

Aquatic Animal Health Strategy

Workshop on enhancing aquatic animal health and biosecurity

26-29 October 2025, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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WOAH Regional Representative for the Middle East



World
Organisation
for Animal
Health

Organisation
mondiale
de la santé
animale

Organización
Mundial
de Sanidad
Animal



وزارة البيئة والمياه والزراعة
Ministry of Environment Water & Agriculture

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia المملكة العربية السعودية

Aquatic Animal Health Strategy

This Aquatic Strategy is a call to action to address some of the greatest challenges in managing aquatic animal health and welfare. It identifies and coordinates actions that address the highest-priority common needs and focus resources on activities that will provide enduring impacts

- Announced at the 4th Global Conference in Chile in April 2019
- Its development was a collaborative effort
- Support and input from the Aquatic Animal Commission and the whole WOAHA Community
- Launched in May 2021



Drivers for collaboration on aquatic animal health and welfare

- THE GLOBAL POPULATION IS GROWING
- DEMAND FOR AQUATIC ANIMAL PRODUCTS IS INCREASING
- PRODUCTION IS SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Growth in aquatic animal production must be sustainable to have lasting benefits





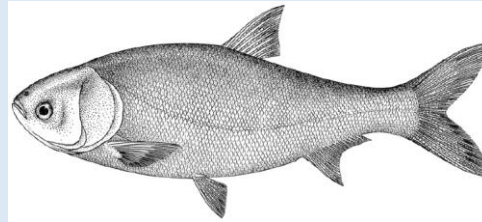
Global aquaculture

4

Over 500 species of aquatic animals
are farmed

Aquaculture is highly diverse

Fastest growing food sector
(~6% per annum)



70% of production is **small-scale, subsistence** and based on species
of carp and tilapia

Aquatic protein most highly
traded food commodity

Sector provides food, nutrition,
income, livelihood for 100's millions
people



Global Strategy addresses shared challenges and benefits

- Aquatic food animal production increasingly **IMPORTANT** protein around the world
- Aquatic animal disease transmission threats are shared across country boundaries
- Collaborative actions improve detection, containment of aquatic animal pathogens



THIS STRATEGY PROVIDES A PATH FOR THE WOAH COMMUNITY TO ACT TOGETHER

- Common needs given highest priority
- Actions leading to ongoing impacts
- Optimize utilisation of existing resources, networks, systems

**Ultimate goal:
improve aquatic animal health worldwide**



STANDARDS

Scientifically sound WOAHA international standards meet WOAHA Members' needs to manage risks, facilitate safe trade, and improve aquatic animal health and welfare



CAPACITY BUILDING

WOAH programmes support strengthening Aquatic Animal Health Services of WOAHA Members



IMPROVING
AQUATIC ANIMAL
HEALTH AND WELFARE
WORLDWIDE

LEADERSHIP

WOAH's capacity to provide global aquatic animal health leadership is strengthened



RESILIENCE

Responses to emerging aquatic animal health issues of regional or global concern are coordinated and timely





- Launch and set-up phase
- Roadmap endorsed
- Project plans developed

Implementation of activities

Mid-Strategy progress report

AAH Forum



WE ARE

Evaluation and next steps

ACTIVITY PROGRESS



9 projects underway and on track



8 projects underway with delays



6 activities not yet commenced





OBJECTIVE 1 – DEVELOP NEW STANDARDS

10

- Development of a new chapter on biosecurity for aquaculture establishments : **COMPLETE**
AND ADOPTED IN MAY 2021
- Development of a new chapter on Infection with decapod iridescent virus 1 (DIV1) : **COMPLETE**
AND ADOPTED IN MAY 2022
- Development of a new chapter for infection with Tilapia lake virus : **COMPLETE AND**
ADOPTED IN MAY 2023





