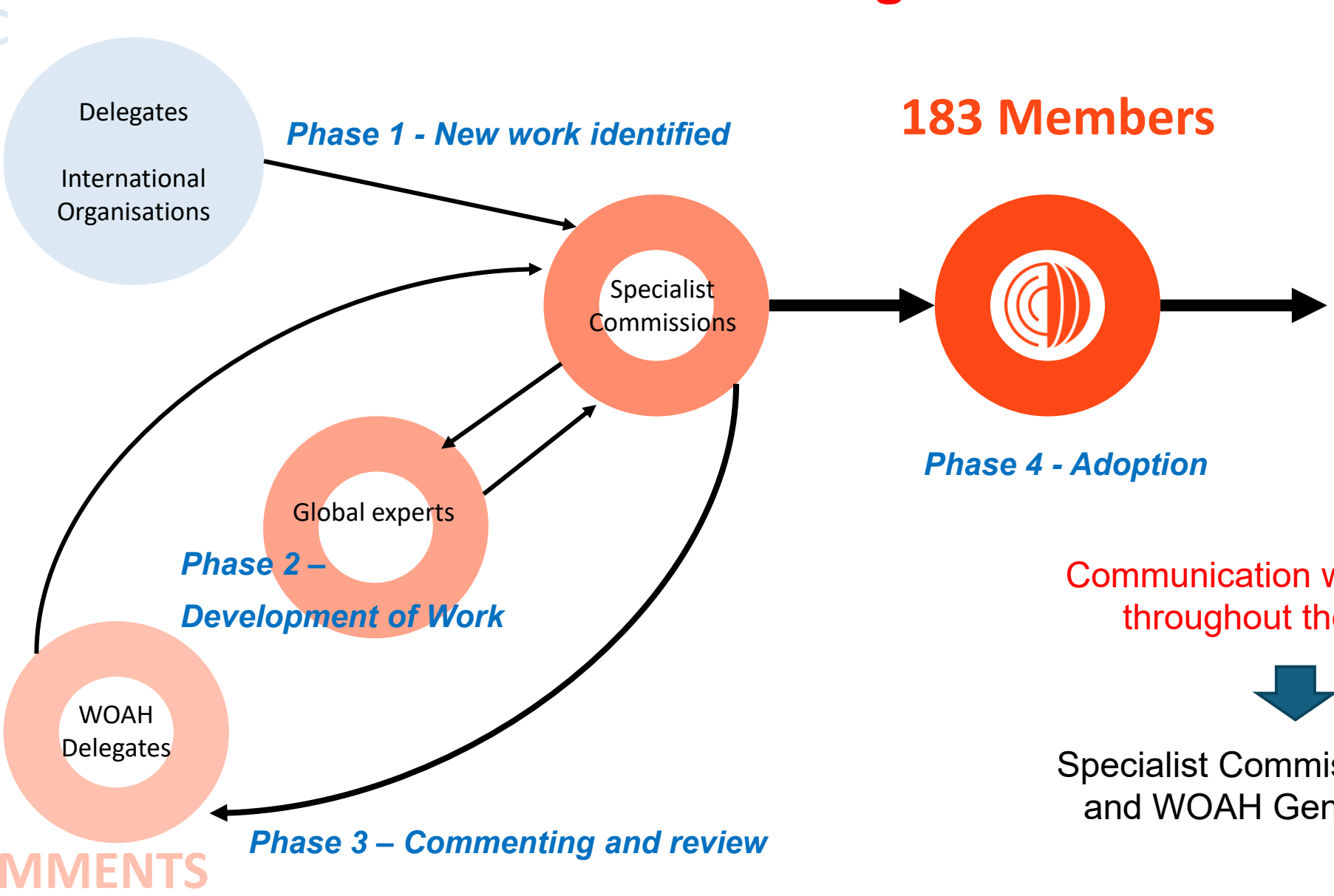
WOAH International Standards
(World Without International AH Standards – a Hypothetical Situation)

- Disease reporting would have been inconsistent.
- Veterinary services would have differed greatly between countries/territories – no consistency/harmonisation.
- Cross-border movement controls would have been weak or absent.
- Outbreaks of TADs would have spready wildly and disrupted trade.
- Trading partners would have often imposed unilateral restrictions based on general disease risk perception (subjective).
- **In essence before the development of official international AH standards,** livestock trade would have depended largely on ad hoc disease controls - creating uncertainty and frequent trade disruptions.

WOAH International Standards

- The ***Office Internationale Epizooties (OIE)***, and now the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) was formed in 1924 – to address these challenges in controlling animal disease by developing AH Standards.
- These Standards are the **internationally agreed, science-based** rules developed by WOAH and **approved by Members**, meant **to improve animal health, animal welfare, veterinary public health**, in order **to safeguard international trade in animals and animal products**
- They **improve transparency in disease reporting and harmonise animal health measures globally** – enabling countries to trade with greater confidence and certainty.
- Compliance to standards may be difficult – a ***"regulatory hurdle"***, but they are important for safeguarding international trade, with countries access lucrative markets globally – i.e. they offer "***competitive advantage"*** .
- They are recognised by the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** as the international reference standards for animal health and zoonoses under the SPS Agreement.

