

# WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

**Information Note: 31/2014**

**Subject: Clearance process for WHO maps**

**Distribution: All WHO staff members**

**Date: 5 December 2014**

The purpose of this Information Note is to remind all staff of the clearance process for maps contained in publications, presentations, other documents, and electronically issued by WHO.

In order to prevent any misrepresentation of the territories of WHO Member States and areas, which could raise diplomatic concerns, Global Health Observatory Graphic Information Systems (GHOGIS) has prepared, in consultation with the Office of the Legal Counsel, [Standard Operating Procedures](#) and [Map templates](#) for WHO maps to provide a standardized and compliant set of tools for those involved in using maps at WHO.

The following maps do not have to be cleared by LEG:

- Maps that are strictly in line with the [Standard Operating Procedures](#).
- [Map templates](#) pre-approved by LEG and available on the Intranet
- Maps downloaded from the [UN Cartographic Section](#) and reproduced without any modification. However, please seek permission from the UN Cartographic Section to use its maps.

Any other map must be cleared by LEG before being finalized (see [WHO eManual](#)). Please note, in particular, that the difference between solid and dashed/dotted border lines is relevant and that borders must be represented appropriately. As more documents become electronically available and individuals are able to electronically zoom into a map, it is critical that all borders comply with the Standard Operating Procedures. Further, any mention of Member States' names must be in accordance with the [latest list of Member States and Associate Members](#) and political maps should be carefully created to ensure all territories and areas are the appropriate colour. Finally, there are a number of geographic designations that are politically and/or legally sensitive that must conform to WHO practice.

Please contact the Office of the Legal Counsel, as appropriate, at [LEG\\_maps@who.int](mailto:LEG_maps@who.int).

La version française de cette note d'information sera publiée au plus tôt.

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