

Report of the Meeting of the WOAHA Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission

Original: English (EN)

11 to 18 February 2026

Introduction and Member contribution

This report presents the work of the WOAHA Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission (hereinafter 'the Aquatic Animals Commission') who met in Paris, France from 11 to 18 February 2026.

The Aquatic Animals Commission wished to thank the following Members for providing written comments for the WOAHA *Aquatic Animal Health Code* (hereinafter 'the *Aquatic Code*') and WOAHA *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals* (hereinafter 'the *Aquatic Manual*'): Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China (People's Rep. of), Chinese Taipei, Ecuador, Japan, Korea (Rep. of), Mexico, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA), Members of the WOAHA Americas Region (the Americas), Member States of the European Union (EU), Members of the QUADS Alliance. The Commission also wished to acknowledge the valuable advice and contributions from numerous experts of the WOAHA scientific network.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered all comments submitted prior to the deadline that were aligned with the [Guide for WOAHA Members and International Organisations on submitting comments during the process for the elaboration of WOAHA International Standards](#) (the 'Guide'). The Commission made amendments to draft texts, where relevant, in the usual manner of 'double underline' and 'strikethrough'. In relevant annexes, amendments proposed at this meeting are highlighted in yellow to distinguish them from those made previously.

For the information of members, [Annex 3](#) provides Commission responses to member comments for each annex. Member comments are provided in the language in which they were submitted. Commission responses are presented in English, French or Spanish according to the language version. Member comments and Commission responses are embedded in the English version of the text that was circulated for comment in September 2025. Please note that the texts for comment are presented in [Annexes 4, 11 to 17, and 23 to 26](#).

Annexes

[Annex 3](#) is presented for information only and presents the Commission's responses to Member comments.

Texts in [Annexes 5 to 10, 18 to 22](#) are proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

Texts in [Annexes 4, 11 to 17, 23 to 26](#) are presented for comment.



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How to submit comments

The Aquatic Animals Commission strongly encourages WOAH Members and International Organisations with a WOAH Cooperation Agreement to participate in the development of WOAH International Standards by submitting comments on relevant annexes of this report.

Engagement of Members and International Organisations in the standard-setting process through the submission of comments is critical to ensure the standards are based on the latest scientific and technical data, reflect the different contexts among Members and stakeholders, and are feasible to implement. To ensure that comments are considered, they should be submitted by the deadline and in the format described in the [Guide for WOAH Members and International Organisations on submitting comments during the process for the elaboration of WOAH International Standards](#) (Guide) and the [Standard Operating Procedure for WOAH Members and International Organisations to submit comments during the process for the elaboration of WOAH International Standards](#) (SOP) available on the Delegates' website and the WOAH public website.

Comments that are not correctly formatted as described in the [Guide](#) and [SOP](#), including those that do not include a supporting rationale may be excluded from consideration by the Commission. Any questions on the requirements for formatting and submission of comments should be sent to AAC.Secretariat@woah.org

The Aquatic Animals Commission wished to highlight that when a Commission discussion is based on the input of an *ad hoc* Group, Members are encouraged to review the relevant *ad hoc* Group report together with the report of the Commission. *Ad hoc* Group reports are available on the dedicated webpages on the WOAH website at <https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/standards-setting-process/ad-hoc-groups/>

Deadline for comments

Comments on relevant texts in this report must be received by **3 July 2026** to be considered by the Aquatic Animals Commission.

Where to send comments

All comments should be sent to AAC.Secretariat@woah.org

Date of the next meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission noted that the dates for its next meeting will be: **16 to 23 September 2026**.

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1. Welcome and updates from WOAAH Headquarters

1.1. WOAAH Director General

Dr Emmanuelle Soubeyran, the WOAAH Director General, met with the Aquatic Animals Commission on 12 February 2026. Dr Soubeyran thanked the Commission members for their support and commitment to achieving WOAAH's objectives in standard-setting and extended these thanks to their employing institutions and national governments.

Dr Soubeyran informed the Commission that development of the 8th Strategic Plan was approaching completion following broad consultation with internal and external stakeholders. Dr Soubeyran underscored that strengthening the global relevance, applicability and scientific quality of WOAAH's international standards remains a key strategic orientation and emphasised the Commission's important role in achieving this objective.

Dr Soubeyran also outlined progress in the ongoing organisational restructuring, noting that the first phase had been completed and that subsequent work would focus on streamlining processes, enhancing internal coordination and improving support to the Specialist Commissions. She highlighted WOAAH's broader efforts to ensure that governance reforms, including those under the Governance Review Committee, contribute to more coherent and effective technical work across the Organisation.

The Commission thanked Dr Soubeyran for her address and acknowledged the Secretariat's work to strengthen organisational effectiveness. The Commission emphasised the importance of aligned work programmes across WOAAH Specialist Commissions to ensure a manageable workload and enable efficient progress on priority items. The Commission highlighted the importance of defining the strategic direction for WOAAH's work on aquatic animal health. It recognised that this would require a review of the current Aquatic Animal Health Strategy and consultation with Members to support the development of a future strategy. The Commission and Dr Soubeyran also agreed on the importance of partner international organisational alignment and collaboration regarding aquatic animal health.

1.2. Deputy Director General, International Standards and Science

Dr Montserrat Arroyo, WOAAH Deputy Director General for Standard-Setting and Implementation (DDG-SSI) met with the Commission on 11 February 2026 and thanked the Commission members for their ongoing contributions to WOAAH's standard-setting work. She informed the Commission that the development of the 8th Strategic Plan was entering its final stages, following extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including the Specialist Commissions. The consolidated text would be presented to the Council in March 2026 and subsequently shared with WOAAH Delegates ahead of its proposed adoption at the 93rd General Session.

Dr Arroyo provided a detailed update on the Governance Review Committee, reiterating that the reform process aims to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of WOAAH's technical governance.

Dr Arroyo also briefed the Commission on operational matters relevant to their work, including updates to the organisational chart, preparations for the 93rd General Session, and ongoing cross-Commission coordination. In particular, she underlined the value of the joint session between the Bureaux of the Code Commission and the Aquatic Animals Commission held during this meeting run.

Dr Arroyo informed the Commission about the progress of the project "Support Members to understand the requirements for self-declaration of freedom from WOAAH-listed aquatic animal diseases", which is being developed by a service provider following a procurement process. Training materials are under development with ongoing feedback from WOAAH and the Commission was requested to support the final review.

The Commission thanked Dr Arroyo for her remarks and welcomed the updates provided on activities supporting the standard-setting agenda.

1.2.1. Transparency of the WOAAH process for the elaboration of Standards

As originally communicated in the Aquatic Animals Commission's September 2023 report, the Director General had agreed to progressively implement a process to improve the transparency of the WOAAH process for the elaboration of Standards for better documentation and traceability.

The first step in this process was the anonymous publication on the Delegates' website of comments considered by the Commission at its February 2024 meeting.

The second step in this process was the anonymous publication on the Delegates' and public WOAAH websites of comments considered by the Commission at its September 2024 meeting. The Commission also included its responses to comments in Annex 3 for information only. As a result, the Commission's report was more concise and focused on providing a short background summary for each agenda item as well as key points discussed and agreed by the Commission.

The third and final step in this process will be to publish Member comments in Annex 3, together with the name of the Member or partner organisation alongside the comment they submitted.

These new processes aim to improve transparency of the standard-setting process and make the report more user-friendly. Together with the guidance documents (see 'How to submit comments' in this report) for submitting comments that are available for Members and partners, WOAAH and the Commission hope that providing such visibility of examples of comments and responses will encourage more Members to engage confidently in the process of development of WOAAH Standards.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda was adopted by the Aquatic Animals Commission. The agenda and the list of participants are attached as [Annex 1](#) and [Annex 2](#) respectively.

3. Cooperation with Other Specialist Commissions

3.1. Cooperation with the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission

The Bureaux of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Code Commission) and the Aquatic Animals Commission held a side meeting chaired by the DDG SSI to discuss horizontal texts planned for circulation by both Commissions. Both Bureaux discussed proposed changes to Chapter 1.1. 'Notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information' of the *Aquatic Code* (see Item 6.1.) and *Terrestrial Code* for alignment and agreed to circulate the draft chapter in their respective reports.

The Code Commission and the Aquatic Animals Commission had agreed to make horizontal edits between the *Aquatic Code* and *Terrestrial Code*. Proposed changes included the addition of title for articles 1.1.3 to 1.1.5, guidance on the stability of events, and clarification on the frequency for follow-up reports to be submitted for emerging diseases. Additional text was proposed to clarify other important animal health information for reporting under Article 1.1.5.

Text between the Chapters 1.1. in each Code is consistent with the following exceptions:

- Regarding the 'strain' of pathogenic agents, the *Aquatic Code* chapter replaces this term with 'variant' of pathogenic agents whereas the *Terrestrial Code* chapter replaces this term with 'type, subtype and variant'. This is for consistency of usage in the disease-specific chapters of the respective *Codes*.
- The term 'susceptible species' is used for the chapter of the *Aquatic Code* whereas the term 'animal host' is used for the chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* due to these terms being defined in their respective glossaries.