Standard Setting Process



Communication with Members throughout the process

Specialist Commissions reports and WOAH General Session

Detailed process available on WOAH Website

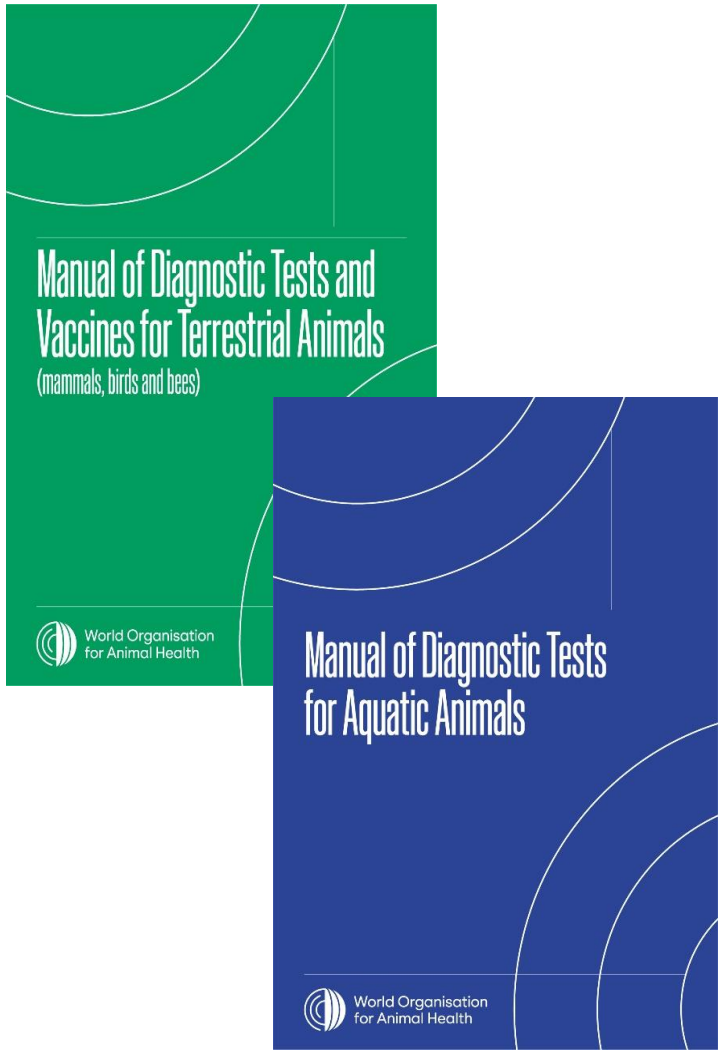
Publication of Standards

Access standards here:

Codes



Manuals



A Case of Foot and Mouth Disease Control in Southern Africa Botswana, Namibia and South Africa Examples), with special emphasis on Zoning.



FMD Control In Southern Africa

- **Integrated and complementary activities**
- **strategy mainly composed of movement control, surveillance, vaccination, public awareness, enabling legislation, biosecurity, traceability, etc**
- **Key to the strategy is the clear chain of command**
- **Done in accordance with WOAH standards/guidelines**

FMD Control In Southern Africa

- **surveillance** (Chap. 1.4 & Articles 8.8.40 - 42)
  - Objective – *early detection, rapid response*
  - Mainly Passive
  - by extension officers strategically deployed throughout the country
  - Facilitated by farmers, as they stay with animals most times
  - Facilitated by clear chain of command
  - *Active* surveillance targeted



- **movement control** (in accordance with relevant TAHC Articles)
  - Permit system (national and international), issued after inspection and sometimes testing of animals,.s
  - Monitored through check points at strategic areas.
  - Facilitated by extension officers strategically deployed throughout the country
  - Quarantine system



FMD Control In Southern Africa

- **Separation of susceptible from reservoir hosts (TAHC)**
  - Livestock management (Herding)
  - Land tenure system (reservoir hosts confined to game reserves)
  - Natural barriers
  - Cordon fences (maintained and patrolled)
  - Animal traceability system



- **Vaccination with good quality vaccine (Terrestrial Manual)**
  - Strategic vaccination (location, frequency, etc)
  - Trained vaccinators
  - Coordinated annual vaccination campaigns
    (military style moving from low to high risk areas)
  - Efficacious vaccines
  - FMD vaccine matching

