

Tonga Aquatic System and PVS Evaluation

Regional Workshop for WOAHA Focal Points for Aquatic Animals

Name of the speaker (Mele. T Faanunu)

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Position of speaker (Fisheries Officer)



World Organisation
for Animal Health



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



国立大学法人

東京海洋大学

Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology



Country Context

Tonga is a small island developing state comprising over 170 islands with an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of approximately 700,000 km².

Fisheries and aquaculture are important for food security, livelihoods, and economic development.

Aquaculture

- Small but growing aquaculture sector; main cultured species:

- Giant clams

- Mabe pearl oyster (*Petria penguin*)

- Seaweed (*Kappaphycus sp.*)

- Sea cucumbers

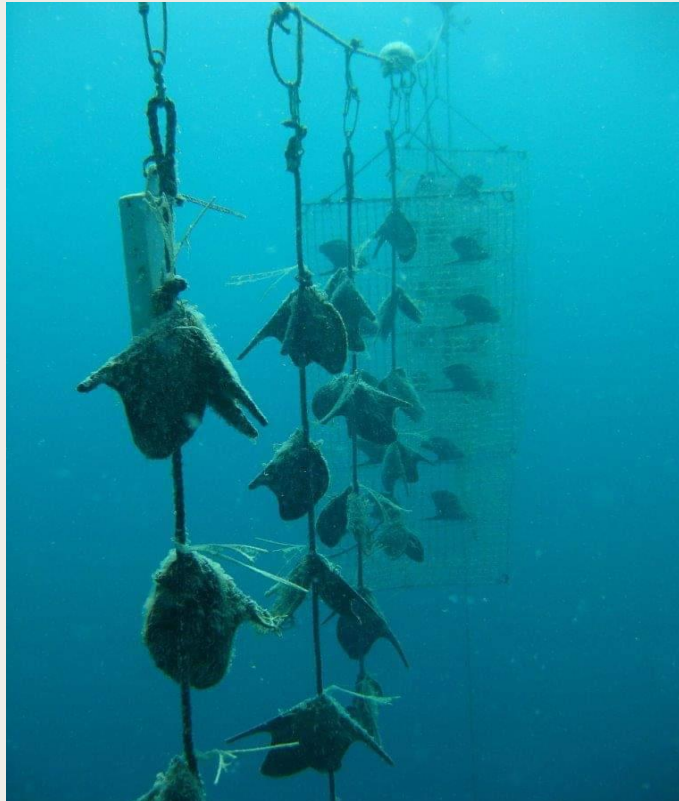
- Production relies heavily on wild broodstock and natural spat.

- No confirmed major WOAHA-listed aquatic diseases, but comprehensive disease status assessments have not yet been completed.



Aquaculture activities







Main Challenges Identified

- Limited aquatic animal disease surveillance.
- Limited diagnostic laboratory capacity.
- Lack of comprehensive aquatic animal health legislation.
- Weak biosecurity measures for:
 - > Imports
 - > Hatcheries
 - > Movement of aquatic animals
- Limited emergency preparedness for aquatic disease outbreaks.
- Shortage of specialised aquatic animal health personnel.