- In point 1 of Article 1.1.3. Notification of listed diseases, the *Terrestrial Code* chapter eliminated point f and combined this as a consideration under point e. Whereas the chapter of the *Aquatic Code* maintained point f for notification of occurrence of a listed disease in a new host species. This difference is reflective of the different approach in the respective Codes. In the *Terrestrial Code*, the epidemiologically relevant animal hosts for a listed disease are provided in the disease-specific chapter and notification to WOAHA is only required for those animal hosts. In the *Aquatic Code*, *susceptible species* is a defined term, and susceptible species are included in each disease-specific chapter if they are assessed as meeting the criteria for susceptibility. As evidence for susceptibility of new aquatic species is common, notification of listed diseases in new host species is important to ensure ongoing revision of the susceptible species lists in disease-specific chapters.

The Bureaux also discussed draft Chapter 5.Y. 'Introduction to recommendations for international aquatic animal health certification and export and import procedures' which was developed by a joint taskforce comprising members from both Commissions (see Item 6.5.).

The Aquatic Animals Commission thanked the Bureaux and encouraged Members to consider the Code Commission's report for the details of relevant horizontal items.

4. Work programme and priorities

Comments were received from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China (People's Rep. of), New Caledonia and the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission noted comments expressing support for the Commission's work programme. Comments on work items discussed in this meeting are addressed in the corresponding items of this report. The Commission noted that Model Article X.X.7 'Compartment free from [pathogen X]' is a new Work Programme item arising from the ongoing revision of Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation' of the *Aquatic Code* and related revisions to Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' (see Item 6.4.).

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

The Commission was encouraged by the acknowledgment of the inclusive consultation process undertaken during the revision of the standards. Engagement with Members remains a cornerstone of the standard-setting process, ensuring transparency, scientific integrity and broad consensus. The active participation and technical contributions of Members continue to strengthen the quality, relevance and practical applicability of the standards.

The Commission welcomed the recognition of the practical impact of the revised standards in supporting Members to implement appropriate biosecurity management strategies. The effective application of tools such as disease-free compartments, zoning for disease control and eradication, and fallowing between production cycles is fundamental to facilitating safe international trade in aquatic animals and aquatic animal products while maintaining high levels of aquatic animal health protection.

The Commission reminded Members that the work programme outlines the current and planned work to be undertaken. The Commission encouraged Members to continue to provide feedback on topics being proposed, as well as their level of prioritisation.

Texts for comment

The updated work programme is presented as [Annex 4](#) for comments.

5. Aquatic Code Items that will be proposed for adoption in May 2026

5.1. Glossary – ‘Ornamental aquatic animal’

Background

Chapter 5.12. ‘Movement of ornamental aquatic animals’ was adopted by the General Assembly at the 92nd General Session in 2025. Chapter 5.12. provides recommendations for managing the disease risks associated with movement of ornamental aquatic animals and complements other provisions of the *Aquatic Code*. To ensure a common understanding of the term ‘ornamental aquatic animal’ the Aquatic Animals Commission proposed a new definition be included in the Glossary of the *Aquatic Code*. The new definition was adopted by the General Assembly at the 92nd General Session in May 2025, including a modification proposed during the session.

At its September 2025 meeting, comments were received from Members requesting the Commission consider the implications of the revision of the glossary definition for ‘ornamental aquatic animal’ adopted at the 92nd General Session. The Commission agreed that the adopted definition did not distinguish between ornamental aquatic animals that are kept as pets from those that are traded for sale as pets and revised the definition to align with the proposed definition as it was circulated in its February 2025 report.

The revised Glossary definition ‘ornamental aquatic animal’ has been circulated once for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 6.1., page 9)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from China (People’s Rep. of), New Caledonia, Peru, Thailand, the USA, and the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received and noted that some comments on the inclusion of pets kept in households in the definition. Further, considering Chapter 5.12. ‘Movement of ornamental aquatic animals’ focused on the movement of ornamental aquatic animals the current exclusion of pets in households is appropriate.

The Commission’s responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts to be proposed for adoption

The revised glossary term ‘ornamental aquatic animal’ is presented as [Annex 5](#) and will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

5.2. Chapter 4.7. ‘Fallowing in aquaculture’

Background

At its September 2024 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that Chapter 4.7. ‘Fallowing in aquaculture’, required a review as a consequence of the development of draft new chapters on emergency disease preparedness and disease outbreak management. At its February 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed and revised the text of Chapter 4.7. to align with new draft Chapters 4.10. ‘Emergency disease preparedness’ and 4.11. ‘Disease outbreak management’ adopted at the 92nd General Session.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Commission received numerous comments to improve clarity and extensive revisions were made to the revised draft chapter.

The revised Chapter 4.7. 'Fallowing in aquaculture' has been circulated twice for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2024 (Item 7.1.3., page 28), February 2025 (item 7.2., page 22); September 2025 report (Item 6.3., page 11)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China (People's Rep. of), Chinese Taipei, Ecuador, Japan, Norway, the UK, the USA, the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received and noted that Members were supportive of the chapter with some recommendations for revisions to improve clarity and readability.

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts to be proposed for adoption

The revised Chapter 4.7. 'Fallowing in aquaculture' is presented as [Annex 6](#) will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

5.3. Article 9.2.2. of Chapter 9.2. 'Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)'

Background

The *ad hoc* Group on Susceptibility of Crustacean Species to Infection with WOAHP Listed Diseases met in April 2025 to continue its work to apply the criteria in Chapter 1.5. 'Criteria for listing species as susceptible to infection with a specific pathogen'. At this meeting the *ad hoc* Group conducted the assessments for susceptibility of crustacean species to infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague). This assessment was an update of a previous assessment completed in 2015.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission considered the *ad hoc* Group report on Susceptibility of Crustacean Species to Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague) and commended the members for their comprehensive work.

The Aquatic Animals Commission agreed to apply Article 1.5.9. 'Listing of susceptible species at a taxonomic ranking of Genus or higher' using criteria outlined in its September 2024 report (Item 6.5.1., page 18) and to amend the list of susceptible species in Article 9.2.2. in line with recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group. The Commission agreed that *Faxonius spp.* and *Procambarus spp.* should be listed at the genus level. The assessment found three species of *Faxonius spp.* were susceptible.

Relevant sections of Chapter 2.2.2. 'Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague)' in the *Aquatic Manual* were also amended in line with recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group (see Item 8.1.1.).

The Aquatic Animals Commission encouraged Members to refer to the *ad hoc* Group's [April 2025](#) report available on the WOAHP website for details of the assessment conducted by the *ad hoc* Group.

The revised Article 9.2.2. of Chapter 9.2. 'Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague)' has been circulated once for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 6.5., page 12)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from Australia, China (People's Rep. of), Peru, Switzerland, Thailand, and the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received and noted that Members were mostly supportive of the proposed revisions with some recommendations for additional susceptible species. References were referred to a subject matter expert for review and provide updated scores.

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

For *Austropotamobius torrentium* the evidence was found sufficient to have a score of 1, and the Commission agreed it would be susceptible. With *A. torrentium* listed as susceptible, the Commission considered whether to apply Article 1.5.9. 'Listing of susceptible species at a taxonomic ranking of Genus or higher' using criteria outlined in its September 2024 report (Item 6.5.1., page 18). The Commission agreed that Article 1.5.9. would be applied to *Austropotamobius spp.* and it would be listed at the Genus level.

For *Cherax destructor* the evidence was not sufficient to score susceptibility.

Texts to be proposed for adoption

The revised Article 9.2.2. of Chapter 9.2. 'Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague)' is presented as [Annex 7](#) will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

5.4. Article 10.3.5. and 10.3.6. of Chapter 10.3. 'Infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris*'

Background

Following the revision of Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' the Aquatic Animal Commission reviewed the periods of basic biosecurity conditions (BBC) and targeted surveillance (TS) periods in the disease-specific chapters of the *Aquatic Code*. An assessment on the periods was completed by a WOAHA Collaborating Centre expert and informed proposed new periods in Articles X.X.5. to X.X.7. (and 10.4.5. to 10.4.10.) in all disease-specific chapters. These assessments were circulated for comment twice and at its February 2025 meeting the Commission agreed that pathway 2 was not suitable for infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris* as available scientific evidence indicated that clinical disease is not seen in all susceptible species.

At the 2025 General Session some Members expressed that pathway 2 (historical freedom) should be suitable for infection with *G. salaris* because while infection with *G. salaris* may present subclinically in some susceptible species it has at least one susceptible species which shows clinical signs. Thus, some Members indicated it should be possible to use pathway 2 (historical freedom) with appropriate surveillance and early detection systems. In response, the President of the Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that these comments required further consideration and recommended to the Assembly that pathway 2 (historical freedom) be placed under study and discussed by the Commission at its September 2025 meeting.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Commission considered comments from the 92nd General Session (May 2025), comments submitted by Members and the Reference Laboratory expert opinion. The Commission agreed that Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) would show clinical disease and pathway 2 (historical freedom) would be suitable for this species only, as other susceptible species may not present clinically. The Commission agreed maintain pathway 2 for both Articles 10.3.5. and 10.3.6. adding a text indicating that it could only be used for Atlantic salmon.

