UPDATE ON THE MANUAL OF DIAGNOSTIC TESTS FOR AQUATIC ANIMALS

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The purpose of the Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals (Aquatic Manual) is to provide a uniform and efficient approach to the detection of the diseases listed in the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code (Aquatic Code), so that the requirements for health certification in connection with disease prevention and control programmes, and trade in aquatic animals and aquatic animal products can be met.

Section 1 of the Aquatic Manual provides recommendations on general provisions required to support effective laboratory testing capability. Chapter 1.1 outlines the important issues and considerations a laboratory should address in the design and maintenance of its quality management system, whether or not it has been formally accredited. Chapter 1.2 provides recommendations on the principles and methods for validating diagnostic assays.

Section 2 of the Aquatic Manual provides recommendations for diagnosis of specific diseases of amphibians, crustaceans, fish and molluscs. The disease-specific chapters in Section 2 cover all OIE listed diseases of aquatic animals. Some additional chapters are included for diseases that are no longer listed by the OIE. Each disease-specific chapter follows a similar format with information provided on the disease (agent factors, host factors, disease patterns, control and prevention), sampling, diagnostic methods, ratings of the recommended tests against their purpose of use, recommended tests for surveillance to declare freedom, and definitions of suspect and confirmed cases.

The information presented in the Aquatic Manual has been prepared under the guidance of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission with expertise provided by OIE Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres. All recommendations of the Aquatic Manual have been adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE and, as such, represent internationally agreed standards. The final version of each adopted chapter is the product of extensive consultation and comment by OIE Member Countries.