

Panorama

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Editorial
Perspectives
Dossier
Around the World
Resources



Improving aquatic animal health and welfare worldwide



World Organisation
for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

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The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Standards aim to improve animal health and welfare as well as the safety of the international trade in animal products. A better understanding of the challenges faced by WOA Members when implementing WOA Aquatic Animal Standards will guide WOA teams in identifying areas for improvement and taking appropriate measures to provide targeted support to Members.

Importance of Standards and their implementation

WOAH develops International Standards to improve aquatic animal health and welfare as well as the safety of the international trade in aquatic animals and their products. These Standards are compiled in the [Aquatic Animal Health Code](#) and the [Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals](#) and provide specific recommendations to Members on:

- Members' obligations to notify WOA of aquatic animal diseases
- the prevention, early detection and control of diseases
- disease-specific recommendations for safe trade in aquatic animals and aquatic animal products
- antimicrobial use
- standardised approaches to the diagnosis of diseases.

A survey to better understand the challenges in implementing WOA Standards

WOAH conducted a 48-question survey in April 2022 to better understand the barriers to implementation of standards and transparency in disease reporting. WOA National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals were consulted and 65% of them contributed to the survey.

The main findings identified in the survey are provided below.

- A lack of resources and expertise in aquatic animal health was cited as the most common barrier to the implementation of standards.
- Members with limited access to relevant training and education on aquatic animal health and welfare reported more barriers to the implementation of WOA Standards.
- The impact of disease notification on regional and international trade was considered an important barrier to the notification of diseases to WOA.
- Many Members noted a lack of national legislation and regulations and/or national legislation and regulations developed with limited consideration of WOA standards.

From the identification of challenges to actions

Following the analysis of the survey, key recommendations are being proposed: capacity-building activities targeting different areas, communication and advocacy campaigns, and clarification of roles and responsibilities in the Aquatic Animal Health Services. Some recommendations target WOA and have been integrated into the WOA [Aquatic Animal Health Strategy](#), while some are suggestions for our Members wishing to develop their aquaculture sector or

access trade markets through an enhanced implementation of WOA H Standards.

Main findings and recommendations of the survey will be made publicly available in the coming months.

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PERSPECTIVES

▶ WOA H ACTIONS

Understanding why implementation of WOA H standards can be challenging

KEYWORDS

[#data integration department](#), [#international standard](#), [#recommendation](#), [#survey](#), [#WOA H Aquatic Animal Health Strategy](#)

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WOAH (founded as OIE) is a global organisation, working to ensure the health of animals across the world. Since 1924, we have focused on the complexities of animal health. We disseminate information on animal diseases and use science-based strategies to limit their potentially negative impact on society.

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