

OIE standards and guidelines on biosecurity and compartmentalisation  
Summary (max 300 words)

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Historically, the OIE as part of its international standards has provided recommendations to Members aimed at seeking disease freedom from their entire territory. While the ultimate goal continues to be disease freedom from countries and regions, other tools permit a risk based approach for the safe trade of animal and animal products, even when the absence of diseases cannot be guaranteed in an entire territory and can also assist disease control or eradication within countries.

Thus, according to Chapters 4.3 and 4.4 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code, zoning and compartmentalisation 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 definition of compartment may revolve around common animal ownership or management, membership in associations, industry improvement plans or breed registries with prescriptive biosecurity guidelines, or similar functional demarcations.

Fundamental to the application of compartmentalisation is the official Veterinary Services' control over the compartment and the free exchange of information necessary to convince importing countries that the risk of disease introduction from trade is minimised. In this regard, compliance by OIE Member Countries with Chapter 3.1 on Veterinary Services is an essential prerequisite.

Compartmentalisation cannot be applied to all diseases but separate requirements will be developed for each disease for which the application of compartmentalisation is considered appropriate. Compartmentalisation may be particularly applicable in intensive production systems which are vertically integrated. Concrete examples will be provided.