

OIE International Standards on Aquatic Animals

Jing Wang

OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific
Food and Science Building, the University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan
E-mail: j.wang@oie.int

Abstract

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) is the intergovernmental organisation responsible for improving animal health worldwide. It is recognised as a reference organisation by the World Trade Organization (WTO) to develop international standards for animal health and zoonoses; as of May 2018, it counts a total of 182 Members.

As the global leader for animal health and welfare standards, the OIE plays an influential role in the prevention, control and information sharing of animal diseases including aquatic animal diseases. The objectives of OIE are to: (1) Ensure transparency in the global animal disease situation; (2) Collect, analyse and disseminate veterinary scientific information; (3) Encourage international solidarity in the control of animal diseases; (4) Safeguard World trade by publishing health standards for international, trade in animals and animal products; (5) Improve the legal framework and resources, national veterinary services and aquatic animal health services; and (6) to provide a better guarantee of food of animal origin and to promote animal welfare.

As an international standard setting organisation, the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code (the Aquatic Code) provides standards for the improvement of aquatic animal health worldwide. It also includes standards for the welfare of farmed fish and use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals. The sanitary measures in the Aquatic Code provide international standards on importing and exporting countries for early detection, reporting and control of pathogenic agents in aquatic animals (amphibians, crustaceans, fish and molluscs) and to prevent their spread via international trade in aquatic animals and their products, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade. In addition, to provide a standardised approach to the diagnosis of the diseases listed in the Aquatic Code and to facilitate health certification for trade in aquatic animals and aquatic animal products, the OIE also developed the OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals.

OIE Aquatic Animal Code chapter 2.1 Import Risk Analysis provide recommendations and principles for conducting transparent, objective and defensible risk for importing aquatic animals and aquatic animal products. The components of risk analysis are 1) hazard identification, 2) risk assessment, 3) risk management and 4) risk communication. Additionally, the OIE international standards (Code and Manual), World Animal Health Information System, and OIE Tool for the Evaluation of Performance of Aquatic Animal Health Services also provide scientific evidence to the MCs on import risk analysis.