

WOAH Aquatic Code and Manuals: Recent Updates

Regional Workshop for WOAH Focal Points for Aquatic Animals

AAHSC (Dr S. Tavoranpanich,
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7 – 9 July 2026 | Tokyo, Japan

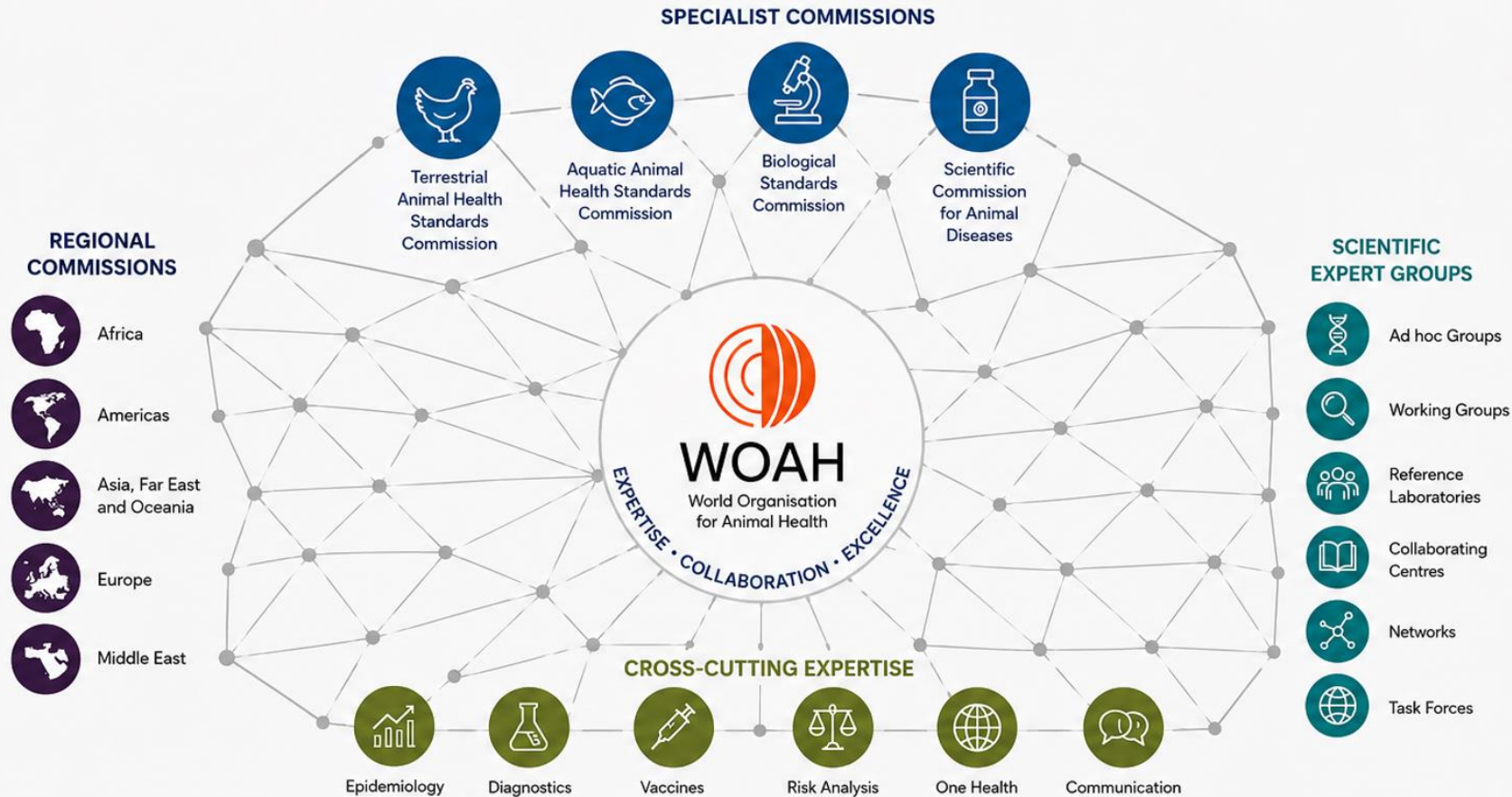


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Resolution 29 – Amendments to the Aquatic Code

