

The OIE is digitising its archives and placing them online
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The OIE, or World Organisation for Animal Health as it is now known, began publishing in 1927. For almost sixty years, its main publication remained to be the “*Bulletin de l’ Office international des epizooties*”, which, through scientific articles, official documents, conference proceedings, resolutions and recommendations, statistics on animal health in the Members Countries and reports on all its activities, reflects the true history of the Organisation since its creation.

The *Bulletin*, together with the scientific articles published in the *Scientific and Technical Review*, the international health standards published in the “*International Animal Health Code*” since 1968, the “*Manual of Diagnostics and vaccines*” since 1989, statistics on animal health worldwide published annually in “*Statistics on Animal Health*” and “*World Animal Health*” since 1959 are a valuable contribution to the improvement of animal health worldwide and a rich historical resource in the field of public health, animal diseases, diagnostic and control means and measures, scientific research and sanitary regulation.

At the end of last century, with the development of Internet and a strong increase of requests for historical information, it became obvious that the accessibility and preservation of our scientific information could be considerably enhanced by digitisation and open access.

After a long period of consultation and a thorough definition of our needs, it was decided in September 2008 to undertake the task of digitising the main archives in order to make them available to the public on our website.

The project started in September 2008 with the digitisation of the *Bulletin* from Vol. 1 (1927) to Vol. 93 (1981), together with the *1921 Paris International Conference*, which led to the foundation of the OIE.

The digitisation of the *Scientific and Technical Review* from 1981 to 2001 started in November 2008 and is now completed. The first editions of the “*Code*”, the “*Manual*” and “*World Animal Health*” are in progress.

The programme is due to finish by the middle of 2010.

The electronic files thus obtained will then be integrated into the online OIE bibliographic database, which, at the present time, gives access to more than 4500 referenced OIE documents with about 2100 documents in full text.

With this addition, online access to OIE publications will be considerably enriched, with several thousand documents being made available, reflecting the history of the Organisation’s activities throughout eighty-three years of existence.

The communication and sharing of these resources on the Internet should help all visitors of our Web site to better understand the part the OIE has played to control the international spread of infectious animal diseases and zoonoses, to safeguard animal and public health by improving animal welfare and food safety, to reduce poverty and help all countries to trade their agricultural products more freely with the rest of the world.