A brief historical overview of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and its historical relationship with countries in southern Africa

Gideon Brückner
Marie Teissier
International Intergovernmental Organisations

- UN (1945)
- W.H.O. (1948)
- F.A.O. (1945)
- Codex Alimentarius Commission (1963)
- IPPC (1924, 1951)
The 18th Century

• At the beginning of the century, Rinderpest invaded Europe. “...It has been estimated that two hundred million cattle died in Europe in the sixty-eight years after 1711 as a result of the great epidemic” (Dunlop & Williams, *Veterinary Medicine - An illustrated history*, 1996).

• During the whole second part of the eighteenth century, Europe was desolated by a series of epizootics brought or favoured by the incessant wars.
“The hand of God struck the Netherlands, afflicting its cattle with Rinderpest”
The first Veterinary school was created in 1762 in Lyon (France)
Claude Bourgelat (1712-1799)
A lecture at the Alfort Veterinary School at the end of 19th century
After France, Veterinary schools are created all over Europe
The 19th Century

- The situation is even more alarming at the beginning of the nineteenth Century. In 1800, the epizootic which raged through all Europe had not completely been contained and contagion reappeared in Central Europe.

- Not until the 1840s were sanitary laws enacted in Europe. The first one was the Polish law, enacted by Ostrowsky in 1844. Others will follow, each inspired by the same objective to establish a nomenclature of main diseases and make compulsory for administrative authorities to notify all suspicion of disease and take immediate protective measures accordingly.
Consultation at the Alfort Veterinary School to discuss the disease situation in Europe – 19th Century
The International Congresses

• On 24 March 1863, at the initiative of Professor John Gamgee, from the New Veterinary College of Edinburgh, associated with Professor Hering, from Stuttgart, a letter is sent to Veterinary Schools and periodicals all over the world.

• The letter proposed the organisation, in Hamburg, of an International Congress which would “define the rules of prevention of contagious and epizootic diseases” and elaborate a standardised sanitary legislation for all countries. (E. Leclainche, Histoire de la médecine vétérinaire, 1936).
The First International Veterinary Congress held in Hamburg 14-18 July 1863, organised by John Gangee who is seated second from the left.

1 Nicklas  
2 Gangee  
3 Roll  
4 Falke  
5 Hering  
6 Hartwig  
7 Gesta  
8 Unterberger (Sen.)  
9 Leisering  
10 Wilt  
11 Fürstenberg  
12 Fied  
13 Kohne  
14 Schmitz  
15 Caste  
16 Probstmayr  
17 Lindau  
18 Pillwa  
19 Hornthal  
20 Petersen  
21 J. F. Stockfisch  
22 G. May  
23 Ziegler  
24 H. V. Stockfisch  
25 Kleinberg  
26 Heinzen  
27 Adria  
28 Wallher  
29 Flock  
30 C. R. May  
31 Solte  
32 Kallert  
33 Kallert  
34 Oufeld  
35 Schmutz  
36 Zipperle  
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Creation of the OIE
2. L'Office international des Épidémies

En 1872, l'invasion de la peste bovine dans l'Europe centrale déclenche le gouvernement autrichien à réunir à Vienne une Conférence internationale pour envisager des mesures communes de prophylaxie. Les gouvernements de l'Allemagne, de la Belgique, de la France, de la Grande-Bretagne, de l'Italie, de la Roumanie, de la Russie, de la Serbie, de la Suisse et de la Turquie sont représentés. La Conférence élabore un règlement international qui n'est pas publié en raison de la disparition de la maladie, mais dont les principes vont servir de base à toutes les législations modernes.

En 1920, la peste bovine apparaît inopinément en Belgique, à la suite du transit, dans le port d'Anvers, de zébus de l'Inde destinés au Brésil. L'émotion est d'autant plus vive que l'on ne prévoyait nullement la possibilité d'un apport de la maladie par une telle voie. La France prend l'initiative d'une Conférence internationale à laquelle tous les Pays sont invités. Quarante-deux États, Dominions ou colonies répondent à cet appel. La Conférence procède à un examen de la situation sanitaire en ce qui concerne spécialement la peste bovine, la fièvre aphteuse et la dourine; elle étudie l'échange des renseignements sanitaires entre les pays, ainsi que les mesures sanitaires à l'exportation.

La Conférence émet le vœu que soit créé à Paris un Office international pour la lutte contre les maladies infectieuses des animaux. Elle donne mandat à trois de ses membres de se mettre à la disposition des autorités françaises pour leur faciliter l'établissement d'un projet de convention internationale.