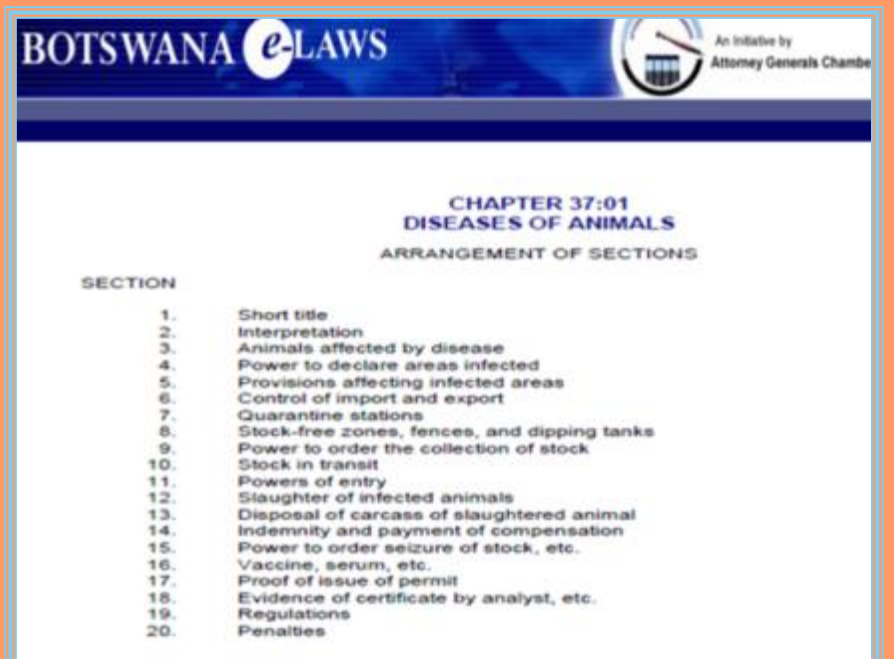


FMD Control In Southern Africa

- **Public awareness**
  - **Public education on disease control**
  - **Improves compliance from members of the public**



- **Legislation**
  - **For enforcement (last resort)**
  - **Diseases of Animals Act**