- **Annex 5:** Glossary – ‘Ornamental aquatic animal’
- **Annex 6:** Chapter 4.7. ‘Fallowing in aquaculture’
- **Annex 7:** Article 9.2.2. of Chapter 9.2. ‘Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)’
- **Annex 8:** Article 10.3.5. and 10.3.6. of Chapter 10.3. ‘Infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris*’
- **Annex 9:** Article 10.4.9. of Chapter 10.4. ‘Infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus’
- **Annex 10:** Update to the viral names of pathogenic agents for WOA listed diseases



Resolution 30 – Amendments to the Aquatic Manual

- **Annex 18:** Section 2.2.1. and 2.2.2. of Chapter 2.2.2. ‘Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)’
- **Annex 19:** Chapter 2.4.5. ‘Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*’
- **Annex 20:** Chapter 2.4.6. ‘Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*’
- **Annex 21:** Chapter 2.4.7. ‘Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*’
- **Annex 22:** Update to the virus names of pathogenic agents for WOA listed diseases

New editions of the **Aquatic Code** and **Aquatic Manual** (available in **English, French, and Spanish**) will be published online by **1 September 2026**.



Texts circulated for comments in Feb. 2026 report

12 annexes

1. Work Program and priorities
2. Chapter 1.1. 'Notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information'
3. Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance'
4. and 5. Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation' and Glossary definition of 'compartment'
6. Model Article X.X.7. 'Compartment free from [pathogen X]' of the disease-specific chapters
7. Chapter 5.Y. 'Introduction to recommendations for international aquatic animal health certification and export and import procedures'
8. Chapter 6.2. 'Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals'
9. Chapter 2.4.2. 'Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*' and Chapter 2.4.3. 'Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*'
10. Chapter 2.4.4. 'Infection with *Marteilia refringens*'
11. Chapter 2.3.X. 'Infection with tilapia lake virus'
12. Chapter 2.3.9. 'Infection with spring viraemia of carp virus'

For details: February 2026 Aquatic Animals Commission Report

<https://www.woah.org/app/uploads/2026/03/a-aahsc-feb-2026-2.pdf#page=304&zoom=100,0,0>



Work programme status

- Work programme includes a range of ongoing work items.
- Work items are prioritised from 1–4, with Priority 1 and 2 are active work for the AAHSC.
- Some are undertaken in coordination with other Specialist Commissions

Annex 4. Item 4. – Work Programme for the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission 2025–2027

Chapter	Subject	Summary of the work	Status – February 2026		
			Stage of consideration	Remarks (Month when draft text first circulated for comment /# of rounds for comment)	Priority order *
Aquatic Code					
Ch. 1.1.	Notification of diseases, and provision of epidemiological information	Discussed with Code Commission to ensure consistency and clarity on revisions.	First circulation for comments.	Refer to Feb 2026 AAHSC report (Feb 2026/1)	1
Ch. 1.4.	Aquatic animal disease surveillance	Reviewed Ch. 1.4. to consider if revision required following the update of Ch. 4.3.	First circulation for comments	Refer to Feb 2026 AAHSC report (Feb 2026/1)	1
Ch. 4.2.	Application of zoning	Draft revision of the chapter taking into account work in <i>Terrestrial Code</i> .	Preparatory work	Refer to Feb 2026 AAHSC report	2
Ch. 4.3.	Application of compartmentalisation	Revision of the chapter to focus on compartmentalisation. Members engaged through a questionnaire and discussion paper.	Circulated for comments	Refer to Feb 2026 AAHSC report (Feb 2025/3)	1
Ch. 4.7.	Fallowing in aquaculture	Review of Ch. 4.7. following the drafting of Ch. 4.X. 'Emergency disease preparedness' and Ch. 4.Y. 'Disease outbreak management'.	To be proposed for adoption in May 2026.	Refer to Feb 2026 AAHSC report (Feb 2025/3)	1
Section 5	Trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification	Revision of chapters in Section 5 to ensure useability for trade purposes	To discuss priority of chapters to revise at September 2026 meeting.	Refer to Sept 2025 AAHSC report (Sept 2025/1)	1
Ch. 5.Y.	New introductory chapter to Section 5	Taskforce between AAC and TCC convened and drafted chapter.	First circulation for comments.	Refer to Feb 2026 AAHSC report (Feb 2026/1)	1



Work programme items – Circulated for Comments

- Revision of ‘Notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information’ (Chapter 1.1.)

Core Standard: Clarifying the core guidelines for member states in the notification of important aquatic animal diseases and sharing of epidemiological information.