OBJECTIVE 1 – DEVELOP NEW STANDARDS



Aquatic Code texts that will be proposed for adoption in May 2026

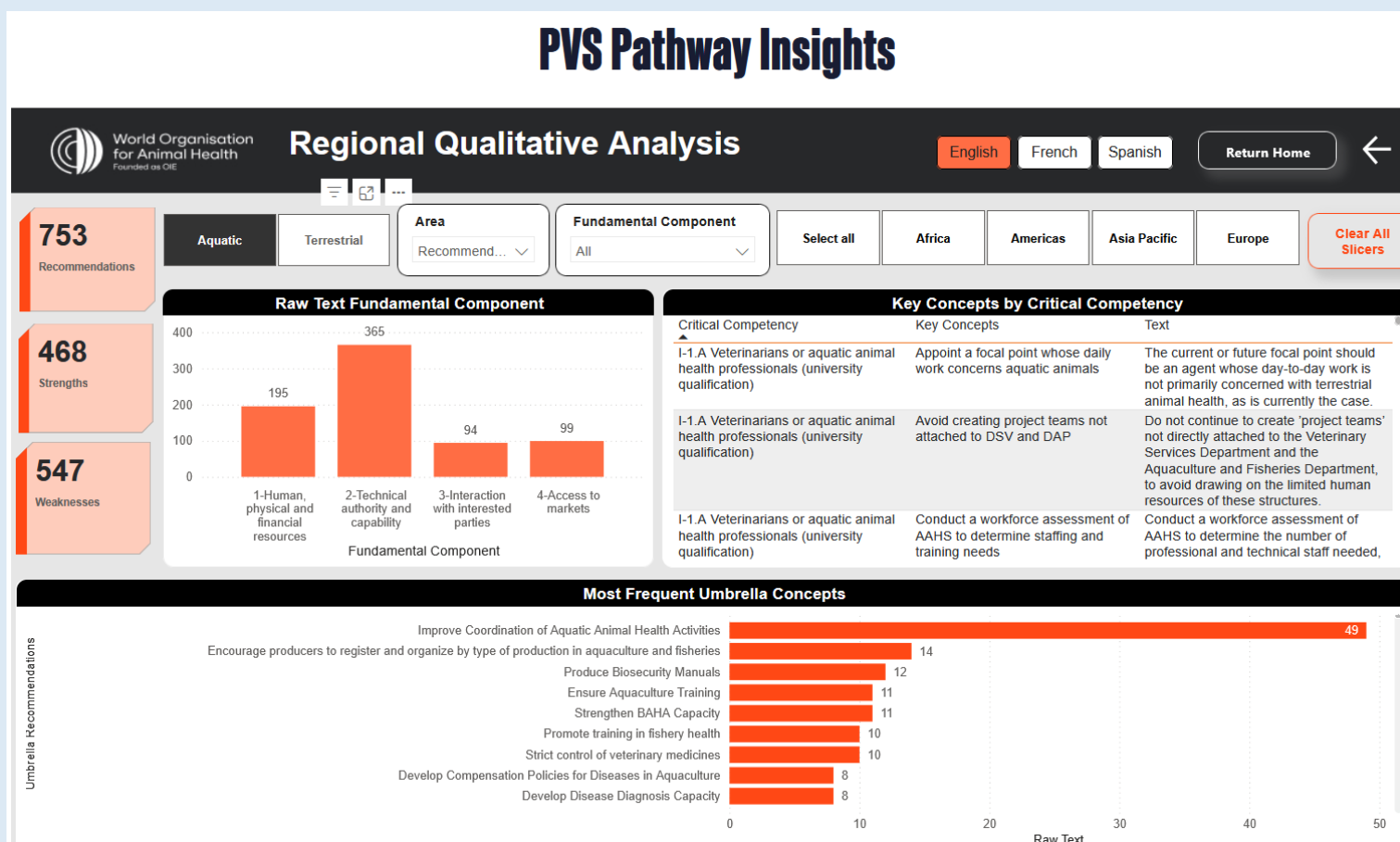
- Will be presented by Dr Saray Tavoranpanich from the aquatic commission





Activity 2.2

Increase the use of the PVS pathway



Evaluation of the Performance of Aquatic Animal Health Services

PVS Tool

Aquatic 2021





Activity 3.4

Provide practical AMR guidance

- ✓ Develop annex for aquatic animals in List of Antimicrobial Agents of Veterinary Importance
- ✓ Refine AMU global data collection for aquatic animals

ANIMUSE

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) has been collecting data on the amounts and reasons for antimicrobial use in animals since 2015. This information is an essential asset to reduce the overuse and misuse of medication and to curb the spread of [antimicrobial resistance](#) (AMR). ANIMUSE, the global database on ANImal antiMicrobial USE, facilitates access to this crucial and growing set of information.



CHAPTER 6.3.

MONITORING OF THE QUANTITIES AND USAGE PATTERNS OF ANTIMICROBIAL AGENTS USED IN AQUATIC ANIMALS

Article 6.3.1

Purpose

The purpose of these recommendations is to describe approaches to the monitoring of quantities of *antimicrobial agents* used in *aquatic animals*, including species reared for food and ornamental purposes.