The revised Articles 10.3.5. and 10.3.6. of Chapter 10.3. 'Infection with *G. salaris*' have been circulated once for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

February 2025 (Item 6.4., page13 and Annex 3, page 31; September 2025 report (Item 6.6., page 13)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, the UK, the USA, the EU, the Americas Region, and the QUADS Alliance.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received regarding the need for improved clarity of revisions.

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

The Commission noted that the proposed added text was interpreted by some Members to state that the application of pathway 2 for infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris* would be limited to single-species monocultures (e.g. Atlantic salmon), and would not allow the use of representative sampling to a wider population. The Commission stated this was not the intention of the text but rather the text was added to highlight that species that show clinical disease must be included in the study population for the use of passive surveillance. The Commission noted that Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic Animal Surveillance' specifies the requirements that must be met for a self-declaration of freedom to be made by pathway 2, historical freedom. These include the requirements for an early detection system (Article 1.4.7) and requirements for passive surveillance (Article 1.4.8). As outlined in Article 1.4.8, there must be:

- 'conditions (biotic and abiotic)' that 'are conducive to clinical expression of infection',
- 'observation of signs of disease' ... that 'would lead to investigation',
- 'susceptible farmed aquatic animals would be under sufficient observation, such that if signs of the disease were to occur, they would be observed',
- for populations of wild aquatic animals, they should either be under observation or epidemiologically linked to farmed populations.

Based on the criteria in Article 1.4.8., pathway 2 would only be applicable if susceptible species that would show clinical signs are present and are appropriately accounted for in the study design.

Considering the other recommendations in the *Aquatic Code*, the Commission revised Articles 10.3.5. (free country) and 10.3.6. (free zone) of the *Aquatic Code* to clarify how pathway 2 should be used when Members declare freedom from *Gyrodactylus salaris*. This update responded to Member concerns about the parasite's high-risk nature, namely its high infectivity, ability to spread unnoticed, lack of vaccines, and the severe impacts and costly eradication measures it requires. The revisions include a cross reference to *Aquatic Manual* Article 2.2.5., which provides information on the epidemiology of infection with *G. salaris*, including that in some strains of fish species, *G. salaris* does not cause any visible signs of disease. As such infections can be undetected, passive surveillance alone is not sensitive enough to reliably support a declaration of freedom under pathway 2 unless susceptible species which show clinical signs are present.

The Commission also considered the Members' comments regarding the required period for basic biosecurity conditions for pathway 2. Taking into account the disease specific biological, ecological, and production related factors of *G. salaris* that reduce the annual likelihood of detection, the Commission concluded that a longer observation period of 15 years is scientifically justified to achieve ≥95% confidence of freedom. This is in accordance with Article 1.4.9, which provides for the minimum period of basic biosecurity conditions to be extended beyond the default ten-year period (which is based on a 30% annual likelihood of detection) when diseases specific factors warrant.

Texts to be proposed for adoption

The revised Articles 10.3.5. and 10.3.6. of Chapter 10.3. 'Infection with *G. salaris*' is presented as [Annex 8](#) will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

5.5. Article 10.4.9. of Chapter 10.4. 'Infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus'

Background

Following the revision of Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' the Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed the periods of basic biosecurity conditions (BBC) and targeted surveillance (TS) periods in the disease-specific chapters of the *Aquatic Code*. An assessment on the periods was completed by a WOAHA Collaborating Centre expert and informed proposed new periods in Articles X.X.5. to X.X.7. (and 10.4.5. to 10.4.10.) in all disease-specific chapters. These assessments were circulated for comment twice.

At the 2025 General Session some Members expressed that the period for a free compartment for infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus HPR0 should be two years. It was noted that ISAV HPR0 is transiently detected in populations of Atlantic salmon, most likely during stressful events such as spawning and may not be detected in one year. Also, there is limited understanding of the epidemiology of ISAV HPR0 in land-based establishments and due to this uncertainty, a longer period is required to consider a compartment free from infection with ISAV HPR0.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission considered information provided by Members and reviewed the assessment of BBC and TS. The Commission consulted Reference Laboratory experts who supported the low likelihood of early detection for ISAV HPR0. Based on this information, the Commission agreed that a minimum period of two years was appropriate for targeted surveillance for a compartment, and the assessment of the periods was updated to reflect this (can be found on the [website](#)).

The Article 10.4.9. of Chapter 10.4. 'Infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus' has been circulated once for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

February 2025 (Item 6.4., page 13 and Annex 3, page 38); September 2025 report (Item 6.7., page 14)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received and noted support for the proposed revision.

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts to be proposed for adoption

The revised Article 10.4.9. of Chapter 10.4. 'Infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus' is presented as [Annex 9](#) will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

5.6. Update to the viral names of pathogenic agents for WOAHA listed diseases

Background

At its February 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission noted that several of the viral pathogenic agents for WOAHA listed aquatic animal diseases have been updated by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV). The Commission agreed to review the taxonomy and names of the viral agents of WOAHA listed diseases and propose revisions for the usage of these names.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed the current classifications in ICTV against the names used in the *Aquatic Code* and the *Aquatic Manual* (see Item 8.3.). Of the 18 viral pathogenic agents listed as WOAHA listed diseases, 12 needed to be updated for crustaceans Chapters 9.3., 9.5., 9.6. and 9.8.; for fish Ch 10.4., 10.5., 10.6., 10.7., 10.9., 10.10., and 10.11. and for molluscs Ch 11.1.

During the review of viral names for pathogenic agents, the Commission noted that infection with yellowhead virus genotype 1 (Chapter 9.10.) needed to be updated to the same format as the other viral diseases by removing Order.

The revised scientific names for viral pathogenic agents of WOAHA listed diseases has been circulated once for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 6.8., page 15)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China (People's Rep. of), Thailand, and the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received and noted that Members were supportive of the revised texts with some references for updated names and editorial revisions.

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts to be proposed for adoption

The revised scientific names for viral pathogenic agents of WOAHA listed diseases is presented as [Annex 10](#) will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

6. *Aquatic Code* Items for Member comments

6.1. Chapter 1.1. 'Notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information'

Background

At its September 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments from WOAHA World Animal Health Information and Analysis Department (WAHIAD) relevant to Chapter 1.1. 'Notification of diseases, and provision of epidemiological information' and was informed that WAHIAD had also provided comments on the corresponding chapter of the *Terrestrial Code*.

At the September 2025 Bureaux meeting of the Aquatic Animals Commission and the Terrestrial Code Commission, the Bureaux agreed to propose revisions to Chapter 1.1. 'Notification of diseases and provision of epidemiological information' of the *Terrestrial Code* and *Aquatic Code* in parallel to ensure consistency between respective chapters. The Bureaux agreed to review each other's draft revised Chapters 1.1. in February 2026.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 7.1.2., page 21)

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed Chapter 1.1. and proposed revisions, which were discussed with the Code Commission at a side meeting involving the Bureaux (see item 3.1.).

Texts for comment

The revised Chapter 1.1. 'Notification of diseases, and provision of epidemiological information' is presented as [Annex 11](#) for comments.

6.2. Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance'

Background

At its February 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission noted that the revision of Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation' with the inclusion of the concepts of dependent and independent compartments would require a review of Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance'. The Commission agreed that at its February meeting it would review Chapter 1.4. and the articles in disease-specific chapters for declaration of compartment freedom and would propose any revisions that may be required to align with the recommendations in Chapter 4.3.

Previous Commission report where this item was last discussed

September 2025 report (Item 6.2., page 10)

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' taking into consideration the revisions to Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation'. Considerations for independent and dependent compartments as well as internal and external surveillance were added to this chapter for consistency with the revised Chapter 4.3.

The Commission noted that it was necessary to ensure conceptual distinction between the purposes on internal surveillance which is required to demonstrate freedom in accordance with Chapter 1.4., and external surveillance which informs assessment of risk.

The Commission also reviewed the model article X.X.7. in the disease-specific chapters to include considerations for dependent and independent compartments into the article on 'compartment free from [pathogen X]' (see item 6.4.).

Texts for comment

The revised Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' is presented as [Annex 12](#) for comments.

6.3. Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation'

Background

At its September 2023 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission developed a discussion paper to engage Members on issues relevant to the revision of Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation'. The discussion paper was informed by Member responses to a short questionnaire circulated in the Commission's September 2022 meeting report, as well as feedback from WOAHA Aquatic Animal Focal Point workshops. The Commission highlighted that compartmentalisation provides an opportunity to trade disease-free aquatic animal commodities from zones or countries that are not declared free from the diseases of concern.

At its February 2024 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received on the discussion paper and noted that responses were generally supportive. The Commission revised the discussion paper to update its proposed approaches to the revision of Chapter 4.3. and it was circulated for comment.