BOTSWANA e-LAWS

An initiative by Attorney Generals Chambe

CHAPTER 37:01
DISEASES OF ANIMALS

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

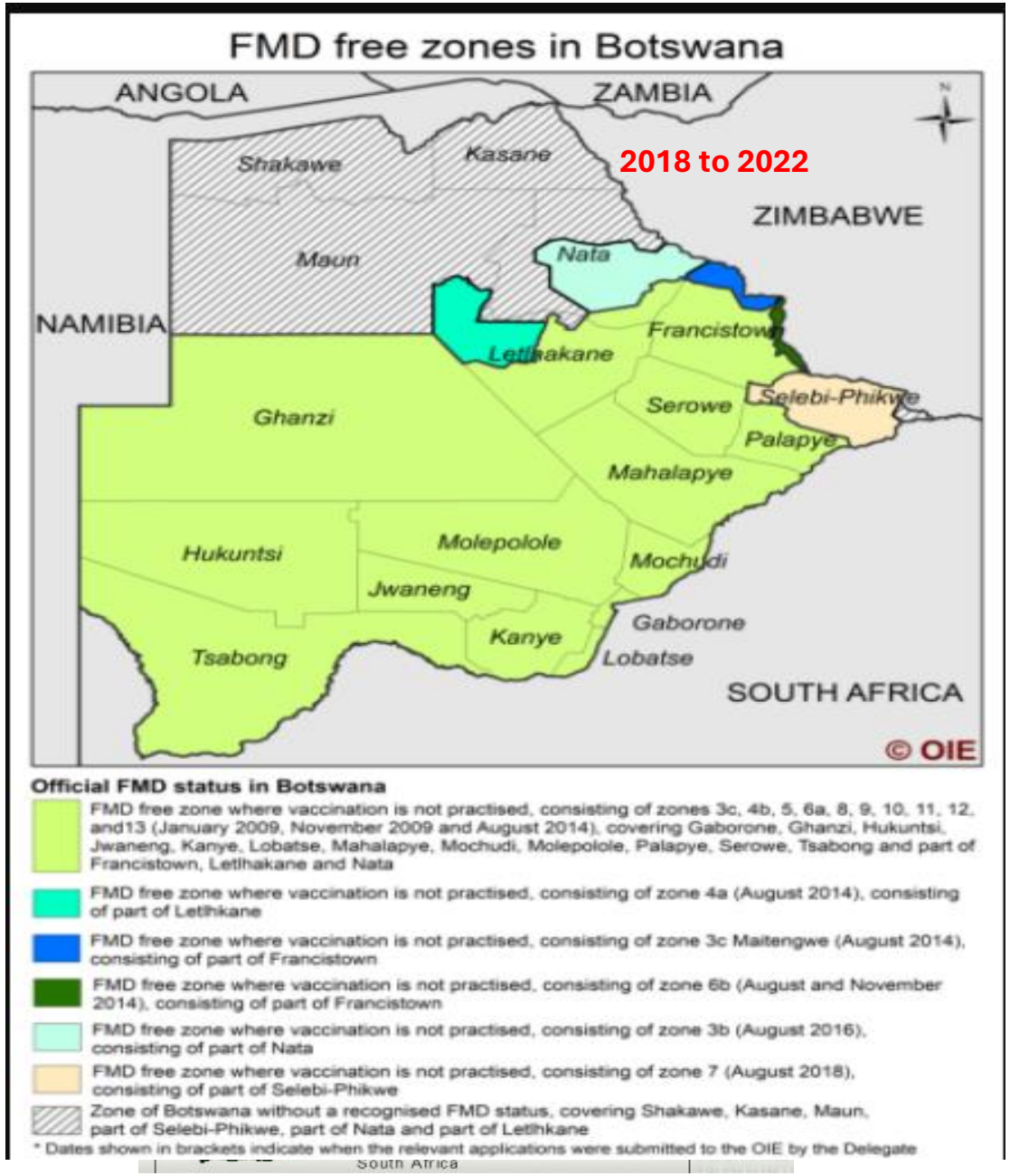
SECTION

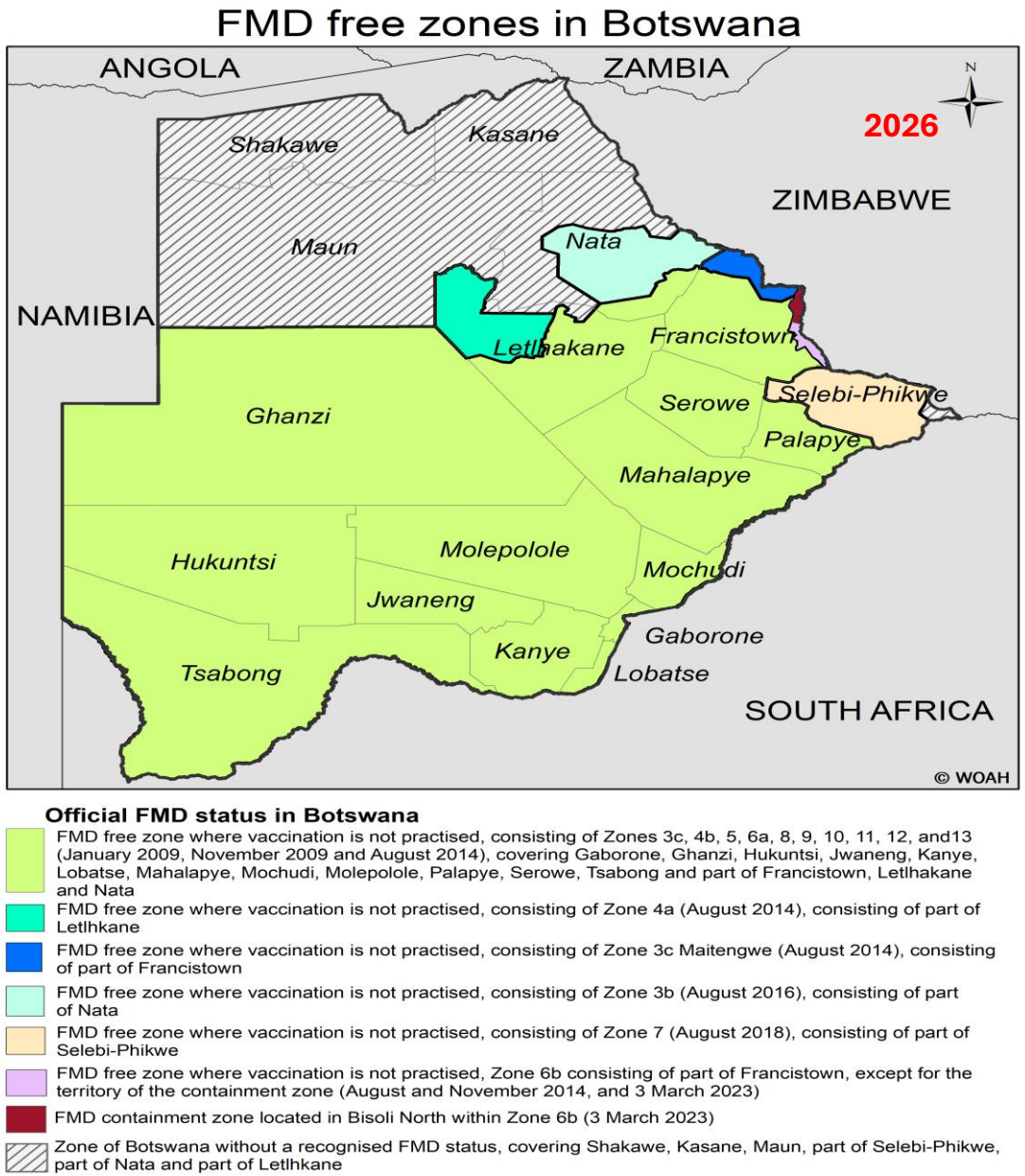
1. Short title
2. Interpretation
3. Animals affected by disease
4. Power to declare areas infected
5. Provisions affecting infected areas
6. Control of import and export
7. Quarantine stations
8. Stock-free zones, fences, and dipping tanks
9. Power to order the collection of stock
10. Stock in transit
11. Powers of entry
12. Slaughter of infected animals
13. Disposal of carcass of slaughtered animal
14. Indemnity and payment of compensation
15. Power to order seizure of stock, etc.
16. Vaccine, serum, etc.
17. Proof of issue of permit
18. Evidence of certificate by analyst, etc.
19. Regulations
20. Penalties