These recommendations are intended for use in the collection of objective and quantitative information to evaluate usage patterns by antimicrobial class, route of administration and *aquatic animal* species in order to evaluate exposure of microorganisms to *antimicrobial agents*.

The collection of data on the use of *antimicrobial agents* in *aquaculture* may be constrained in some countries by the lack of available resources, lack of accurately labelled products, poorly documented distribution channels and lack of professional consultation or supervision. This chapter may therefore be seen as indicating the direction in which countries should develop with regard to collecting data and information on the use of *antimicrobial agents* in *aquatic animals*.



Regional networks for aquatic animal health

- Regional Collaboration Framework on Aquatic Animal Health in Asia and the Pacific
- **Aquatic Middle East Network (AQMENET)**
- Regional Animal Aquatic Animal Health Networks (RAAHN) in Africa
 - North Africa
 - Southern Africa
 - Laboratory network



OBJECTIVE 4 – LEADERSHIP: Regional networks for aquatic animal health¹⁶

- **Aquatic Middle East Network (AQMENET)**

Official inauguration in Jeddah, 22 November 2022





OBJECTIVE 4 – LEADERSHIP: Regional networks for aquatic animal health¹⁶



• Aquatic Middle East Network (AQMENET)

AQMENET Objectives

General Objective:

Support Members in sustainable aquaculture development by implementing WOAHA standards for aquatic animal health.

Specific Objectives:

1. Improve prevention, detection, and control of aquatic diseases.
2. Enhance emergency preparedness and response.
3. Strengthen scientific and technological capacities.
4. Facilitate collaboration among laboratories and experts.
5. Promote communication, training, and knowledge exchange.



OBJECTIVE 4 – LEADERSHIP: Regional networks for aquatic animal health¹⁴



Governance

Steering Committee (SC):

- Composed of national Delegates, WOAH reps, FAO, etc.
- Oversees strategic direction and approves action plans.

Technical Committee (TC):

- Composed of national Focal Points, Reference Centres, experts.
- Executes projects and action plans, meets twice annually.

Aquatic Middle East Network (AQMENET)

Member Countries	
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Kuwait
United Arab Emirates	Bahrain
Oman	Qatar
Iraq	Egypt
Sudan	Yemen
Jordan	Somalia
Djibouti	



OBJECTIVE 4 – LEADERSHIP: Regional networks for aquatic animal health¹⁸



• **Aquatic Middle East Network (AQMENET)**

AQMENET Future Perspectives – 2025 and beyond

Regional Impact Vision:

- A robust, connected aquaculture health network.
- Greater biosecurity and AMR monitoring capacity.
- Stronger harmonization of practices across Member countries.

Post-2025 Goals

- Expand AQMENET reach and influence.
- Further integrate with global aquatic health strategies.
- Scale up diagnostics and training programs.
- Develop joint research projects and vaccine initiatives.



OBJECTIVE 4 – LEADERSHIP: Regional networks for aquatic animal health¹⁰



- **Aquatic Middle East Network (AQMENET)**

AQMENET Next meetings

SC and TC meetings back-to-back with the Middle East Aquatic Focal Points training

Jeddah, 26-29 October 2025

Conclusion: AQMENET sets the foundation for sustainable, healthy, and resilient aquaculture in the Middle East.



Survey of National Focal Points

The survey highlighted regional differences in capacity and identified priorities for WOA H Regions

Activities
1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.6

48 question survey

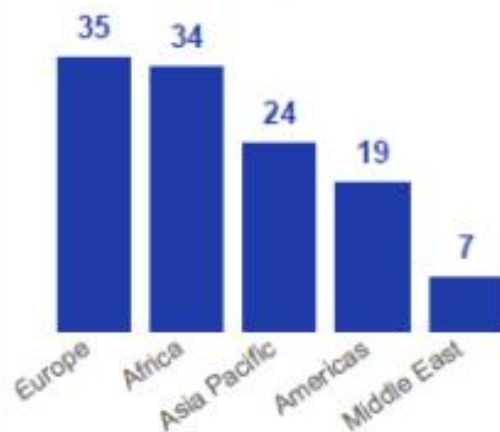
- Disease surveillance and national reporting
- Disease notification to WOA H
- Barriers to the implementation of Standards
- PVS Pathway Aquatic
- Capacity building