At its September 2024 meeting, the Commission agreed to use the final version of the discussion paper circulated in its February 2024 report to guide the revision of Chapter 4.3.

At its February 2025 meeting the Commission finalised the revised draft Chapter 4.3. and revised the Glossary definition for 'compartment' for consistent usage in the draft text and revised the Glossary definition for 'compartment' for consistent usage in the draft text. The revised Chapter 4.3 was provided to members for comment.

At its September 2025 meeting the Commission noted that to account for the many comments received, extensive revisions and the re-ordering of articles were made. These revisions included providing clarity to the categories of independent and dependent compartments as well as to highlight the use of risk analysis. The Commission agreed to review Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' at its February meeting to communicate what revisions would be required with the update to Chapter 4.3.

The revised Chapter 4.3. and Glossary definition 'compartment' has been circulated twice for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2023 report (Item 6.5., page 11); February 2024 (Item 8.1., page 41); September 2024 (Item 7.1.2., page 27); February 2025 (item 7.1., page 21); September 2025 report (Item 6.2., page 9)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China (People's Rep. of), Chinese Taipei, Korea (Rep. of), New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Thailand, the UK, the USA, and the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received. The Commission noted that while Members welcomed the use of risk analysis, some members requested further clarity on the application of dependent compartments.

The Commission wished to emphasise that revised Chapter 4.3. provides a framework for Members to apply compartmentalisation and negotiate requirements with trading partners. It is not intended to provide prescriptive requirements, rather it utilises risk analysis to provide a flexible approach to the application of compartmentalisation that can be applied to mitigate risks across a range of circumstances. The Commission noted that this need for flexibility had been emphasised by some members during consultation on the discussion paper since 2022. Text was added to Article 4.3.1. to reinforce the purpose of the revised Chapter 4.3.

In response to comments on external surveillance, the Commission highlighted that the intention of external surveillance is to inform risk analysis for the compartment, rather than to provide evidence for declaration of freedom in the surrounding water body. It was noted that external surveillance may be passive and/or targeted depending on suitability and requirements to evaluate risk. As described in Chapter 1.4., passive surveillance is always required within a compartment in order to meet the basic biosecurity requirements.

The Commission considered comments from some Members that requested that the concept of dependent compartments should be applicable to semi-open systems if risks can be mitigated as informed by the outcome of risk analysis. The Commission noted that this has been beyond the scope of application of dependent compartments (through a discussion paper with Members since 2022). However, the Commission remains flexible to consider this proposal and requests that Members provide more details of rationale regarding the application of dependent compartments to semi-open systems in their general comments on [Annex 13](#).

The Commission reviewed comments received on the Glossary definition of 'compartment' and noted that Members were supportive with minor suggestions for edits.

The Commission's responses to comments received regarding revised Chapter 4.3. and Glossary definition of 'compartment' are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts to be proposed for adoption

The revised Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation' and Glossary definition 'compartment' are presented as [Annex 13 and 14](#) for comments.

6.4. Model Article X.X.7. 'Compartment free from [pathogen X]' of the disease-specific chapters

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission revised model Article X.X.7. in the disease specific chapters to incorporate considerations for both dependent and independent compartments in the article 'Compartment free from [pathogen X]'. This revision aligns with the Commission's revision of Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance' and takes into account the revision to Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation' (see item 6.3.).

Texts for comment

The revised model article X.X.7. 'Compartment free from infection with [Pathogen X]' is presented as [Annex 15](#) for comments.

6.5. Chapter 5.Y. 'Introduction to recommendations for international aquatic animal health certification and export and import procedures'

Background

At the 2024 Bureaux meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission and Code Commission discussed the need to collaboratively develop a new introductory chapter for Section 5 of the *Aquatic Code* and *Terrestrial Code* to provide clarity on its objectives and how the Section should be used.

A task force was formed with two members from the Aquatic Animals Commission and the Terrestrial Code Commission, respectively, which met twice during 2025 to draft the new chapter.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed the new draft Chapter 5.Y. 'Introduction to trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification'. The Commission commended the task force for their work on the chapter. The Commission noted that the chapter had details which were not normally included in an introductory chapter and agreed that the Task force should review the chapter again following the introductory chapter template. The Commission considered that the information not included in the introductory chapter could be considered in line with the proposed revisions to Section 5.

Previous Commission report where this item was last discussed

September 2025 report (Item 7.1.2., page 18)

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed a revised draft of the introductory chapter to Section 5 that was developed by the task force. The task force had removed some of the content as previously requested by the Commission. The Commission considered that the updated scope of the chapter was fit for purpose and edited the chapter for clarity and consistency.

During the Bureaux meeting of the two Commissions (see Item 3.1. of this report), the Bureau of the Code Commission reported that the Aquatic Animals Commission had also reviewed the draft introductory chapter and edited the draft for clarity. A final version of Chapter 5.Y. was approved, and the Bureaux agreed to circulate the Chapter 5.Y. for comments.

The Bureaux also discussed relocating Chapter 5.3. 'WOAH procedures relevant to the agreement on the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures of the World Trade Organization' to Section 2 of both Codes. Section 2 of both Codes would eventually be expanded to refer to development of sanitary measures. Both Bureaux agreed on the importance of harmonising this approach, however noted that prioritisation of this work would need to occur under the work programmes of both Commissions.

Texts for comment

The draft Chapter 5.Y. 'Introduction to recommendations for international aquatic animal health certification and export and import procedures' is presented as [Annex 16](#) for comments.

6.6. Chapter 6.2. 'Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals'

Background

At its February 2024 meeting, the WOAHA Working Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (Working Group) recommended that Section 6 'Antimicrobial use in aquatic animals' of the *Aquatic Code* be revised. The revision was requested to incorporate current scientific information and alignment with Chapter 6.10. 'Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary medicine' of the *Terrestrial Code*. This chapter had been recently revised, to reflect the One Health approach, and adopted at the 91st General Session in May 2024.

At its September 2024 meeting, the Aquatic Animal Commission agreed that Chapter 6.2. 'Principles for responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals' of the *Aquatic Code* is no longer aligned with the newly adopted Chapter 6.10. of the *Terrestrial Code*. The Commission agreed that revision of this and other chapters on Section 6 of the *Aquatic Code* should be added to the Commission's work programme and requested a gap analysis of the section. In its February 2025 meeting, the Commission, based on gap analysis, requested to convene an *ad hoc* Group to revise Chapter 6.2.

In April 2025, an *ad hoc* Group, composed of six experts including a member of the Working Group and a member of the Commission, was convened to update Chapter 6.2. of the *Aquatic Code*. After two meetings (July and August 2025), a draft was prepared and submitted to the Commission for consideration at their September 2025 meeting. The Commission requested that the article referred to the responsibilities of the Competent Authorities be more aligned to the counterpart section in the *Terrestrial Code*. The Commission also suggested that more examples be included in relevant articles for purposes other than food production. After a third *ad hoc* Group meeting (November 2025), a revised draft of Chapter 6.2. was presented to the Commission for their meeting in February 2026.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 7.1.3., page 19)

February 2026 meeting

A revised draft of Chapter 6.2. prepared by the *ad hoc* Group was presented to the Commission for discussion during their meeting in February 2026. The Commission noted that this version more thoroughly addressed Competent Authority responsibilities and was better aligned to the structure of the equivalent chapter of the *Terrestrial Code*. The Commission expressed its gratitude to the AHG for its work to revise the chapter. The report of the *ad hoc* Group is provided on the WOAHA [website](#).

The Commission considered the *ad hoc* group report and draft chapter in detail. The Commission made some minor editorial changes to improve readability and clarity. The Commission also included an article that lists the principles of responsible and prudent use, with each principle cross referenced to an article within the chapter where the principle is elaborated. This approach follows the structure of other chapters in the *Aquatic Code*. The Commission considered that with these last amendments the chapter is ready to be shared with Members for comments.

Texts for comment

The revised Chapter 6.2. 'Principles for responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals' is presented as [Annex 17](#) for comments.

7. Aquatic Code Items for Member Information

7.1. Chapter 4.2. 'Application of zoning'

Background

At its February 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that work to revise Chapter 4.2. 'Zoning and compartmentalisation' will commence following the revision of Chapter 4.3. 'Zoning and compartmentalisation'.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Commission completed a gap analysis on Chapter 4.2. taking into account work to be done on the zoning chapter in the *Terrestrial Code* and the current situation in the aquatic industry. The Commission decided to consult with Collaborating Centres and work on a revised text to be considered at its next meeting.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 7.1.1., page 18)

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed a draft revision for Chapter 4.2. 'Application of zoning'. The Commission noted that the text was drafted taking into account the work on the *Terrestrial Code* chapter on zoning. A Commission member had attended the WOAH zoning forum and the *Terrestrial Code ad hoc* Group for its chapter on zoning to ensure awareness of ongoing work to allow for inclusion of similar approaches where appropriate. The Commission acknowledged that it is important for the chapters to be horizontal between the *Aquatic Code* and the *Terrestrial Code* where applicable. The Commission agreed to continue to review the draft text and make further revisions at its September 2026 meeting.