Priority Recommendation

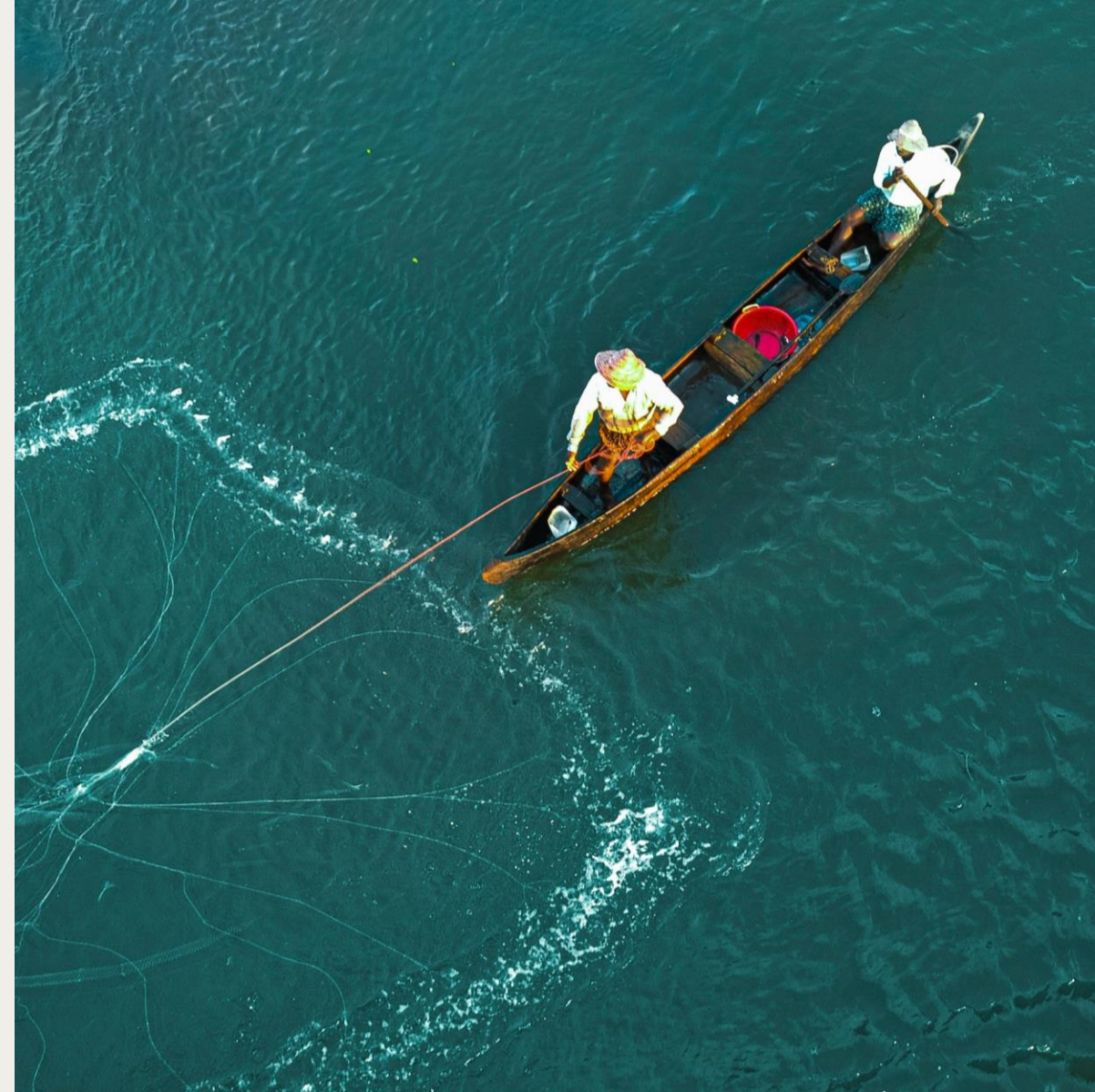
1. Strengthen aquatic biosecurity legislation
2. Develop risk-based surveillance programmes
3. Improve diagnostic laboratory capability
4. Enhance import risk analysis and quarantine procedures
5. Build national emergency preparedness and response plans
6. Increase training for aquatic animal health officers
7. Improve data collection and reporting to WOAHA
8. Strengthen coordination among fisheries, environment and health sectors



Key Messages

- Tonga has a low-risk vulnerable aquaculture sector.
- Prevention through strong biosecurity is more cost-effective than outbreak response
- Capacity building should focus on surveillance, diagnostics, legislation and emergency preparedness
- Continued collaboration with regional partners will be critical to sustainable aquaculture growth and compliance with WOAHA standards.

Thank you



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