STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR WOAH MEMBERS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS TO SUBMIT COMMENTS DURING THE PROCESS FOR THE ELABORATION OF WOAH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

WOAH has developed this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to improve the transparency, documentation, and traceability of the process for receiving and responding to comments submitted during the process for the elaboration of WOAH International Standards, as well as to describe the roles and responsibilities of WOAH Members and International Organisations, Specialist Commissions, subject-matter experts, and WOAH Headquarters, during this process.

Standard Operating Procedure

Scope:	This SOP describes the process to be followed by WOAH Members or International Organisations with a cooperation agreement (IOs), to comment on the development and review of WOAH Standards. The procedure comprises three steps: 1. Submission of comments by Members and IOs 2. Consideration and response by the responsible WOAH Specialist Commission 3. Technical advice on comments Comments should be addressed to and responded to by the responsible Specialist Commission, i.e. 1. the AAHSC (for the *Aquatic Code* and *Aquatic Manual*) 2. the BSC (for the *Terrestrial Manual*) 3. the TAHSC (for the *Terrestrial Code*)

Related documents:	Guide for WOAH Members and IOs to submit comments during the process for the elaboration of WOAH International Standards (hereafter 'Guide')

Acronyms:	AAHSC : Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission BSC : Biological Standards Commission AHG : *Ad hoc* Group IO : International Organisation with a WOAH cooperation agreement SC : Specialist Commission SCAD : Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases TAHSC : Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission WG : Working Group

SOP for WOAH Members and International Organisations to submit comments during the process for the elaboration of WOAH International Standards

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1. SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS				
Component	Time Reference	Responsible	Action	Reference
1.1	After a SC meeting	WOAH Delegates and IOs	Read the published Commission report and consider commenting on annexes or items discussed in the report. Prepare comments on topics of interest.	Guide For the work programme or items discussed without an annex, refer to Section 1 of the Guide; For a proposed new or revised Standard circulated in an annex, refer to Section 2 of the Guide
1.2	Before the deadline for comments (indicated in the respective report)	WOAH Delegates and IOs	Submit comments to the relevant Secretariat email address.	For the: TAHSC Secretariat: TCC.Secretariat@woah.org AAHSC Secretariat: AAC.Secretariat@woah.org BSC Secretariat: BSC.Secretariat@woah.org

		2. CONSIDERATION OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Component	Time Reference	Responsible	Action	Reference
2.0	Before a SC meeting	TAHSC Secretariat or AAHSC Secretariat or BSC Secretariat	The responsible Secretariat acknowledges receipt of the submission, collates comments received, and presents them to the responsible SC for its consideration. The responsible Secretariat may include additional information to support the SC consideration, including requesting further advice before the comment is considered by the responsible SC (see Step 3).	
2.1	During a SC meeting	TAHSC or AAHSC or BSC	Considers each comment within the corresponding agenda item. For each comment: • if it agrees, see 2.2; • if it does not agree, see 2.3. • if it requests further advice, see 2.4.	
2.2	During a SC meeting	TAHSC or AAHSC or BSC	When the SC agrees with a comment: - If it is on a proposed new or revised Standard circulated, it introduces the relevant amendments in the text, and the response is documented in the relevant SC report. - If it was on an item in the report with no annex circulated, it is taken into consideration for the development of the specific work, and the response is documented in the relevant SC report.	
2.3	During a SC meeting	TAHSC or AAHSC or BSC	When the SC does not agree with a comment, it documents the decision and its rationale in its meeting report.	
2.4	During a SC meeting	TAHSC or AAHSC or BSC	When the SC requires additional advice, it records its considerations and rationale in its meeting report and requests the responsible Secretariat to seek additional advice from another SC, *ad hoc* Group, a WOAH Working Group, or other subject-matter experts (see Step 3). At a future meeting, the responsible SC considers the advice received together with the original comment (see 2.1).	
2.5	After a SC meeting	TAHSC Secretariat/ AAHSC Secretariat/ BSC Secretariat	Publishes the relevant SC report on the WOAH Delegates website and the WOAH public website in Eng, Fr and Sp.	

3. TECHNICAL ADVICE ON COMMENTS				
Component	Time Reference	Responsible	Action	Reference
3.1	When needed (see Step 2)	TAHSC Secretariat or AAHSC Secretariat or BSC Secretariat	Undertakes the requested consultation with: • Another SC • *Ad hoc* Group • Working Group • Reference Centre experts • Subject-matter experts • Others	
3.2	During a specific consultation	SCAD or BSC or AHG or WGs or Experts	Considers the request and provides its advice to support the responsible SC decision.	
3.3	After a specific consultation or relevant meeting	SCAD Secretariat or BSC Secretariat or AHG Secretariat or WGs Secretariat or other	a) If the advice was requested by the Secretariat before the responsible SC consideration, the consultation is noted by the Secretariat. b) If the advice was requested by the responsible SC, the advice is documented in the respective report. In all cases, the outcomes of the consultation are forwarded to the responsible Secretariat (TAHSC/AAHSC/BSC). The responsible SC considers the advice together with the original comment (see 2.1.)	