7.2. Section 5. 'Trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification'

Background

At its September 2024 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that the usability of the *Aquatic Code* for developing and implementing sanitary measures should be reviewed. This should include relevant chapters and the logical ordering of articles in disease-specific chapters. The Commission agreed to develop a plan for the review of all relevant texts, including Section 5. 'Trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification' together, relevant chapters from other sections, including any relevant new texts.

At its February 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that the work on Section 5 should focus on providing a clear understanding of how implementation of sanitary measures should occur and identifying barriers to the implementation of these standards. The Commission agreed to finalise its work plan for Section 5 at its September 2025 meeting following the Bureaux meeting with the Terrestrial Code Commission.

At its September 2025 meeting the Commission discussed Section 5. 'Trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification'. The Commission agreed that the objectives of the proposed approach to the revision of Section 5 would include: revision and improved quality of older standards as necessary; addressing any gaps in the standards for trade; improving usability for developing sanitary measures; addressing aquatic specific issues while maintaining alignment with *Terrestrial Code*; and improving alignment of chapters within Section 5 and between Section 5 and other sections of the *Aquatic Code*. Considering these objectives the Aquatic Animals Commission proposed a plan for revision of Section 5.

The proposed approach to revision of Section 5. 'Trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification' has been circulated once for comment.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 6.4., page 11)

February 2026 meeting

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China (People's Rep. of), Chinese Taipei, Ecuador, Japan, Norway, the USA, and the EU.

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received and noted that Members supported the proposed approach to revision of Section 5. The Commission noted that comments were provided on details of specific chapters and on other sections of the *Aquatic Code*. These would be considered when the relevant chapters were put under revision and Members would have further opportunity to comment at that time.

The Commission also considered outcomes of the meeting of the Bureaux of the Terrestrial Code Commission and the Aquatic Animals Commission (see item 3.1.) and noted the need for strong alignment between the commissions.

At its September 2026 meeting, the Commission will review the User's Guide, Section 2 and Section 5 in association with Member comments to determine if updates are required to other aspects of the *Aquatic Code* in association with the planned work on Section 5.

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

7.3. Section 7. 'Welfare of farmed fish'

Background

At its September 2024 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that a review of the scientific basis of welfare of farmed fish should be completed to ensure that the recommendations in Section 7. 'Welfare of farmed fish' in the *Aquatic Code* are scientifically sound and meet the needs of Members. This work aligns with the [WOAH Aquatic Strategy](#), specifically Activity 1.3, Review the scientific basis of existing animal welfare standards.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Commission considered the review of scientific justification and recommendations for revision to Section 7. 'Welfare of farmed fish' completed by an external expert. The Commission noted that that this was a very comprehensive review of the available evidence.

The Aquatic Animals Commission agreed that the review of scientific evidence could be used as the basis for revisions to Chapters 7.2. to 7.4. The Commission requested that the expert prepare revised draft Chapters 7.2 to 7.4. In addition, the Commission requested a revised draft Chapter 7.1. 'Introduction to the recommendations for the welfare of farmed fish' taking into consideration relevant elements of the corresponding Chapter 7.1. 'Introduction to the recommendations for animal welfare' in the *Terrestrial Code*.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 7.1.4., page 20)

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed the consultant reports on the relevant scientific evidence relevant to Chapters 7.1. to 7.4. in the *Aquatic Code*. The Commission noted that the reports were comprehensive. The Commission highlighted that the review of the chapters aims to ensure that the recommendations in the *Aquatic Code* are scientifically sound and meet the needs of Members. It was however, noted that the recommendations in the reports may not be applicable for all aquaculture systems or species.

The following reports can be found on the WOAAH website:

- Welfare of farmed fish: [Review of the relevant scientific evidence on the welfare aspects of farmed fish during transport, the stunning and killing of farmed fish for human consumption and the killing of farmed fish for disease control purposes](#)
- Welfare of farmed fish: [Review of Chapters 7.2. 'Welfare of farmed fish during transport'; 7.3. 'Welfare aspects of stunning and killing of farmed fish for human consumption'; 7.4. 'Killing of farmed fish for disease control purposes' of the Aquatic Code](#)

The Commission agreed that the consultant reports provide a useful review of welfare science, analysis of the existing chapters and recommendations for their review. The Commission wished to emphasise that detailed comments on the reports are not being sought from Members at this stage. Comments will however, be sought on future revisions of the welfare chapters.

In order to guide the work of the Commission concerning Section 7, Members are requested to consider the two reports referenced above and provide their views on the following questions:

1. Should the *Aquatic Code* provide a high-level approach to achieve positive welfare outcomes, without the provision of detailed technical requirements, or are more detailed standards for certain species and systems preferred when scientific evidence is available to support those standards?
2. Are there alternative approaches or suggestions that Members wish to put forward?
3. Would Members prefer that the chapters in Section 7 be revised and released for comment sequentially, or that all four chapters of Section 7 be circulated for comment at the same time?

As the two reports referred to above are being circulated for the information of Members and to inform responses to questions 1, 2 and 3, specific comments on the technical aspects of the reports will not be considered at the September 2026 Commission meeting. The Commission will focus on the responses of Members to the above questions, and on planning a path forward for revision of Section 7, including prioritisation of this work within the Commission workplan. Revised draft chapters of Section 7 will be circulated to Members for comment at a later time, taking into account feedback from Members on the three questions above.

7.4. Consideration of 'emerging diseases'

A standing agenda item for each meeting of the Aquatic Animals Commission is to review scientific information on emerging diseases to determine whether a disease should be considered as an emerging disease by Members or whether any other actions are warranted. The Commission also considered information from other sources such as Members, experts and Reference Centres.

The Commission reminded Members that 'emerging disease' is a defined term in the Glossary of the *Aquatic Code* and that should the Commission determine that a disease meets the WOAHA definition for an emerging disease, then Members should report it in accordance with Article 1.1.4. of the *Aquatic Code*.

The Commission reiterated that the purpose of identifying and reporting emerging diseases is to:

- bring global attention to the disease,
- disseminate information regarding the disease,
- determine the importance of the disease in terms of impact to aquaculture production and trade,
- prevent spreading between countries and regions and
- support proactive actions to avoid global spread.

The Commission also encouraged Members to investigate mortality and morbidity events linked to any emerging disease, emphasising that a better understanding of the pathogenic agent is essential for efforts to control its possible spread. The Commission also highlighted the role that WOAHA collaborating centres could play in enhancing the understanding of emerging diseases.

The Commission also encouraged Members to provide information to the Commission on their experiences with emerging diseases and impacts, in particular the impact of these diseases to aquaculture production and trade so that the Commission can consider this information when reviewing emerging diseases.

7.4.1. Standard Operating Procedures for listing decisions for diseases of Aquatic Animals and Emerging Diseases and for determining whether an aquatic animal disease should be considered an emerging disease

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission discussed revisions to the Standard Operating Procedure for listing decisions for diseases of Aquatic Animals and Emerging Diseases and the SOP for determining whether an aquatic animal disease should be considered an emerging disease, for alignment with terrestrial equivalent where relevant.

7.5. Assessments of susceptible species

Background

Chapter 1.5. 'Criteria for listing species as susceptible to infection with a specific pathogenic agent' of the *Aquatic Code*, provides criteria for determining which host species are listed as susceptible in Article X.X.2. of each disease-specific chapter in the *Aquatic Code*.

Assessments for all WOAHA listed diseases in the *Aquatic Code* are being undertaken progressively by dedicated *ad hoc* Groups. Based on assessments undertaken, the revised list of susceptible species in the relevant Article X.X.2. of the *Aquatic Code* and Section 2.2.1. of the *Aquatic Manual* are circulated for comment and then presented for adoption. Species that have some evidence of susceptibility, but insufficient evidence to demonstrate susceptibility in accordance with the criteria of Chapter 1.5., are included in Section 2.2.2. of the relevant disease-specific chapter of the *Aquatic Manual*.

Assessments have now been completed for all the eleven fish, ten crustacean and seven molluscan listed diseases.

Diseases of amphibians

The Aquatic Animals Commission was informed that the first meeting of the *ad hoc* Group on Susceptibility of Amphibian Species to Infection with WOAHA *Listed Diseases* is planned for 2026 and a provisional Terms of Reference and list of possible experts were shared with the Commission. This *ad hoc* Group will assess susceptible species for the three WOAHA listed amphibian diseases.

Maintaining up-to-date susceptible species lists

The Aquatic Animals Commission noted that as new information becomes available on susceptible species the lists in Articles X.X.2. would need to be updated. The Commission agreed that a standing *ad hoc* Group should be proposed to review new evidence of susceptibility to WOAHA listed diseases. Evidence assessed would be gathered when submitted by Members, experts and Reference Centres. After the assessments were completed, the Commission would review them and determine when the list of susceptible species would be updated. The Commission requested the Secretariat to report back to the Commission on proposed process and agreed to propose possible expert members.

