

**OIE SEA Sub-Regional Virtual Workshop on  
OIE international standards supporting self-declaration of freedom from rabies,  
and endorsement of official control program for dog-mediated rabies**

*6-8 July 2021*

**CONCEPT NOTE**

Good understanding and compliance with the OIE international standards enable countries to progressively control rabies in the dog population, which is a key step towards the elimination of human deaths from dog-mediated rabies. The *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* Chapter 8.14 “infection with rabies virus” was last amended in 2019 after extensive consultation with subject-matter experts and representatives from the United Against Rabies. This revision was aligned with one of the expected outcomes of the Global Strategic Plan “Zero by 30”, which is to ensure the development of a coherent set of international standards and guidance to prevent and control rabies across the human and animal health sectors, using a “One Health” approach.

Implementing a science-based rabies control programme in line with the recommendations of the OIE standards is a key step towards the elimination of human deaths from dog-mediated rabies. Members with a robust official control programme for dog-mediated rabies compliant with Article 8.14.11 are encouraged to request the OIE for its endorsement. Having an official control programme endorsed by the OIE will facilitate national Veterinary Services to advocate for support from their governments and hence to progressively prevent and control the disease until they can be eventually eliminated from their territories, which paves the way for Members to self-declare freedom from dog-mediated rabies.

The first list of Members having an OIE endorsed official control programme was adopted during the OIE General Session in May 2021. The Philippines is one of the two first countries that had their official control programme for dog-mediated rabies endorsed by the OIE. More South-East Asian countries would be in condition and are encouraged to apply for the endorsement of their rabies official control programmes in the future and/or make a submission to the OIE for the publication of their self-declaration of country or zone rabies or dog-mediated rabies freedom.

To present the updated Chapter 8.14, and the procedures for the endorsement of official control programme and for the self-declaration of freedom from rabies or dog-mediated rabies, the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asia (OIE SRR SEA) is planning to conduct a virtual Sub-Regional Workshop on these topics. It is expected that the workshop will assist countries to better understand the requirements and procedure for the official endorsement and self-declaration to further refine their national rabies control programmes. Furthermore, the workshop will facilitate exchanges of country experiences, challenges, and achievements to date in pursuing consistency with the international standards and implementing rabies-related initiatives towards “Zero by 30”.

**Objectives:**

This workshop aims to:

1. Provide information regarding the different Chapters of the OIE *Terrestrial Code* relevant to rabies, including surveillance, vaccination, diagnosis and dog population management.
2. Provide guidance on the procedure to apply for the OIE endorsement of an official control programme for dog-mediated rabies.
3. Sharing of experience and lessons learned from a member having recently applied to the endorsement of its official control programme for dog-mediated rabies.
4. Provide guidance on the procedure for self-declaration of a country or zone free from (dog-mediated) rabies.

**Participants:**

- Representatives from 11 South-East Asia countries (AMS including Timor-Leste)
  - o Both animal health and human health sectors,
  - o Other relevant sectors (Up to the Delegates recommended invitees)
- OIE HQ
- OIE RR-AP
- OIE SRR-SEA
- FAO
- WHO (SEARO and WPRO)
- Partners and NGOs involved in rabies in the region

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**PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

**Day 1 (2 hours)**

<b>Presentation/Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Time</b>
Welcoming remarks and objectives of the workshop	Dr Ronello Abila	5 min
Introduction & context: Rabies situation in SEA and the challenges in its control and prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion: Regional progress towards Zero by 30 Global Goal.</li> <li>- United Against Rabies forum. Phase two of the Global Strategic Plan Zero by 30</li> </ul>	OIE SRR SEA  OIE Science Department	10 min
<b>Session 1: Relevant OIE standards related to rabies</b>		
OIE Standards relevant to dog-mediated rabies control.	OIE Science Department/ OIE <i>ad hoc</i> Group on Rabies	20 min
OIE Standards on rabies diagnostics (Manual)	OIE rabies Reference Laboratory expert	20 min
OIE standards on dog management population and rabies vaccination, and other control activities	OIE <i>ad hoc</i> Group on Rabies	20 min
OIE relevant activities: Vaccine bank; communication campaign...	OIE Standard Department	10 min
A joint presentation about OIE/FAO/WHO rabies activities in the region	Tripartite Representatives	10 min
Q&A session on OIE standards		25 min

**Day 2 (2 hours)**

<b>Presentation/Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Session 2: OIE endorsement of rabies official control programmes</b>		
First day's recap	OIE SRR SEA	10 min
OIE SOP for the endorsement of official control programme for dog-mediated rabies	Status Department	20 min
Questionnaire to support the preparation of the dossier to be submitted to the OIE	Status Department	20 min
Case study on timeline, indicators to be developed	Status Department	20 min
Philippine's experience in the submission of its official control programme for dog-mediated rabies for endorsement	Philippines	20 min
Discussion/Q&A		30 min

**Day 3 (2 hours)**

<b>Presentation/Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>Session 3: Self-declaration of (dog-mediated) rabies freedom</b>		
Second day's recap	OIE SRR SEA	10 min
OIE SOPs on self-declaration of rabies free zones	Status Department	20 min
Freedom from rabies or from dog-mediated rabies: what is the difference? what kind of surveillance for each?	OIE Science Department/ OIE <i>ad hoc</i> Group on Rabies	30 min
Thailand's initiative of achieving Rabies Free Zone	Thailand	20 min
Discussion/Q&A		30 min
Take home message + Closing remark	Dr Ronello Abila	10 min