Key Implementation: Establishing mandatory notification obligations, standardizing notification procedures and time limits, and uniformly submitting and exchanging data through the WAHIS system.



Work programme items – Circulated for Comments

- Revision of 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' (Chapter 1.4.)
- Revision of the 'Application of compartmentalisation' (Chapter 4.3.) and Glossary definition of 'compartment'

Core of Revision:

- Introduces the concepts of **"Independent compartment"** (i.e. independent of disease status of surrounding water body) **and "Dependent compartment"** (i.e. dependent on disease status of surrounding water body)
- Emphasizing that scientific risk analysis should run through the entire process of compartment identification, establishment, maintenance, and withdrawal, which is the key cornerstone for determining the effectiveness of compartmentalization.



Chapter 1.4 Aquatic animal disease surveillance’ (Table 1.1)

Pathway	Primary <i>surveillance</i> evidence to claim <i>disease</i> freedom	Secondary evidence to claim freedom (if required)	Applicable level of application
1. Absence of <i>susceptible species</i>	Surveys, historical data, import records, environmental information	None	Country, <i>zone</i>
2. Historical freedom	<i>Passive surveillance</i>	<i>Targeted surveillance</i> (in populations where <i>passive surveillance</i> is not appropriate)	Country, <i>zone</i>
3. <i>Targeted surveillance</i>	<i>Targeted surveillance</i>	<i>Passive surveillance</i> (in appropriate populations)	Country, <i>zone</i> , <i>compartment</i>
4. Returning to freedom	<i>Targeted surveillance</i>	<i>Passive surveillance</i> (in appropriate populations)	Country, <i>zone</i> , <i>compartment</i>





Work programme items – Circulated for Comments

- Revision of recommendations for international aquatic animal health certification and export and import procedures (Section 5)

Core of Revision: Section 5, covering trade measures, import/export procedures, and health certification, is under comprehensive review to improve practical application of the standards.

Chapter 5.Y is a new introductory chapter to Section 5 (circulated for comments). This chapter aims to clarify the overall structure and improve how users navigate import/export procedures and certification requirements. Taskforce between AAC and TCC convened and drafted chapter.



Work programme items – Circulated for Comments

- Revision of the ‘Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals’ (Chapter 6.2.)

Core of Revision:

- Comprehensively revise the principles for the use of antimicrobial agents
- Alignment with the corresponding chapter of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code
- Presents nine clear principles for responsible and prudent use
- Recognises obligations to implement national action plans on AMR
- Emphasizing the "One Health " concept and clarifying the legal responsibilities of each party.



Work programme items – Circulated for Comments

- Aquatic Manual reformat and review each disease-specific chapter of the Aquatic Manual into a new template, 2 of 31 disease-specific chapters remain
- A new Manual Chapter 2.3.X. ‘Infection with tilapia lake virus’ has been developed and circulated for Member comments



Work programme items – Information Update

- Ongoing revision of Section 7 on welfare of farmed fish

The Commission reviewed an expert report on the current science for welfare of farmed fish and has published for Member consultation.

Members were invited to provide feedback on two reports available on the WOA website:

- Welfare of farmed fish: review of the scientific evidence on transport, stunning and killing for human consumption, and killing for disease control purposes
<https://www.woah.org/app/uploads/2026/03/welfare-review-science-feb2026.pdf>
- Welfare of farmed fish: review of Chapters 7.2., 7.3. and 7.4. of the Aquatic Code
<https://www.woah.org/app/uploads/2026/03/welfare-review-chapter-feb2026-1.pdf>



Work programme items – Information Update

- Emerging diseases remain a standing priority for the Commission.
- “Emerging disease” is a defined term in the Aquatic Code; when criteria are met, Members are expected to report it under notification requirements.
- Ongoing work is revising SOPs for disease listing and emerging disease determination to improve alignment with the Terrestrial Code framework.



