

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY FOR AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT IN VIETNAM

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Vietnam is endowed with an abundant supply of water resources that are ideal for fisheries and aquaculture. It has 3,260 km long coastline, 112 estuaries, 1 million km² of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and more than 4,000 islands which form many bays, straits and lagoons. Aquaculture production has been increasing during the last 3 decades largely due to the production of black tiger shrimp, white shrimp and pangasius catfish. Other important cultured species include molluscs, cobia, grouper, sweet snail, tilapia, snake-head and sea weeds. The total export earnings from the fisheries and aquaculture sector in 2010 was more than US\$4 billion, a large increase from US\$1 billion in 1999. Aquaculture and fisheries industries are estimated to employ more than 5 million people.

The Vietnamese Government is strongly aware that aquaculture is a key industry to provide food security and alleviate poverty as well as provide foreign currency return. Species diversification and intensification have resulted in increased production but disease outbreaks and water pollution have caused great production losses. The government of Vietnam has, therefore, recognized the urgent need to implement comprehensive health management strategies and policies in order to sustain the rapidly developing aquaculture sector.

Vietnam's Aquatic Animal Health Services (AAHS) were formerly run by the National Fisheries Quality Assurance and Veterinary Drugs (NAFIQAVED). Since January 2008, when the Ministry of Fisheries (MoFi) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) merged, this has become the responsibility of the Department of Animal Health (DAH). However, some responsibilities are held by two other Departments under MARD, the National Agro Forestry and Fisheries Quality Assurance Department (NAFIQAD) and the Aquaculture Directorate (DAQ). This presentation will describe the current situation with aquatic animal diseases and the AAHS of Vietnam.

Furthermore, in 2010, DAH supported an OIE expert team to conduct a PVS (Performance of Veterinary Services) evaluation of AAHS in Vietnam. The results have been valuable to assist in the development of a national strategy for 2011 to 2015, which will focus on the following objectives/issues: 1) to build up human capacities, i.e. for professional and technical staff on aquatic animal health; 2) to improve technical authority and capability in laboratory diagnosis, risk analysis, quarantine and inspection, epidemiology, control and early warning; 3) to strengthen cooperation between DAH and other national institutions/organizations such as NAFIQAD and DAQ on aquatic animal health management; and 4) to strengthen international cooperation and private sector involvement in response to new/emerging diseases and trade issues. Details of the strategy will be described in this presentation.

Keywords: Aquatic animal health services – OIE PVS