14 RECOMMENDATIONS

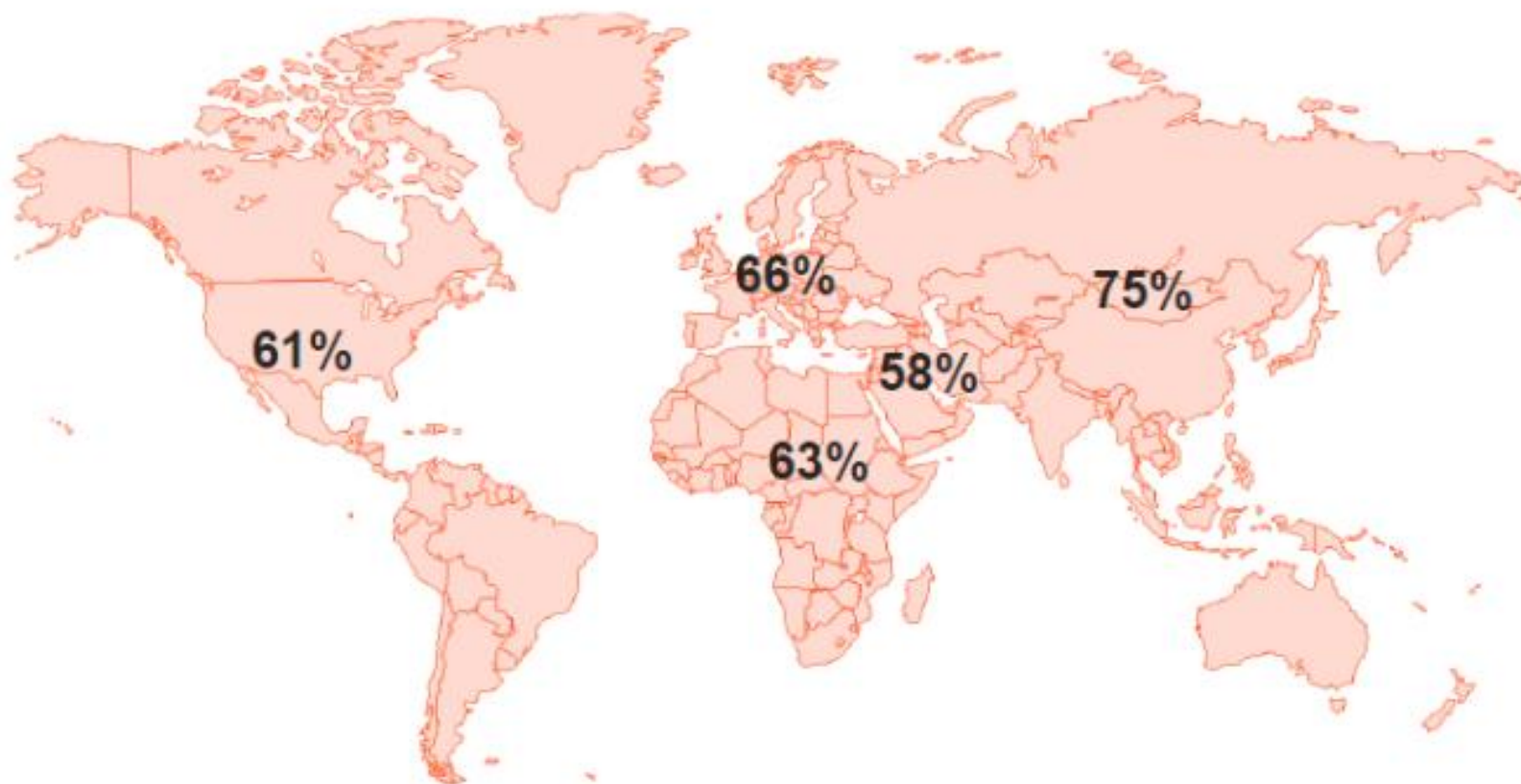
119

Members completed the survey

Members by Region



Participation rate, by WOA Region



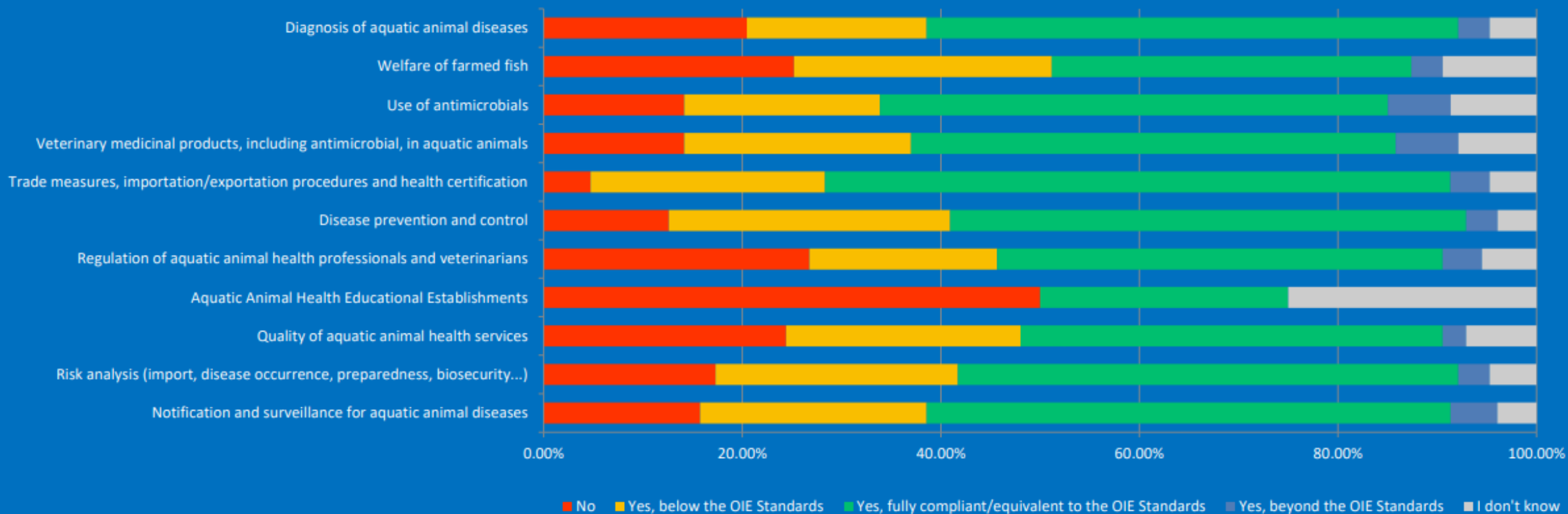
Findings from the survey of WOA Members conducted in 2022