FMD Control In Southern Africa - Zoning

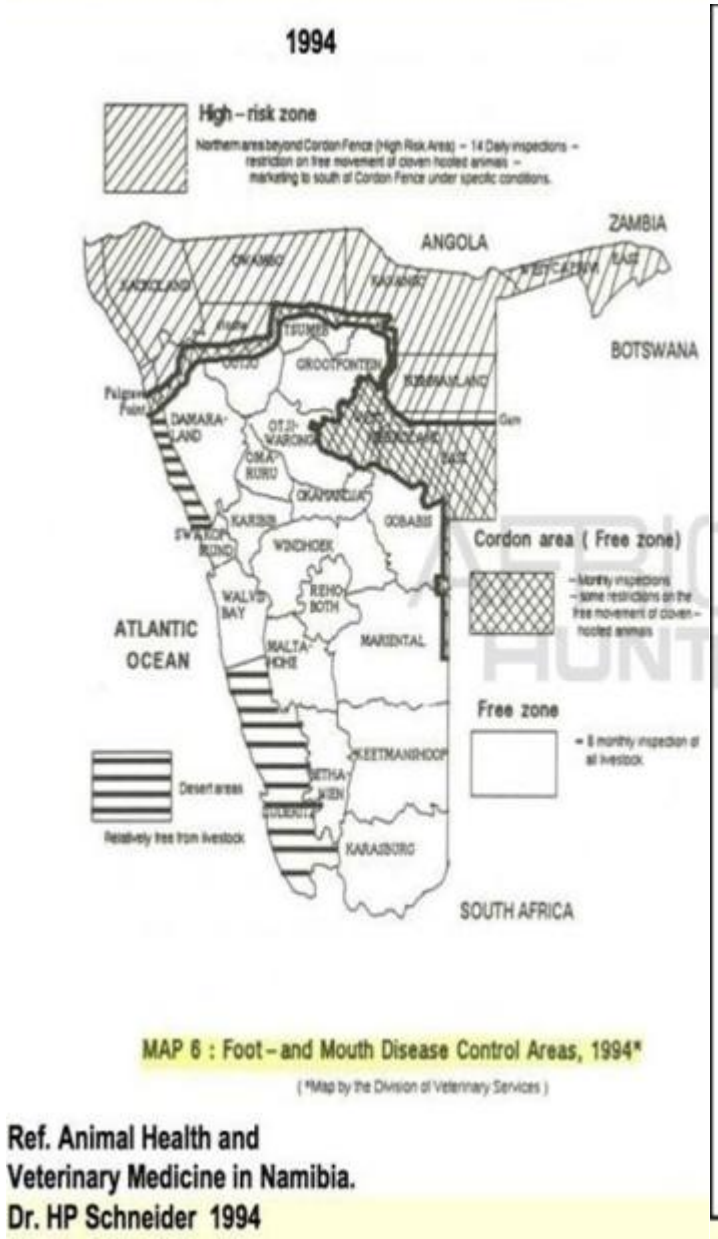
- Zonation (All 3 Countries)
- Protection Zone (e.g. Botswana)
- Containment Zone (e.g. Botswana)
- FMD Control Program (All 3 COuntries)
- Trade in Safe Commodities (All 3 Countries)

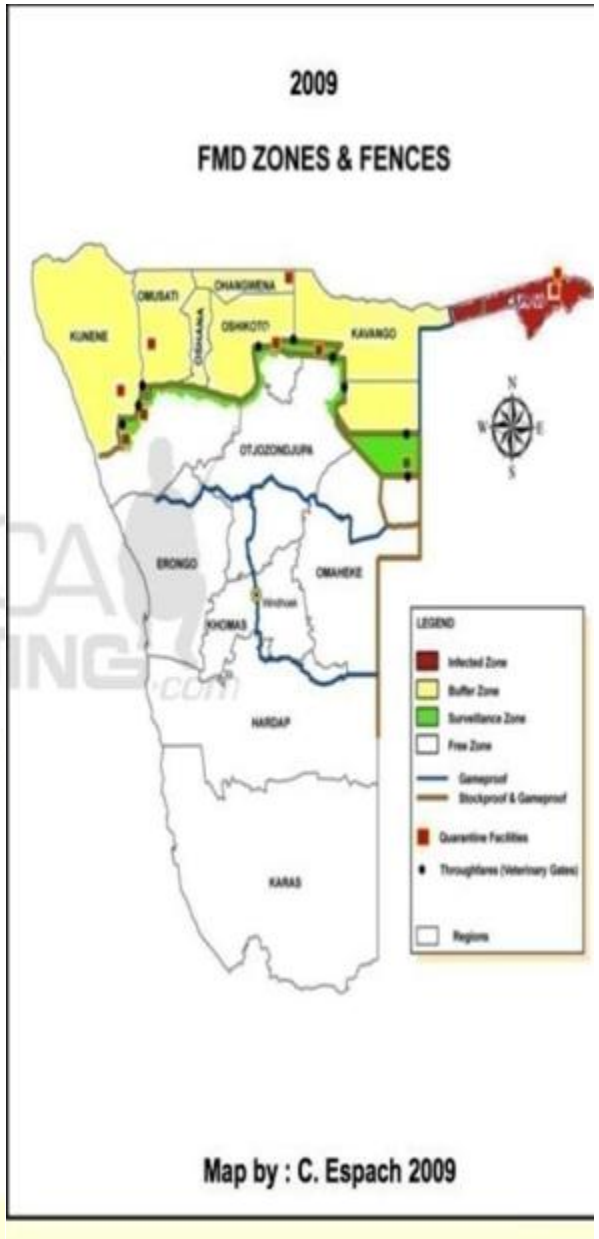
Botswana FMD Control Zones (1982 – 2026)