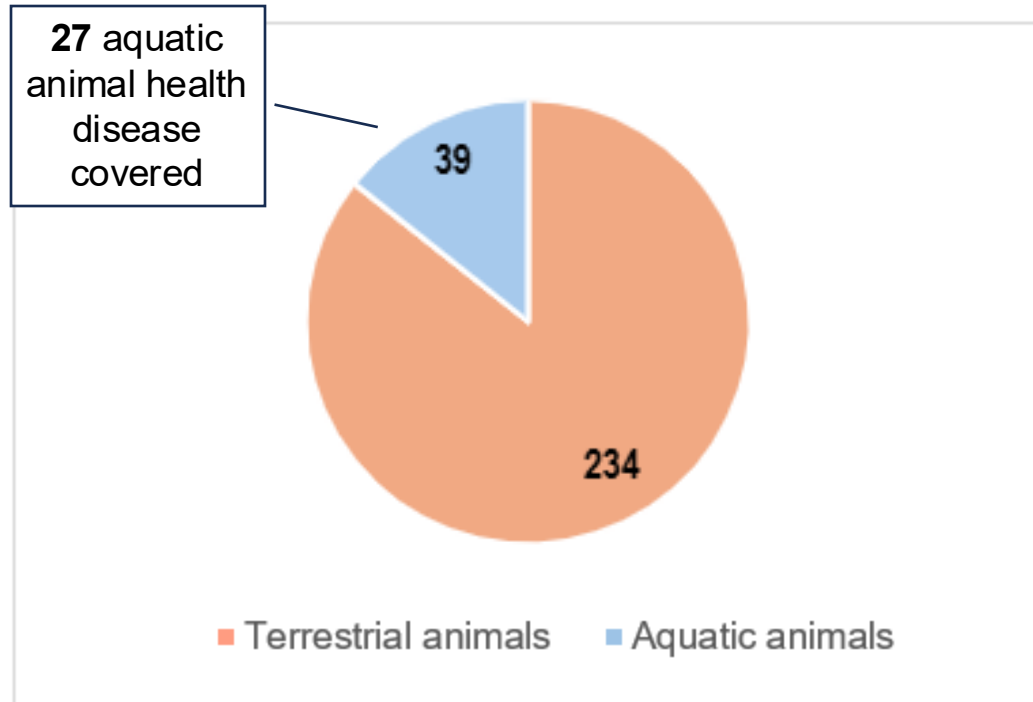
Work programme items – Information Update

- Revision of the susceptible species: application of Chapter 1.5 criteria to disease-specific chapters to determine susceptible host species. Assessments completed for all listed diseases in fish, crustaceans, and molluscs; next phase will address amphibian diseases in 2026
- AHG on amphibian susceptibility to WOA listed diseases: first meeting planned for 4-6 August 2026
- AHG on Certification (first meeting held 16-18 June 2026): ongoing review of several chapters of section 5 aligned with the Terrestrial code
- AHG on new chapter for infection with Megalocytivirus pagrus1, which was listed in the Aquatic Code in May 2024. Preparatory work – interlaboratory comparison.

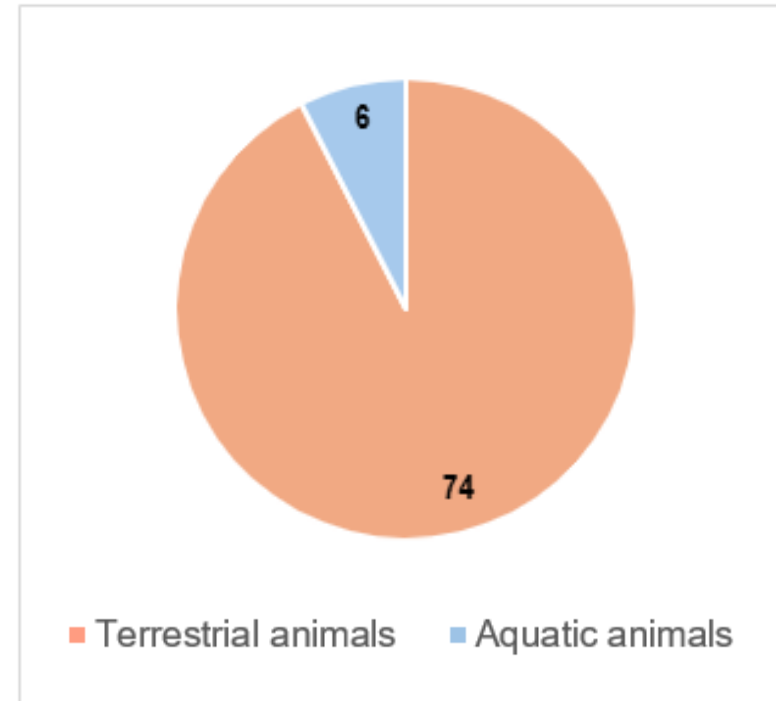


WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Reference Centres

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Thank you

