



## OIE-PVS TOOL AND AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH SERVICES

- **Keren Bar-Yaacov**  
OIE Delegate for Norway

The OIE has had the responsibility for setting aquatic animal health standards for more than 50 years. Aquatic animal production based on aquaculture is growing exponentially, and has during the last 5- 10 years already surpassed catch-fisheries measured in volume production in many of the major seafood producing countries world-wide. Aquaculture production represents today an essential asset to the income of developing and in-transition countries, and is an important alternative protein source to terrestrial animal production, assuring food security in a world where protein sources are under continuous pressure. The potential of aquaculture production to grow and support the growing protein needs of the developing and in-transition countries is dependent on good governance.

Intensive production systems and large volumes in limited geographical water systems are posing new challenges to animal health, animal welfare and food safety. Aquatic animal health is a relatively new veterinary field; new and emerging diseases are being discovered at a very rapid rate. Approximately 30 new shrimp diseases have been diagnosed in as many years.

Following the 1st OIE Global Aquatic Animal Health Conference (Norway, 2006), the OIE followed up the recommendations to support good governance of aquatic animal health services (AAHS) by expanding the OIE PVS Tool to specifically address good governance of aquatic animal health. The Tool needed some small adaptations to support this expansion. The most important of these adaptations focus on the fact that AAHS in many countries are not necessarily directly connected to the Veterinary Services. Veterinarians are not always involved in the management of aquatic animal health and there is no equivalent to the Veterinary Statutory Body (responsible for governance of the veterinary profession) for aquatic animal health professionals. Disease surveillance and control in aquaculture is in an open aquatic environment which cannot be managed in the same way as most terrestrial systems. Following the adaptation of the PVS Tool, the OIE performed a first PVS evaluation of AAHS in South-East Asia. Following this evaluation, the Tool was further modified following the feed-back from the PVS evaluation team. Further pilot evaluations are planned to take place in Africa and South America in 2011. Consistent with the approach to the evaluation of veterinary services, the OIE is taking steps to train and accredit aquatic animal health professionals to perform evaluations.

The PVS evaluation is the first step in the OIE PVS Pathway, which has the objective of strengthening governance and securing investment in key infrastructure elements, such as diagnostic laboratories, legislation and technical capacity of professionals. The PVS Pathway could be as important an asset to good governance in aquatic animal health as it is for the Veterinary Services. Unfortunately, very few OIE Members have requested evaluation of AAHS to date. It is important to assure good collaboration between the OIE, FAO and key donors to help provide the incentives for OIE Members to request a PVS evaluation of their AAHS.

Keywords: OIE PVS Pathway - good governance of Aquatic Animal Health Services - OIE PVS Tool