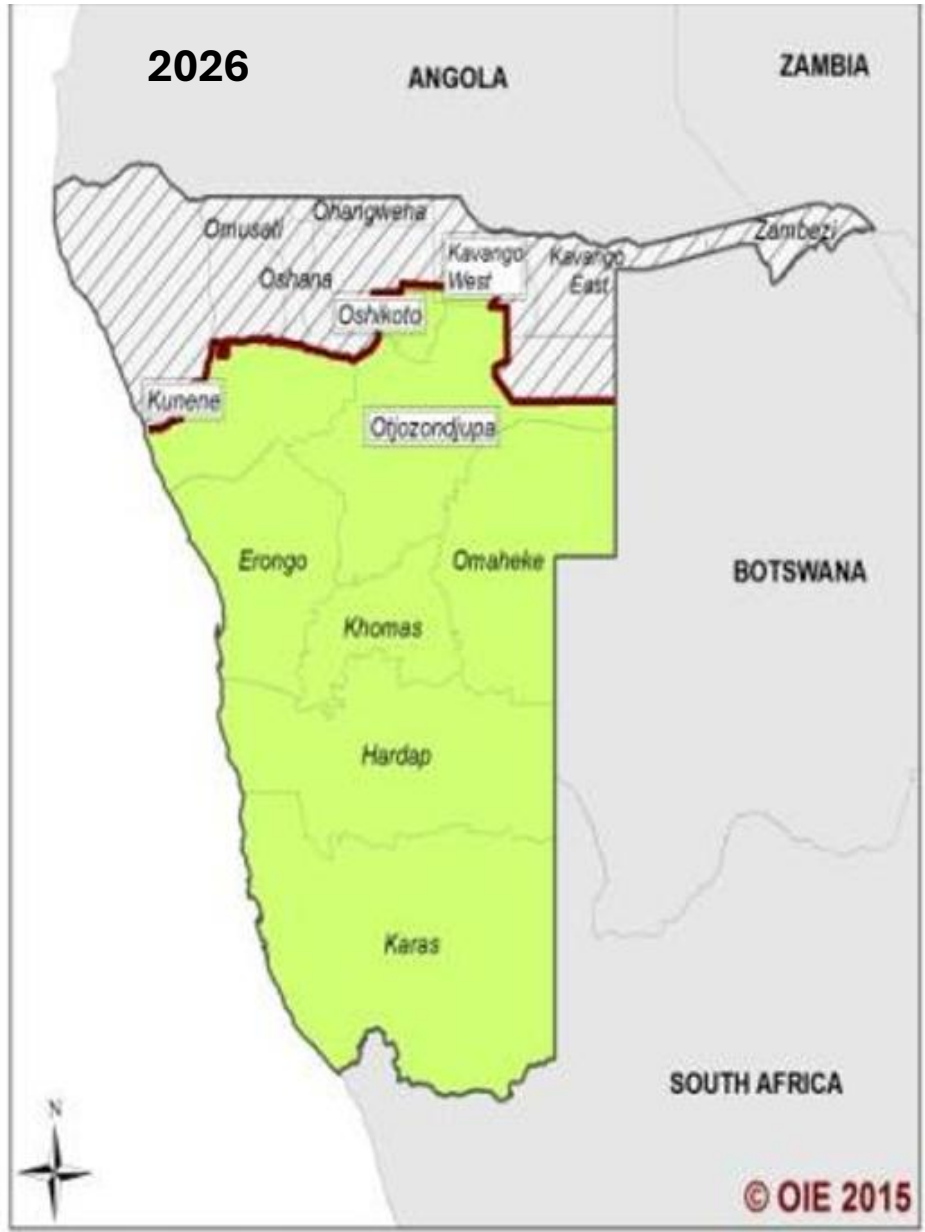




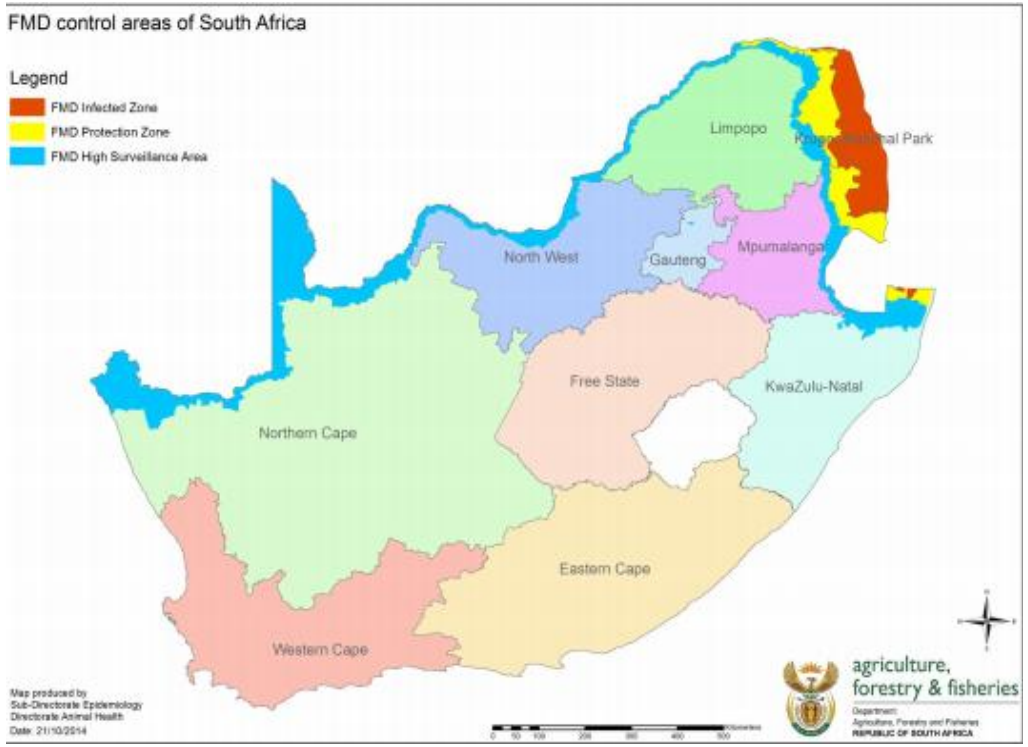
Namibia FMD Control Zones 1994 - 2026

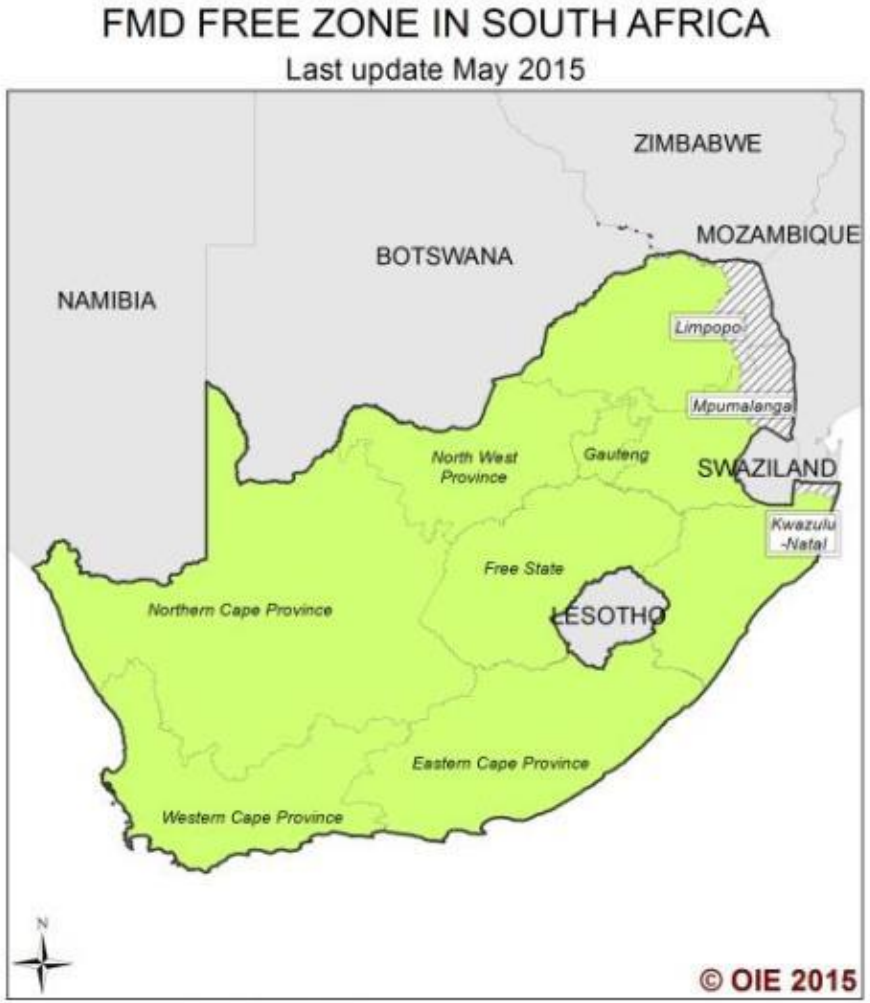






South Africa FMD Control Zones till 2029





Official FMD status in South Africa

FMD free zone where vaccination is not practised, consisting of the provinces of Eastern Cape Province, Free State, Gauteng, North West Province, Northern Cape Province, West Cape Province and part of Kwazulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga (May 2005 and January 2014)

Zone of South Africa without a recognised FMD status

Province Framed provinces are partly included in the FMD free zone

* Dates shown in brackets indicate when the documents describing the zone were submitted to the OIE by the Delegate