Changes to the susceptible species list in disease-specific chapters of the *Aquatic Code* are discussed below, together with the companion disease-specific chapters of the *Aquatic Manual*.

Previous Commission report where this item was last discussed

September 2025 report (Item 7.1.5., page 20)

The WOAHA Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals

The Aquatic Animals Commission has commenced the process of progressively reformatting the disease-specific chapters of the *Aquatic Manual* into a new template. As the reformatted and updated chapters have substantial changes, at its meeting in September 2019, the Commission agreed that only clean versions of the revised chapters would be provided in its report. Subsequent changes made to these initial revisions following Member comments would be indicated in the usual style (i.e. ~~strikethrough for deletions~~ and double underline for additions).

A software-generated document that compares the adopted version of a chapter and the proposed new text can be created. This comparison document is not included in the Commission's report but will be available upon request from the WOAHA Standards Department (AAC.Secretariat@WOAHA.org).

8. Aquatic Manual texts that will be proposed for adoption in May 2026

8.1. Section 2.2. 'Diseases of crustaceans'

8.1.1. Sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2. of Chapter 2.2.2. 'Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)'

Comments were received from China (People's Rep. of), Mexico, Peru, Thailand and the EU.

Background:

The *ad hoc* Group on Susceptibility of Crustacean Species to Infection with WOAHA Listed Diseases met in April 2025 to continue its work to apply the criteria in Chapter 1.5. 'Criteria for listing species as susceptible to infection with a specific pathogen'. At this meeting the *ad hoc* Group conducted the assessments for susceptibility of crustacean species to infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague). This assessment was an update of a previous assessment completed in 2015.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission considered the *ad hoc* Group report on Susceptibility of Crustacean Species to Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague) and commended the members for their comprehensive work.

The Aquatic Animals Commission agreed to apply Article 1.5.9. 'Listing of susceptible species at a taxonomic ranking of Genus or higher' using criteria outlined in its September 2024 report (Item 6.5.1., page 18) and to amend the list of susceptible species in Article 9.2.2. in line with recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group. The Commission agreed that *Faxonius spp.* and *Procambarus spp.* should be listed at the genus level. The assessment found three species of *Faxonius spp.* were susceptible.

Relevant sections of Chapter 2.2.2. 'Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague)' in the *Aquatic Code* were also amended in line with recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group (see item 5.3.).

The Aquatic Animals Commission encouraged Members to refer to the *ad hoc* Group's [April 2025](#) report available on the WOAHA website for details of the assessment conducted by the *ad hoc* Group.

The revised Sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2. of Chapter 2.2.2. 'Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague)' has been circulated once for comment

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2026 report (Item 8.1.1., page 23).

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received and noted that Members were mostly supportive of the proposed revisions with some recommendations for additional susceptible species. References were referred to a subject matter expert for review and provide updated scores.

The Commission's responses to comments received are presented in [Annex 3](#).

For *Austropotamobius torrentium* the evidence was found sufficient to have a score of 1, and the Commission agreed it is susceptible. With *A. torrentium* listed as susceptible, the Commission considered whether to apply Article 1.5.9. 'Listing of susceptible species at a taxonomic ranking of Genus or higher' using criteria outlined in its September 2024 report (Item 6.5.1., page 18). The Commission agreed that Article 1.5.9. would be applied to *Austropotamobius spp.* and it would be listed at the Genus level.

For *Cherax destructor* the evidence was not sufficient to score susceptibility.

Texts to be proposed for adoption

Sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2. of Chapter 2.2.2. 'Infection with *A. astaci* (crayfish plague)' will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026. is presented as [Annex 18](#) for comments.

8.2. Section 2.4. 'Disease of molluscs'

8.2.1. Chapter 2.4.5. 'Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*'

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China (People's Rep. of), New Zealand, Peru, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States of America and the European Union,

Background:

At its September 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission amended Chapter 2.4.5. 'Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*' which had been updated by a WOAHA Reference Laboratory expert and reformatted using the new disease chapter template.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed:

September 2025 report (Item 8.2.3., page 24-25).

February 2026 meeting:

The Aquatic Animals Commission addressed Member comments and made amendments to the chapter as considered appropriate. The Commission's responses to Member comments are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts proposed for adoption:

The revised Chapter 2.4.5. 'Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*' is presented as [Annex 19](#) and will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

8.2.2. Chapter 2.4.6. 'Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*'

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China (People's Rep. of), Peru, New Zealand, Thailand and the European Union

Background:

At its February 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission amended Chapter 2.4.6. 'Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*', which had been updated by a WOAHP Reference Laboratory expert and reformatted using the new disease chapter template.

At its September 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received during the first round of Member comments and noted that Members were generally supportive of the revised Chapter 2.4.6. 'Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*'.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed:

February 2025 report (Item 10.1.1., page 33), September 2025 report (Item 8.2.4., page 25).

February 2026 meeting:

The Aquatic Animals Commission addressed Member comments and made amendments to the chapter as considered appropriate. The Commission's responses to Member comments are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts proposed for adoption:

The revised Chapter 2.4.6. 'Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*' is presented as [Annex 20](#) and will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

8.2.3. Chapter 2.4.7. 'Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*'

Comments were received from Australia, Canada, China (People's Rep. of), New Zealand, Thailand, and the European Union.

Background:

At its February 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission amended Chapter 2.4.7. 'Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*', which had been updated by the *ad hoc* Group on susceptibility of mollusc species to infection with WOAHP listed diseases and reformatted using the new disease chapter template.

At its September 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission considered comments received during the first round of Member comments and noted that Members were generally supportive of the revised Chapter 2.4.7. 'Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*'.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed:

February 2025 report (Item 10.1.2., page 34), September 2025 report (Item 8.2.5., page 25).

February 2026 meeting:

The Aquatic Animals Commission addressed Member comments and made amendments to the chapter as considered appropriate. The Commission's responses to Member comments are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts proposed for adoption:

The revised Chapter 2.4.7. 'Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*' is presented as [Annex 21](#) and will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

8.3. Update to the virus names of pathogenic agents for WOAHA listed diseases

Comments were received from Canada, China (People's Rep. of), Japan, Thailand and the European Union.

Background:

At its February 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission noted that some of the viral pathogenic agents for WOAHA listed aquatic animal diseases have been updated by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV). The Commission agreed to review the taxonomy and names of the viral agents of WOAHA listed diseases and propose revisions for the usage of these names.

At its September 2025 meeting the Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed the current classifications in ICTV against the names used in the *Aquatic Code* (see Item 6.8.) and the *Aquatic Manual*. Of the 18 viral pathogenic agents listed as WOAHA listed diseases, 12 needed to be updated.

In the *Aquatic Manual* these include:

- Diseases of crustaceans: infection with decapod iridescent virus 1 (Ch 2.3.3.), infection with hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus (Ch 2.2.5.), infection with infectious myonecrosis virus (Ch 2.2.6.), infection with *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* nodavirus (white tail virus) (Ch 2.2.7.) and infection with Taura syndrome virus (Ch 2.2.8.).
- Diseases of fish: infection with infectious salmon anaemia virus (Ch 2.3.4.), infection with infectious haematopoietic necrosis virus (Ch 2.3.5.), infection with koi herpesvirus (Ch 2.3.6.), infection with infectious salmonid alphavirus (Ch 2.3.8.), infection with spring viraemia of carp virus (Ch 2.3.9.) and infection with viral haemorrhagic septicaemia virus (Ch 2.3.10.).
- Diseases of molluscs: infection with abalone herpesvirus (Ch 2.4.1.).

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed:

February 2025 (Item 8.2.2., page 28), September 2025 report (Item 8.3, page 26).

February 2026 meeting:

The Aquatic Animals Commission addressed Member comments and made amendments to the chapter as considered appropriate. The Commission's responses to Member comments are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts proposed for adoption:

The revised scientific names for viral pathogenic agents of WOAHA listed diseases is presented in [Annex 22](#) and will be proposed for adoption at the 93rd General Session in May 2026.

9. Aquatic Manual items for Member comment

9.1. Section 2.4. 'Diseases of molluscs'

9.1.1. Chapter 2.4.2. 'Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*' and Chapter 2.4.3. 'Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*'

Comments were received from Australia, China (People's Rep. of), New Zealand, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States of America, and the European Union.

Background

Chapter 2.4.2. 'Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*' and Chapter 2.4.3. 'Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*', had been adopted in May 2025 on the provision that the Commission review the case definitions given in Section 6 'Corroborative diagnostic criteria'.

At its September 2025 meeting, the Aquatic Animals Commission amended the case definitions in consultation with the WOAHA Reference Laboratory expert on these two molluscan diseases. **Please note:** the report of the September 2025 meeting erroneously states that 'for these diseases, molecular methods may identify endogenous DNA'. To confirm, molecular methods **do not** identify endogenous (oyster) DNA, but they could detect environmental *Bonamia* DNA 'retained' by the oysters during filtration.

