Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) is one of the most damaging of all animal diseases, and around 70 countries have either reported the disease to the OIE or are suspected of being infected. Of these, more than 60% are in Africa, the other infected countries being in Asia (People’s Republic of China, South Asia, Central Asia/West Eurasia, including Turkey) and the Near and Middle East. Fifty other countries are considered to be at risk of PPR.

In the worst situations, PPR-related morbidity is as high as 100%, with a mortality rate that can reach 90%. In areas where the disease is endemic the mortality rate may be lower, but the disease has a more insidious impact on flock productivity. Each year, PPR causes economic losses worth an estimated USD 1.2 to 1.7 billion, due to animal deaths, reduced production and the cost of fighting the disease.

The FAO/OIE Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) Global Steering Committee in 2012, the FAO Council and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), and the OIE, in the form of a Resolution of the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE in 2014, all recommended the development of a Global Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR (hereinafter ‘the Global Strategy’) and
expressed a strong willingness to address animal health problems in a systematic way, dealing with horizontal as well as more disease-specific (i.e. vertical) issues, relating to PPR or to other diseases.

The Global Strategy has been prepared by the GF-TADs Working Group on PPR, in collaboration with numerous experts and representatives of key countries, regional organisations, specialised organisations and the private sector.

The overall objective of the Global Strategy is a small ruminant sector contributing to global food security and nutrition, human health and economic growth, particularly in developing countries, thereby alleviating poverty, increasing income generation and improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and general human wellbeing. The specific objectives are the eradication of PPR by 2030, while at the same time, through reinforcing the Veterinary Services, improving animal health globally by reducing the impact of other major infectious diseases of small ruminants.

The experience gained and the lessons learned during the Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme (GREP) are important assets, and there are several factors conducive to Global Strategy implementation, such as the availability of effective vaccines, suitable diagnostic assays, favourable epidemiological conditions and a political context that is now quite conducive to PPR control and eradication. Other factors provide strong incentives, such as the possibility to strengthen the small ruminant sector by combining PPR control with control activities for other important diseases, and indeed the possibility of obtaining official OIE recognition of a ‘PPR free’ status or endorsement of national PPR control programmes.

Nevertheless, Global Strategy implementation will have to contend with significant challenges, such as the level of effectiveness of the Veterinary Services, the difficulty of finding vaccine delivery systems that are effective in all locations, even in remote or war-torn areas, and also the considerable mobility of small ruminants.

The Global Strategy has three integrated components. While eradication of PPR (Component 1) is the ultimate goal, it cannot be achieved independently of the other two components, namely strengthening the Veterinary Services (Component 2) as a country moves towards PPR eradication and better prevention and control of other priority diseases of small ruminants (Component 3).

At national level, the strategic approach is based on four stages, beginning with Stage 1, when the epidemiological situation is being assessed, and culminating with Stage 4, when the country can provide evidence that there is no virus circulation and is ready to apply for official OIE recognition of the status ‘free from PPR’.

In addition to the PPR vaccine and specific diagnostic assays that are already available, a variety of tools will be used during implementation of the Global Strategy, such as the OIE PVS Pathway, the PPR Monitoring and Assessment Tool (PMAT) and the Post-Vaccination Evaluation (PVE) tool. The aim of the PMAT is to categorise countries according to the four stages identified in the Global Strategy. The PVE tool will enable the effectiveness of the vaccination campaign to be evaluated. The Global Strategy will also establish a Global PPR Research and Expertise Network (PPR-GREN).
The five technical elements that characterise each stage are related to:

- PPR diagnosis
- surveillance systems
- prevention and control systems
- the legal framework in place
- stakeholder involvement.

The activities will begin by controlling the disease in areas where it is highly endemic, and they will then consolidate these efforts by concentrating on zones where a low endemic level has been achieved. For countries already free from PPR, this status will be maintained.

At **regional level**, the emphasis is on the need to harmonise strategies and activities through strong partnerships with the relevant regional economic communities or other relevant regional organisations, such as the African Union – Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR) in Africa, as well as through the development of regional networks for laboratories and epidemiology. The GF-TADs Regional Animal Health centres (RAHCs) can play an important role at regional level. Countries will participate in (sub-)regional roadmaps that provide for evaluation and validation of the various stages.

**At global level**, the GF-TADs governing bodies, principles and mechanisms will be maintained and a new FAO/OIE Global PPR Control and Eradication Programme (PPR-GCEP) will be established, with its own FAO/OIE joint global Secretariat. FAO/OIE global networks of PPR Reference Laboratories/Centres and Epidemiology Collaborating Centres for PPR will be established.

Monitoring and evaluation are key elements of Global Strategy implementation and the PPR Monitoring and Evaluation Tool (PMAT) and Post-Vaccination Evaluation tool (PVE) will be used for this purpose.

The timelines of the PPR Global Strategy foresee three five-year phases, with constant epidemiological evaluation and monitoring and a global evaluation of the results in 2020, which will provide guidance on the continuation or updating of programme activities.

**The undiscounted costs** for a fifteen-year Global Strategy are between USD 7.6 and 9.1 billion. The annual cost during the initial five-year period is estimated to be in the region of USD 0.5 billion.

In the event of a rapid decrease in PPR incidence in countries employing an effective vaccination strategy, the costs could be lower than the original estimates. In all the scenarios tested, vaccination campaigns are significant components and their cost could well be reduced by strong targeting of at-risk populations through careful epidemiological and economic analysis.

The annual direct impact of PPR is currently between USD 1.2 and 1.7 billion, and this impact would be reduced to zero if the eradication programme were successful. It is important to realise that without the Global Strategy anything between USD 4.0 and 5.5 billion would be spent over a 15-year period on poorly targeted vaccination campaigns that are unlikely to lead to eradication.