FMD Situation in 2016

Countries Free From FMD, where Vaccination is not practiced

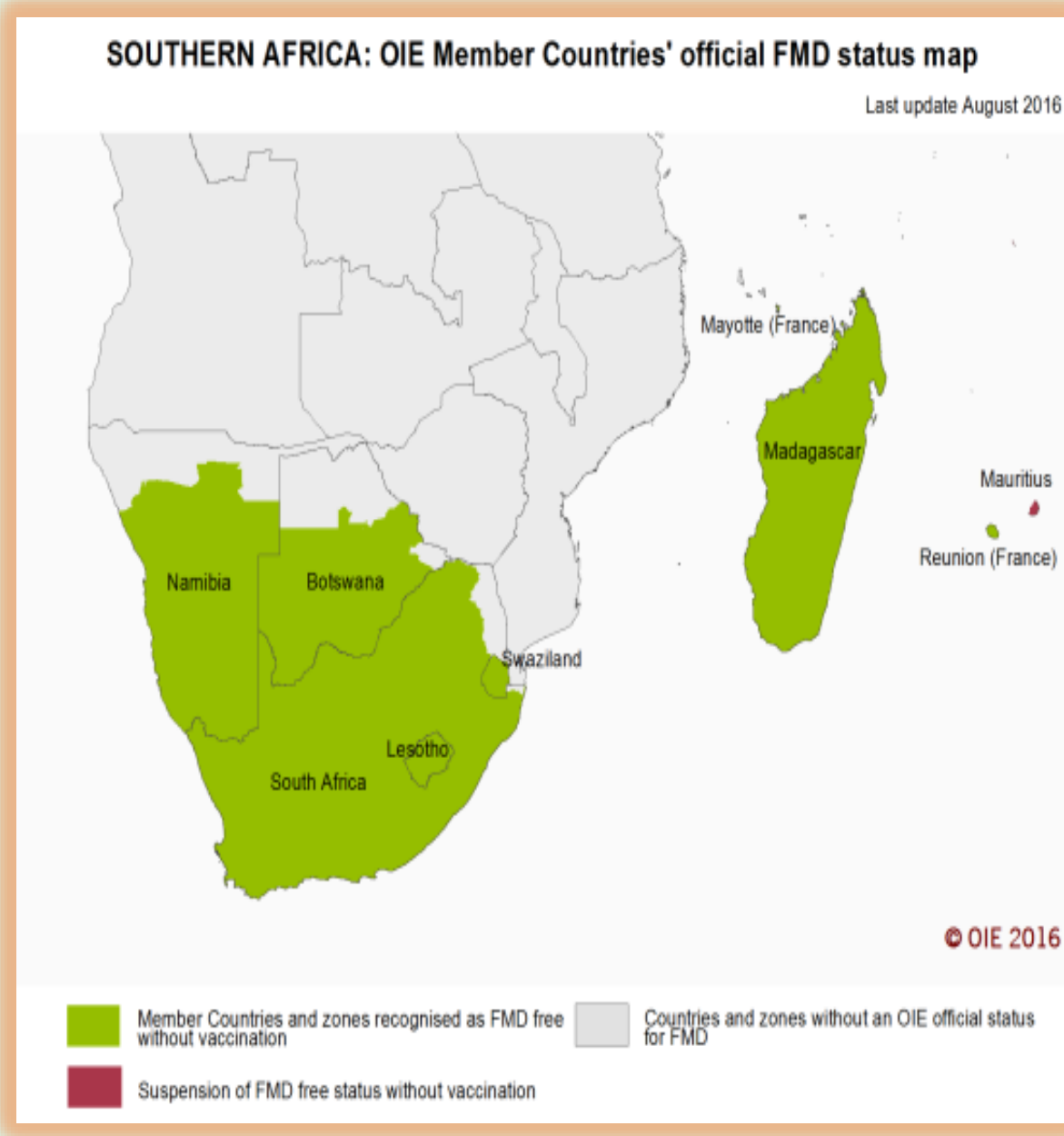
- Eswatini
- Lesotho
- Madagascar

Countries with Zones Free From FMD, where Vaccination is not practice

- Botswana
- Namibia
- South Africa

SADC Countries without Status

- The rest



Advantages of FMD Free Zones or Countries

- **Open up more exports markets for animal and animal products (beef, wool & mohair);**
- **The 3 countries (+ Eswatini & Lesotho) were trading in with, Africa, GCC/Middle East, EU, Norway, Americas (USA), and Asia (China)**
- **Increase value of animals (*net-worth*)**
- **Increased contribution of Livestock to the Gross Domestich Product (GDP)**
- **Justifies more national funding support form the Treasury and Development Partners**
- **Motivation for genetic improvement of animals**
- **Contribues to achievement of global FMD control programme.**





FMD Situation in 2026

Countries Free From FMD, without Vaccination

- ~~Eswatini~~ **(2025) - suspended**
- ~~Lesotho~~ **(2026) - suspended**
- Madagascar

Countries with Zones Free From FMD, Without Vaccination

- ~~Botswana~~ *(3 free zones r)* **(2025) suspended**
- ~~Namibia~~ **(2026) - suspended**
- ~~South Africa~~ **(2019) – Status lost**

SADC Countries without Status

- The rest (endemic or historically free)



Conclusion

- Countries that implement WOAH Standards can successfully;
  - **effectively and efficiently control animal diseases**, thereby,
  - Improving **market accessibility of their animal products,**
  - seize **an opportunity for accelerated economic growth, and achieve the goal of being self sufficient in animal products,**
  - **Compliance with Standards are not *regulatory hurdle* but offer a *definitive competitive advantage*.**

Thank you

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