The case definitions for a confirmed case in either apparently healthy or clinically affected animals should recommend two specific methods. Molecular methods should either be combined with another diagnostic method or two molecular methods targeting non-overlapping regions of the pathogen genome should be used.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2024 report (items 8.3.1. and 8.3.2., pages 31–33), February 2025 report (Items 9.3.1. and 9.3.2., pages 31–32, September 2025 report (Item 8.2.1 pages 23–24)

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission addressed Member comments and made amendments to the chapter as considered appropriate. The Commission's responses to Member comments are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts for comment

The revised Section 6 'Corroborative diagnostic criteria' of Chapter 2.4.2. 'Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*' and Chapter 2.4.3. 'Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*' are presented as [Annex 23](#) for comment.

9.1.2. Chapter 2.4.4. 'Infection with *Marteilia refringens*'

Comments were received from Australia, China (People's Rep. of), New Zealand, United Kingdom, and the European Union.

Background

Following the discussion on the two *Bonamia* chapters described above (item 10.1.1.), the Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed Section 6 'Corroborative diagnostic criteria' of Chapter 2.4.4. 'Infection with *Marteilia refringens*'.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 8.2.2., page 24).

February 2026 meeting

The Aquatic Animals Commission addressed Member comments and made amendments to the chapter as considered appropriate. The Commission's responses to Member comments are presented in [Annex 3](#).

Texts for comment

The revised Section 6 'Corroborative diagnostic criteria' of Chapter 2.4.4. 'Infection with *Marteilia refringens*' is presented as [Annex 24](#) for comment.

9.2. Section 2.3. 'Diseases of fish'

9.2.1. Chapter 2.3.X. 'Infection with tilapia lake virus'

February 2026 meeting

An expert from the WOAHA Collaborating Centre for Emerging Aquatic Animal Diseases in collaboration with a subject-matter expert, had drafted a new Chapter 2.3.X. 'Infection with tilapia lake virus' using the new disease-specific chapter template.

Texts for comment

The new Chapter 2.3.X. 'Infection with tilapia lake virus' is presented as [Annex 25](#) for comment.

9.2.2. Chapter 2.3.9. 'Infection with spring viraemia of carp virus' – PCR cycling parameter tables

Background

In September 2025, the Aquatic Animals Commission was updated on ongoing work to finalise a research publication concerning validation of real-time PCR assays for infection with spring viraemia of carp virus. The outcomes are expected to be made available in the form of a peer-reviewed publication or a validation report. The updated scientific evidence is anticipated to inform revisions to Tables 4.1 and 4.2, as well as to Sections 5 and 6 of the chapter, to ensure alignment with the most current validated methodologies.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2025 report (Item 9.1.4., page 28).

February 2026 meeting

During the February 2026 meeting, the Commission considered revisions to Section 4 based on publication of the anticipated validation study (Zhu *et al.*, 2026. Development and partial validation of an RT-qPCR assay for the rapid detection of spring viremia of carp virus (SVCV). doi: 10.3389/fmicb.2025.1726705).

The Commission thanked the member for this work and also updated molecular methods in this chapter to follow the approach of more recent revisions where the methods are included in a tabular format.

The Commission noted the importance of ensuring that the diagnostic tables accurately reflect scientifically validated and internationally applicable methods. The Commission agreed to circulate the revised text for comment.

Texts for comment

The relevant updated sections of Chapter 2.3.9. 'Infection with spring viraemia of carp virus' are presented as [Annex 26](#) for comment.

10. Aquatic Manual items for Member information

10.1. Expert consultation for Infection with infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus (IHHNV)

Background

A Member sought guidance from the Aquatic Animals Commission regarding the specificity of certain molecular diagnostic methods described in Chapter 2.2.5. 'Infection with infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus (IHHNV)', particularly in relation to confirmation of infection in apparently healthy animals. The concern relates to the potential difficulty in distinguishing infectious virus from endogenous viral elements (EVEs) present in the genome of relevant shrimp species.

The Commission consulted the two WOAHA Reference Laboratory experts for IHHNV, whose responses underscored the scientific complexity of differentiating viral infection from EVEs. The experts noted that, where initial PCR screening results are positive, additional confirmatory approaches are required to establish infection. To further examine the matter, the Commission convened a virtual expert consultation to review the current scientific knowledge and consider potential refinements to the diagnostic provisions of the chapter. Proposed revisions included adjustments to the case definition and additional explanatory text; however, the Commission considered that further clarification would be beneficial and requested a revised proposal.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2024 (Item 9.1.1., page 34), February 2025 (Item 11.1.2., page 34), September 2025 (Item 9.1.2., page 27)

February 2026 meeting

The Commission noted that the matter remains under revision and acknowledged the scientific and diagnostic complexity associated with differentiating IHHNV from endogenous viral elements. It was further noted that the WOAHA Reference Laboratories continued to actively contribute to the process, with one laboratory submitting a revised proposal and the other participating in the discussion during the meeting, including through a presentation on the current state of research in this area.

The Commission expressed its gratitude to the experts for their continued engagement and constructive collaboration and noted that the designated Reference Laboratories are working closely with the Commission to refine the proposed amendments. The Commission looks forward to reviewing a revised proposal at a forthcoming meeting, with the objective of circulating an updated text for comment once sufficient clarity and scientific consensus have been achieved.

10.2. Update on the electronic expert consultation on *Megalocytivirus pagrus1*

Background

Following the listing change of 'infection with red sea bream iridovirus' to 'infection with *Megalocytivirus pagrus1*' at the 91st General Session in May 2024, a new disease-specific chapter for the *Aquatic Manual* is required. The chapter needs to include validated diagnostic methods that are inclusive for viruses within all three genogroups: red sea bream iridovirus (RSIV), infectious spleen and kidney necrosis virus (ISKNV) and turbot reddish body iridovirus (TRBIV).

To support this revision, the Aquatic Animals Commission proposed convening an electronic *ad hoc* Group tasked with reviewing and evaluating available diagnostic methods for potential inclusion in the updated chapter. Since its first electronic meeting in November 2024, the Group has undertaken a comprehensive review of the scientific literature, established an initial shortlist of assays considered most appropriate for detecting all three genogroups, and developed a technical disease card providing preliminary diagnostic guidance to Members. An inter-laboratory comparability (ILC) study is planned to assess the performance characteristics of the shortlisted assays. Those demonstrating appropriate performance will be proposed for inclusion in the revised *Aquatic Manual* chapter.

Previous Commission reports where this item was discussed

September 2024 (Item 9.1.2., page 34), February 2025 (Item 11.1.3., page 35), September 2025 (Item 9.1.3., page 28)

February 2026 meeting

The Commission noted that the work remains ongoing and acknowledged the technical complexity associated with ensuring diagnostic inclusivity across all three genogroups. It was emphasised that the *ad hoc* Group last met electronically in November 2025 and has continued its work. The Commission noted that progress had been made, including obtaining the necessary virus material for the ILC.

The Commission expressed its appreciation to the experts involved for their sustained engagement and scientific rigour and noted that the designated Reference Laboratory is working closely with the Commission and the *ad hoc* Group.

The Commission looks forward to receiving further updates as the inter-laboratory comparability study progresses and expects that a first draft of the revised *Aquatic Manual* chapter will be available for consideration at its September 2026 meeting.

11. Reference centres

11.1. Evaluation of applications for Reference Centres for aquatic animal health

The Aquatic Animals Commission recommended acceptance of the following application for WOA Reference Laboratory status:

WOAH Reference Laboratory for crayfish plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*)

Norwegian Veterinary Institute, As

NORWAY

Tel.: +47 23.21.6000 / 47.62.37.16

E-mail: david.strand@vetinst.no

Website: www.vetinst.no

Designated expert: Dr David A. Strand

11.2. Evaluation of annual reports for activities in 2025

The Aquatic Animals Commission reviewed the performance of the aquatic WOAHA Reference Centres (comprising 34 of 39 Reference Laboratories and three of five Collaborating Centres) through analysis of their 2025 annual reports. This assessment was conducted in accordance with the performance criteria set out in the Procedures for Designation and aimed at evaluating compliance with the Terms of Reference (ToRs), the level of engagement within the WOAHA network, and the overall contribution of each Centre to the Organisation's normative and scientific activities.

The Commission noted the strong overall performance of the Reference Centres and acknowledged the importance of their work to support the needs of WOAHA Members. The Commission noted that the Reference Centres have different strengths and may emphasise activity for some of the ToRs more than others, for example, demonstrating active engagement in diagnostic activities, scientific publication, international collaboration, training, proficiency testing and support to WOAHA initiatives.

Several Centres were noted for particularly strong performance, including high levels of international cooperation, technical innovation, and sustained contributions to the *Aquatic Manual* and *Aquatic Code*. The Commission also acknowledged the continued involvement of Centres in working groups, consultancies and capacity-building activities, which significantly strengthen the global aquatic animal health network.

For a small number of Reference Centres, the Commission noted some areas requiring attention, such as annual reports not being submitted, limited activities for the disease for which designation was granted, limited evidence of international engagement, or incomplete reporting against certain elements of the ToRs. The Commission requested that these Reference Centres be contacted to explore the reasons for the reduced activity. The Commission also reviewed submitted 5-year workplans and self-assessments where applicable. These were generally considered to be clear and aligned with the ToRs, demonstrating continuity of objectives and strategic planning within the network.