E. Leclainche, in his “Histoire de la médecine Vétérinaire” (1936) writes: “...In 1920, Rinderpest suddenly appears in Belgium, Following the transit through the port of Antwerp of zebu cattle bound for Brazil. It causes a great commotion....”
Strengthened by the experience of the past century, France takes the initiative to convene an “International Conference for the Study of Epizootics” to take place in Paris in May 1921

A group of personalities attending the Conference of 1921 visit the Alfort Veterinary School
• Forty-two States heeded the call. The Conference expressed the wish that an International Organisation in charge of the control of infectious diseases of animals should be created.

• In less than three years, twenty-eight countries joined the project and an “International Agreement” was signed in Paris by their representatives on 28th January 1924.
The International Agreement for the creation of the OIE (Office international des épizooties) is signed in Paris on January 25, 1925 by 28 countries.
Argentine Republic, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Egypt, Spain, Finland, France, Great-Britain, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Italy, Luxemburg, Morocco, Mexico, the Principality of Monaco, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Siam, Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovak Republic and Tunisia signed the Agreement.
Office international des épizooties

International Office of Epizootics

Organisation intergouvernementale
Crée à Paris par l’arrangement international du 25 janvier 1924
Structure and working
Structure and composition of the OIE

• On 8 March 1927, the International Committee of the Office held its first General Session. Twenty-six Delegates participated.

• The Assembly elected Inspector General De Roo, Delegate of Belgium, as President and Professor Leclainche was appointed first Director of the Office.

E. Leclainche, Director general of the OIE from March 1927 till May 1949

Inspector General Henri de Roo, Delegate of Belgium, first President of the OIE from 1927 to 1929
Working and composition of the OIE

• Since its first General Session, held in Paris on 8 March 1927, the office carries on its work under the authority of a Committee (known as the International Committee) consisting of Delegates of the contracting Governments.

• The composition and prerogatives of this Committee, as well as the organisation and powers of the office, are determined by the Organic Statutes, attached to the Agreement and regarded as being an integral part of the Agreement.
Institutional independence of the OIE

- Because its creation dates back to the early 20th century, the OIE is one of the oldest existing Intergovernmental Organisations.
- It does not depend on the UN system, as the United Nations only officially came into existence on 24 October 1945, and this is a notable exception among the existing organisations of the same type.
- Its autonomy is institutional and financial. Its activities are governed by its own constitutional texts.
- Since its creation it has worked in close collaboration with the League of Nations.
The first issue published the text of the International Agreement for the creation of the Office and the minutes of the first meeting of its Committee.
The OIE and the League of Nations

• On January 1928, the first Conference of the Economic Committee of the League of Nations met in Geneva with only eight veterinary experts.

• The third Conference, in 1929 categorised contagious diseases according to their seriousness. It also specified conditions for issuing sanitary certificates for international trade of animals and animal products.

• At the Conferences of 1931 and 1934, eleven experts failed to come to an agreement on sanitary certificates and had to submit the texts to the OIE.

• From then onwards the OIE was the internationally accepted institution to set international standards for animal health.
League of Nations: A meeting in Switzerland in 1929
• During World War II, the activities of the Office slowed down.

• In 1942, under the German occupation of Paris, the idea of transferring the headquarters of the Office to Berlin (Germany) was raised. It was only the intervention of Dr G. Flückiger (Switzerland), acting President of the OIE International Committee, that prevented this plan from being carried out.

The Hôtel de Prony – official headquarters of the OIE since 1939
The OIE and the Statue of Liberty

The Statue of Liberty was built in Rue de Chazelles adjoining the current OIE headquarters at Parc Monceau and donated by France to the USA in 1884. Gustave Eifel who built the Eifel Tower, did the metal structure of the statue.
Attempts to dissolve the OIE

• The United Nations, which replaced the League of Nations in 1945, established two specialist Agencies the same year:
  – the World Health Organization (WHO) and
  – the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

• Their aims partially covered those of the OIE. The presence of these two Agencies called the existence of the OIE into question and the possibility of simply dissolving the organisation was envisaged in 1946, and again in 1951.

