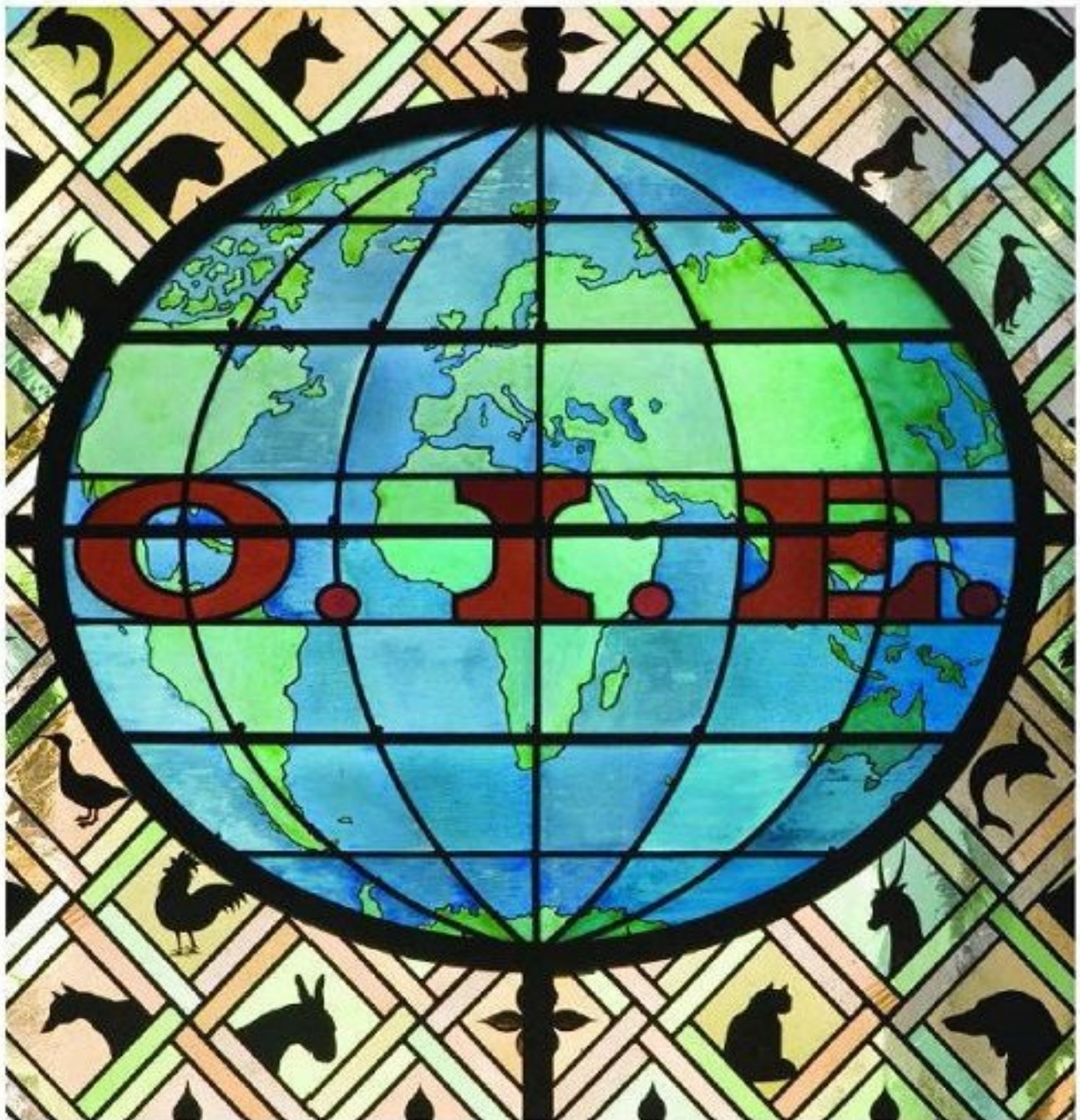


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## ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

### ▶ REFERENCE CENTRES

## 13th Annual Meeting of the OIE/FAO FMD Reference Laboratories Network

Woking, United Kingdom, 7-8 November 2018



Network delegates celebrate the signing-off of the Network memorandum of understanding by all partner laboratories with Matthew Stone, Deputy Director General of the OIE (centre)  
© David Paton

### *Members of the OIE/FAO Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) Reference Laboratory Network met at the Pirbright Institute in Surrey in the United Kingdom during November 2018.*

This Network was established in 2004 as a forum for exchanging laboratory and epidemiology data, as well as to harmonise and improve the quality of diagnostic testing carried out by international and national FMD laboratories. The work of the Network has been recently strengthened by the formal signing of a memorandum of understanding by all of the core 15 partner laboratories.

During the meeting, the experts reviewed recent reports of FMD outbreaks and discussed the distribution of FMD virus lineages in different parts of the world. Particular attention focused on North Africa, where FMD outbreaks due to serotypes A (A/AFRICA/G-IV) and O (O/EA-3) were reported in 2017 and 2018. Data generated by Network partners and affiliates pinpointed West Africa as the source of the viruses causing both of these events, raising questions about trans-Saharan connectivity between countries and the precise routes by which FMD viruses are being spread in West and North Africa. Elsewhere, data shared between Network partners have been used to monitor the frequent emergence of FMD virus lineages (such as O/ME-SA/Ind-2001 and A/ASIA/G-VII) from South Asian countries and their onward spread in West Eurasia and South-East and East Asia. Together, these unexpected events highlight the ease with which the virus can cross international boundaries and emphasise the importance of the work undertaken by FMD Reference Laboratories to continuously monitor risks and share real-time information on the global epidemiology of FMD.

[Meeting report](#)

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