Overall, the Aquatic Animals Commission recognised the high level of technical expertise and commitment demonstrated by the aquatic WOAHA Reference Centre network. It emphasised the essential role of these Centres in maintaining the scientific foundation of WOAHA standards and supporting Members in disease surveillance, diagnosis and control. The Commission remains committed to supporting the network, promoting continuous improvement, and ensuring that performance remains aligned with the expectations established under the designation framework.

The Aquatic Animals Commission expressed its appreciation to the aquatic WOAHA Reference Centres for their continued collaboration and for the considerable efforts invested in preparing and submitting their annual reports.

The Commission also noted that there are important gaps in the WOAHA Reference Laboratory network and encourages applications from suitably qualified laboratories. Guidelines for applicants are available at: [Reference Laboratories - WOAHA - World Organisation for Animal Health](#). The Commission noted that there are currently no reference laboratories for the following listed diseases:

- Infection with *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans*
- Infection with *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*
- Infection with *Ranavirus*
- Infection with infectious myonecrosis virus
- Infection with TiLV
- Infection with *Marteilia refringens*
- Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*
- Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*
- Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*.

11.3. Evaluation of the Collaborating Centres' self-assessment of their 5-year workplans

Two aquatic Collaborating Centres submitted self-assessments in accordance with the designation framework, covering the period 2021–2025. The reports provided a comprehensive overview of activities undertaken during this period, including progress against their approved five-year work plans and contributions to WOAH's strategic objectives.

Upon evaluation, the Aquatic Animals Commission concluded that both Centres demonstrated sustained technical capacity, continued engagement within their respective areas of expertise, and clear alignment with their Terms of Reference. The self-assessments highlighted substantial contributions to standard development, scientific exchange and capacity-building activities within the WOAH network.

The Commission therefore accepted the self-assessments and acknowledged the continued commitment of these Collaborating Centres to supporting WOAH and its Members. The concerned Centres will receive formal communication inviting them to submit their next five-year work plan for the forthcoming designation period.

11.4. Update on the Aquatic Collaborating Centres Network

The Aquatic Animals Commission was updated on recent activities undertaken by the Aquatic Collaborating Centres Network. It was noted that progress had been limited in recent months due to availability constraints. To ensure continuity and renewed momentum, it was agreed that the Chairmanship would be transferred to another Collaborating Centre within the Network.

The Commission emphasised the importance of strengthening coordination and strategic direction to maximise the added value of the Network to WOAH and its Members. It was agreed that the Secretariat would provide dedicated support during the next Network meeting to assist in refining priorities and structuring future work.

The Commission was informed that the next meeting of the Aquatic Collaborating Centres Network will be held in March/April 2026, during which members will continue discussions on potential activities for incorporation into the Network's workplan and related concept note.

12. Updates from WOAH Headquarters

12.1. Advancing aquaculture health research: outcomes of the global consultation on crustaceans, molluscs and amphibians

The Aquatic Animals Commission received an update on the joint WOAH–STAR IDAZ IRC initiatives conducted under Activity 4.5 of the WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Strategy, aimed at supporting the strategic prioritisation of research areas relevant to the WOAH Community.

The Aquatic Animals Commission commended the substantial work undertaken within the WOAH–STAR IDAZ IRC collaboration and recognised the value of the global consultation in identifying priority research needs across finfish, molluscs, crustaceans and amphibians. They noted that the finfish survey and workshop outputs have already been published and are [publicly available](#), and welcomed that the sector reports for molluscs, crustaceans and amphibians will soon be published on both [WOAH](#) and [STAR IDAZ](#) websites. The Commission highlighted that these forthcoming reports provide a strong basis for guiding further research and strengthening alignment across the aquatic animal health community.

The Commission also noted the relevance of emerging or cross-cutting research areas, particularly the current status of work on eDNA methodologies. The Commission indicated that they would consider whether further exploration of this topic would be useful to help steer future efforts and identify potential gaps where additional targeted research or complementary activities could add value.

.../Annexes

Annex 1. Item 2. – Adopted Agenda

MEETING OF THE WOAHP AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH STANDARDS COMMISSION

11 to 18 February 2026

Agenda

1. Meeting with the Director General and Deputy Director General
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Cooperation with other specialist commissions
 - 3.1. Aquatic Animals Commission and Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission Bureaux meeting to discuss alignment of Chapters 1.1. and section 5, including 5.Y.
4. Work programme of the aquatic Animals Commission
 - 4.1. Comments received on the Work Programme
 - 4.2. Overview of the Work Programme
5. **Aquatic Code**
 - 5.1. Items circulated for comment
 - 5.1.1. Glossary:
 - 5.1.1.1. 'Ornamental aquatic animal' definition
 - 5.1.1.2. 'Compartment' definition
 - 5.1.2. New Chapter 4.3. 'Application of compartmentalisation'
 - 5.1.3. Chapter 4.7. 'Fallowing in aquaculture'
 - 5.1.4. Section 5. 'Trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification'
 - 5.1.5. Article 9.2.2. of Chapter 9.2. 'Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)'
 - 5.1.6. Article 10.3.5. and 10.3.6. of Chapter 10.3. 'Infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris*'
 - 5.1.7. Article 10.4.9. of Chapter 10.4. 'Infection with infectious salmon anaemia'
 - 5.1.8. Update to the virus names of pathogenic agents for WOAHP listed diseases
 - 5.2. Items for Commission consideration
 - 5.2.1. Chapter 1.1. 'Notification of diseases, and provision of epidemiological information'
 - 5.2.2. Chapter 1.4. 'Aquatic animal disease surveillance'

- 5.2.3. Chapter 4.2. 'Zoning and compartmentalisation'
- 5.2.4. Chapter 5.Y. 'Introduction to trade measures, importation/exportation procedures and health certification'
- 5.2.5. Chapter 6.2. 'Principles for responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals'
- 5.2.6. Section 7. 'Welfare of farmed fish'
 - 5.2.6.1. Chapter 7.1. 'Introduction to recommendations for the welfare of farmed fish'
 - 5.2.6.2. Chapter 7.2. 'Welfare of farmed fish during transport'
 - 5.2.6.3. Chapter 7.3. 'Welfare aspects of stunning and killing of farmed fish for human consumption'
 - 5.2.6.4. Chapter 7.4. 'Killing of farmed fish for disease control purposes'
- 5.2.7. Consideration of 'emerging diseases'
 - 5.2.7.1. Standard Operating Procedures for listing decisions for diseases of Aquatic Animals and Emerging Diseases and for determining whether an aquatic animal disease should be considered an emerging disease
- 5.2.8. Assessments of susceptible species
 - 5.2.8.1. Update regarding *ad hoc* Group for susceptible species for amphibian diseases

6. Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals texts that will be proposed for adoption in May 2026

- 6.1. Section 2.2. 'Diseases of crustaceans'
 - 6.1.1. Sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2. of Chapter 2.2.2. 'Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (crayfish plague)'
 - 6.1.2. Section 2.4. 'Diseases of molluscs'
- 6.2. Section 2.4. 'Diseases of molluscs'
 - 6.2.1. Chapter 2.4.5. 'Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*
 - 6.2.2. Chapter 2.4.6. 'Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*'
 - 6.2.3. Chapter 2.4.7. 'Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*'
- 6.3. Update to the virus names of pathogenic agents for WOAHA listed diseases

7. Aquatic Manual items for Member comment

- 7.1. Section 2.4. 'Diseases of molluscs'
 - 7.1.1. Chapter 2.4.2. 'Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*' and Chapter 2.4.3. 'Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*'
 - 7.1.2. Chapter 2.4.4. 'Infection with *Marteilia refringens*'

7.2. Section 2.3. 'Diseases of fish'

7.2.1. New draft Chapter 2.3.X. 'infection with tilapia lake virus'

7.2.2. Chapter 2.3.9 'Infection with spring viraemia of carp virus': PCR cycling parameter tables

8. Aquatic Manual items for Member information

8.1. Expert consultation for Infection with infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus (IHHNV)

8.2. Update on the electronic expert consultation on *Megalocytivirus pagrus1*

9. Reference Centres or change of experts

9.1. Evaluation of applications for Reference Centres for aquatic animal health

9.2. Evaluation of annual reports for activities in 2025

9.3. Evaluation of the Collaborating Centres' self-assessment of their 5-year workplans

9.4. Update Aquatic Collaborating Centres Network

10. Updates from WOAAH Headquarters

10.1. Advancing Aquaculture Health Research: update on the crustaceans, molluscs and amphibians

11. Meeting review

12. Next meeting: 16–23 September 2026

Annex 2. Item 2. – List of Participants

MEETING OF THE AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH STANDARDS COMMISSION

11-18 February 2026

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

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Stewardship in Aquaculture Centre,
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La Pintana,
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Dr Mariana Delgado
Scientific Secretariat Officer
Science Department

Ms Sara Linnane
Senior Scientific Officer –
International Standards
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Dr Ana Rita Sancho Silva
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