World Organisation
for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

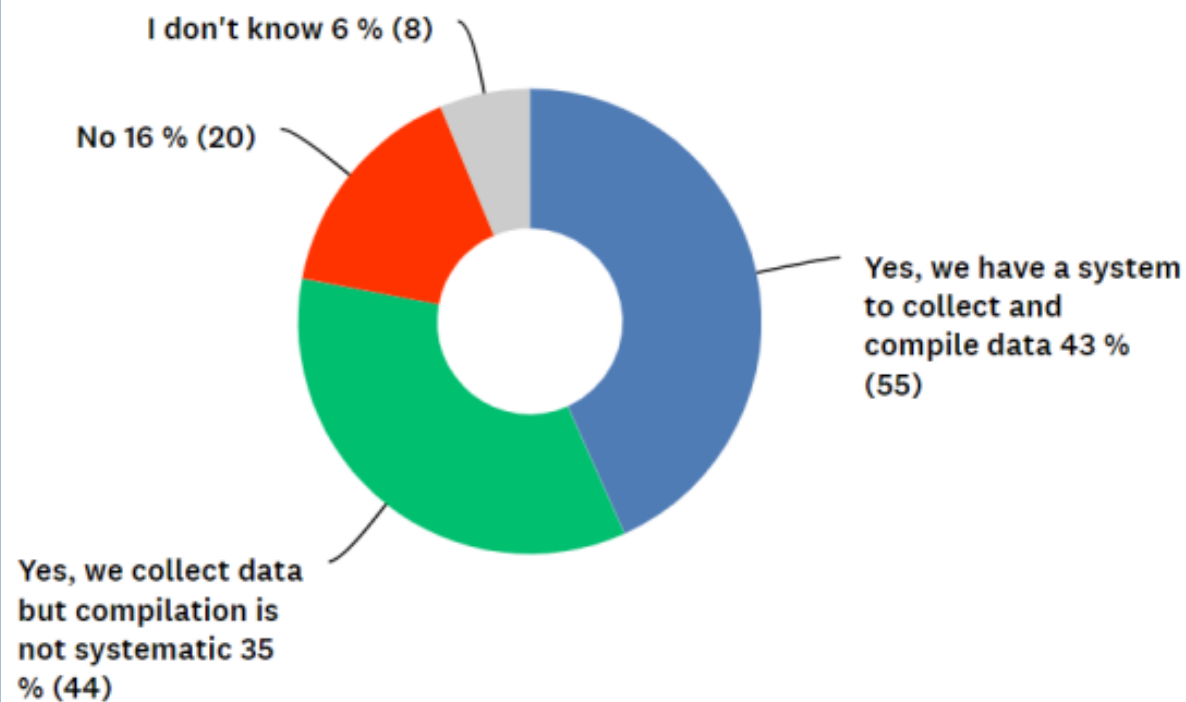


Does your country/territory have any national laws and regulations on the following topics?