• Due to the opposition of numerous OIE Member Countries and Delegates, the functions of the Office were kept alive.
A meeting in Madrid in 1951 – a fore runner for establishing the WVA
The OIE and the WTO (World Trade Organisation)

- Following official recognition of the OIE by the World trade Organisation in 1994, as an international reference for safe trade in animals and animals products as regards risks due to animal diseases and zoonoses, the OIE has become a standard setting organisation in terms of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures of the WTO.
International Relations

Institutional cooperation with 75 international and regional organisations notably the following:

- **WHO** World Health Organization
- **FAO** Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
- **WTO** World Trade Organization
- **CAC** Codex Alimentarius Commission
- **WVA** World Veterinary Association
- **IPPC** International Plant Protection Convention
- **World Bank**
- **CABI** CAB International
- **ILRI** International Livestock Research Institute
The OIE and the WVA

- OIE is an international intergovernmental institution since 1924
- WVA is an international association of veterinary associations since 1959
- OIE has a mandate in terms of the SPS Agreement of the WTO
- OIE and WVA has signed agreement of cooperation (signed in 2002 and again in 2015)
- Support mutual policies such as on AMR
Involvement of countries in Africa with OIE

- Only 3 African countries joined the OIE in 1924
- Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt
- The remainder were represented by their Colonial “mother” country
- Africa countries were thus practically excluded from the OIE decision-making process
OIE member countries in southern Africa

- Most countries in southern Africa became members of the OIE only after independence.
- Only exception is South Africa (then the Union of South Africa) who became a member in 1936 and re-confirmed in 1963 after independence.
- Botswana (1968); Lesotho (1984); Mozambique (1949); Swaziland (1970); Zimbabwe (1961) and Namibia (1990).
### Liste des Pays participant à l'Office International des Épizooties

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Afrique Occidentale Française</th>
<th>Japon</th>
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<td>Albanie</td>
<td>Lithuanie</td>
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<td>Allemagne (République)</td>
<td>Luxembourg (Grand-Duché de)</td>
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<td>Argentine</td>
<td>Madagascar</td>
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<td>Australie</td>
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<td>Autriche</td>
<td>Monaco (Principauté de)</td>
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<td>Belgique</td>
<td>Nouvelle-Zélande</td>
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<td>Espagne</td>
<td>Russie (U.R.S.S.)</td>
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<td>Finlande</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Grande-Bretagne</td>
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<td>Grèce</td>
<td>Tchécoslovaquie</td>
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<td>Hongrie</td>
<td>Tunisie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indes Britanniques</td>
<td>Turquie</td>
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<td>Indochine</td>
<td>Union Sud-Africaine</td>
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<td>Irak</td>
<td>Uruguay</td>
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<td>Italie</td>
<td>Yougoslavie</td>
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Adressez toutes les communications à l'Office International des Épizooties, 9, avenue Emile-Aollas, Paris (VIIe).

### Boultin de l'Office International des Épizooties

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### Douzième Session du Comité de l'Office International des Épizooties

**(24 au 28 mai 1938)**

### I. - Rapports

La situation sanitaire en 1937

par

M. E. Leclainche

Directeur de l'Office International des Épizooties

L'année 1937 est marquée, en Europe, par une invasion aphteuse, tout imprévue, qui a progressé au cours du second semestre et qui était en pleine évolution à la fin de l'année.

Rien de particulier en ce qui concerne les contagions permanentes. Il est regrettable que les maladies qui préoccupent au plus haut point l'opinion comme la tuberculose, la maladie de Bang, les marnutes ne donnent point lieu à l'établissement de statistiques dans tous les pays.

**Fièvre Aphteuse**

L'année débute dans les conditions les plus favorables. La fièvre aphteuse rétrocède depuis plusieurs années et l'année 1936 a été très calme. La plupart des pays d'Europe sont res-
Vaccination CBPP in Togo
OIE Assistance in Africa
Tick control in Kenya
Several other initiatives by the OIE in Africa to assist improvement of Veterinary Services

- PVS (Performance of Veterinary Services) missions
- Follow-up PVS missions
- Assistance with improvement of legislation
- Assistance with improvement of laboratory services
- Missions to assess and advise on disease control
- Applying One-Health concept
- Antimicrobial resistance initiatives together with WHO and WVA
Recognition of official disease status

Goal:

• Promote Veterinary Services
• Protect animal (and human) health in international trade
• Facilitate trade

The International Committee adopted that OIE shall officially recognise disease status (countries, zones) for currently 6 diseases

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<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>FMD</th>
<th>RP</th>
<th>CBPP</th>
<th>BSE</th>
<th>AHS</th>
<th>PPR</th>
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OIE Disease freedom in southern Africa

Southern Africa

- FMD
- CBPP
- BSE
- PPR

FMD PPR CBPP

FMD CBPP PPR

CBPP PPR FMD (lost 2019)
Thank you for your attention