



### **3rd OIE Global Conference on Aquatic Animal Health 'Riding the wave to the future'**

**Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam), 20-22 January 2015**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **CONSIDERING THAT:**

1. Aquaculture is one of the world's fastest growing food producing sectors and food derived from aquatic animals is an important source of high quality nutrition; aquaculture representing close to 50% of aquatic animal global consumption;
2. Aquatic animal diseases continue to cause significant losses in aquaculture production throughout the world and are having a major detrimental impact on national economies in some countries and regions;
3. Approximately 500 different aquatic animal species are farmed globally, with several new species brought to aquaculture every year;
4. Aquaculture production is very diverse worldwide ranging from family farms to intensive integrated production systems, and from locally consumed to internationally traded production;
5. Countries need effective aquatic animal health programmes to secure potential investments and to increase production of aquatic animals in an environmentally sustainable way and to participate in international trade;
6. Veterinarians and other aquatic animal health professionals play a key role in the establishment and implementation of aquatic animal health programmes;
7. Aquatic Animal Health Services, whether part of the Veterinary Services or not, frequently lack human and financial resources and infrastructure, including legislation, to implement efficient aquatic animal health programmes.
8. One of the objectives of the OIE is to improve aquatic animal health worldwide and the welfare of farmed fish, and to facilitate safe international trade;
9. The need for all OIE Member Countries to meet their OIE membership obligations, and to implement the OIE standards for disease prevention and control, and trade in aquatic animals in line with the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (as appropriate).
10. The need to clarify and develop the concept and application of compartmentalisation in aquaculture.
11. Private-Public-Partnerships are an essential component to ensuring the effective implementation of OIE standards.

12. OIE Reference Centres are of critical importance to help the OIE to fulfil its mandate relevant to diagnostic capacities and the setting of science-based standards, guidelines and recommendations on aquatic animal health; and noting that there are only 2 OIE Collaborating Centres for aquatic animal topics;
13. The ongoing work of the OIE in reinforcing the capacity of Veterinary Services and Aquatic Animal Health Services, using the OIE PVS Pathway and the OIE standards published in the *Aquatic Animal Health Code* and *Manual for Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*;
14. One hundred and sixty eight (168) OIE Member Countries have already nominated a national Focal Point for Aquatic Animals, under the responsibility of the National OIE Delegate; the OIE is providing ongoing capacity building regional seminars for national Focal Points for Aquatic Animals to assist them to meet their responsibilities;
15. The successful global initiative for twinning of OIE Reference Centres;
16. The OIE has developed recommendations on the Competencies of graduating veterinarians ('Day 1 graduates') to assure National Veterinary Services of quality in both aquatic and terrestrial animals;
17. A number of important and relevant topics and issues were identified at the 2<sup>nd</sup> OIE Global Conference on Aquatic Animal Health, held in Panama in 2011, including the need for Member Countries to develop national aquatic animal health strategies.

**OIE MEMBER COUNTRIES ARE REQUESTED TO:**

1. Consider requesting an aquatic animals OIE PVS evaluation of their Veterinary Service and/or Aquatic Animal Health Service, if not yet done, with the objective of improving competencies and general compliance with OIE standards for aquatic animals, where aquaculture is an important or potentially growing sector;
2. Take steps to improve compliance with OIE standards, notably surveillance and early detection, notification to the OIE of aquatic animal diseases; and the control of pathogenic agents in aquatic animals and preventing their spread via trade, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade;
3. Support participation of nominated Focal Points in OIE regional capacity building seminars and other relevant activities while those Member Countries who have not yet done so should nominate national Focal Points for Aquatic Animals under the responsibility of the OIE Delegate;
4. Promote the development of Public-Private-Partnerships to ensure the effective implementation of OIE standards;
5. Ensure that the OIE standards and guidelines including the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents are respected in their country;
6. Encourage veterinary education establishments to address the competence of graduating veterinarians ('Day 1 graduates') in aquatic animal health, as appropriate to the importance of the aquaculture sector in their country, using the OIE 'Guidelines for a Model Core Veterinary Curriculum';
7. Ensure that veterinarians accredited by the Veterinary Services to perform regulatory functions in aquatic animals health programmes, receive appropriate training;

8. Encourage potential centres of expertise to apply to become an OIE Collaborating Centre or Reference Laboratory for an aquatic topic in order to expand the network of Reference Centres for aquatic animals;
9. Consider participation, if appropriate, in OIE twinning programmes for Reference Centres; and
10. As appropriate, comply with their WTO SPS obligations with respect to aquatic animal health certification for international trade.

**THE OIE IS REQUESTED TO:**

1. Continue to revise and develop OIE standards for aquatic animal health, notably standards on surveillance, zoning and compartmentalisation, diagnostic tools and vaccines, and responsible and prudent use of antimicrobials, in accordance with priorities set by the World Assembly of Delegates;
2. Provide more guidance in the OIE standards on the concept of compartmentalisation and its application and review the critical competency for compartmentalisation in the PVS Tool: Aquatic;
3. Assist Member Countries in strengthening their Veterinary Services and other Competent Authorities to promote good governance practices including national legislation and regulatory frameworks for import, marketing authorisation, production, distribution and use of quality antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals worldwide using, if needed, the OIE PVS Pathway;
4. Encourage veterinary education establishments to address the competence of graduating veterinarians ('Day 1 graduates') in aquatic animal health, as appropriate to the importance of the aquaculture sector in the country or region, using the OIE 'Guidelines for a Model Core Veterinary Curriculum';
5. Cooperate with governments and with relevant international and regional organisations to increase awareness of the need for aquatic animal health programmes; improve disease reporting and foster cooperation between veterinary and other relevant authorities at the national, regional and international level;
6. Continue to strengthen collaboration with donors and with regional and international organisations, such as FAO, to advocate for the key role of veterinarians and aquatic animal health professionals in the prevention and control of aquatic animal disease and to encourage governments and donors to invest in Veterinary Services and/or Aquatic Animal Health Services as a global public good, as well as in aquaculture and health control programmes;
7. Continue to encourage governments, relevant regional and international organisations and donors to provide resources for applied research in vaccines and alternative therapeutics to reduce the use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals.
8. Work closely with donors and international and regional organisations, and continue to provide appropriate technical support to Member Countries, especially developing countries, to meet the OIE standards for quality Veterinary Services and/or Aquatic Animal Health Services through the OIE PVS Pathway;

9. Develop its capacity building activities including through negotiation with donors, to assist Delegates, supported by nominated Focal Points, to comply with the obligations and responsibilities of OIE membership, including participation in the standard-setting process and capacity building activities;
  10. Promote the role and responsibility of the Veterinary Services and/or Aquatic Animal Health Services (including public and private sector veterinarians and experts) in aquatic animal health;
  11. Promote the development of Public-Private-Partnerships to ensure the effective implementation of OIE standards.
  12. Collaborate with donors and governments, and continue to promote the use of twinning programmes for OIE Reference Centres.
  13. Ensure that OIE Reference Laboratories apply OIE standards and guidelines for the validation of diagnostic tests so as to ensure confidence and reliability of diagnostic tests in the improvement of disease control programmes; and achieve or maintain accreditation to the ISO 17025 or equivalent quality management system in diagnostic laboratories.
  14. Request the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission to consider the development of recommendations for the use of serosurveillance for fish and for the concept of disease freedom at supranational level.
  15. Work together with FAO and WHO using the tripartite 'One Health' approach to reduce the impacts of zoonotic diseases for aquatic animals.
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