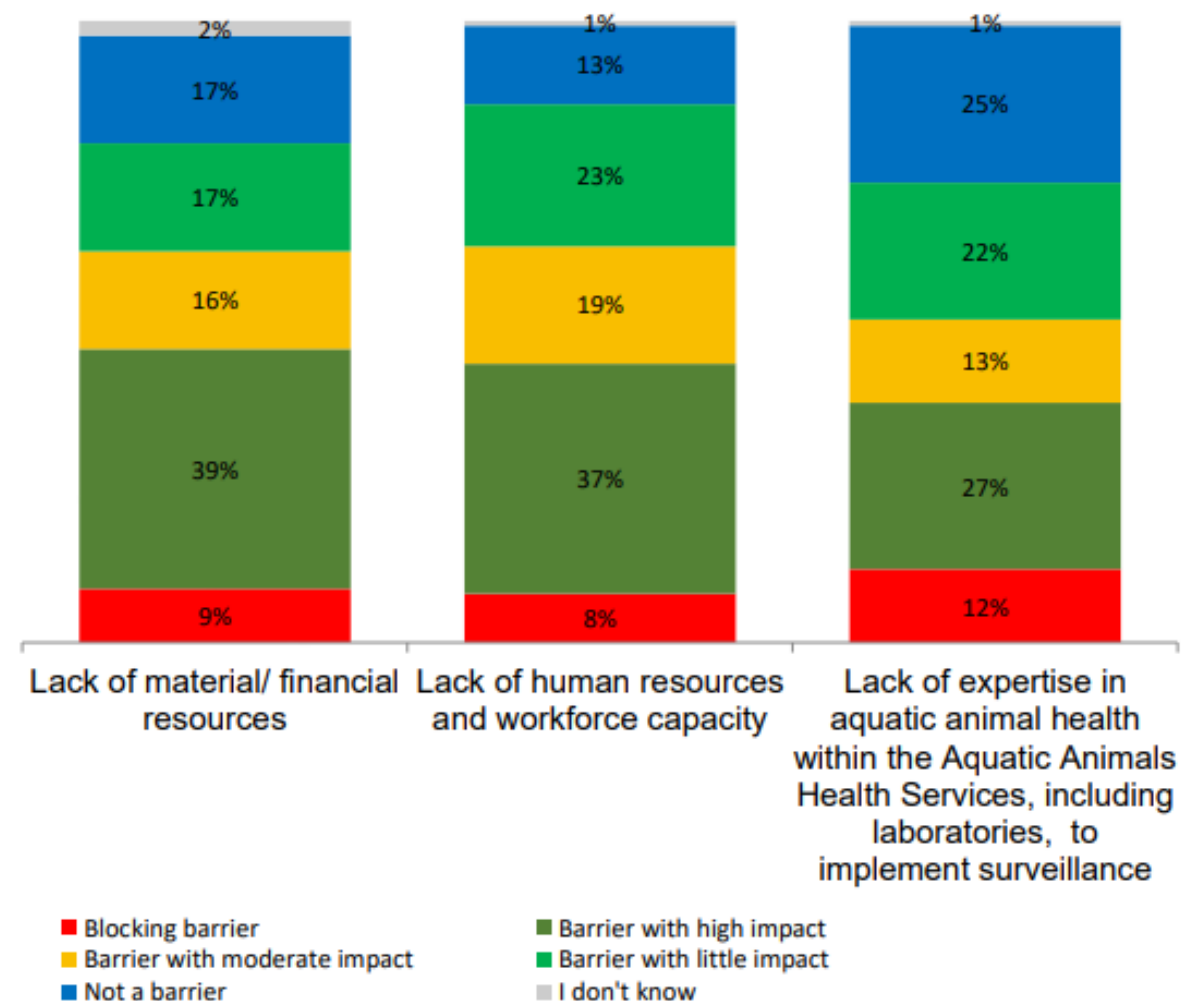




Percentage of Members collecting and compiling disease event data into a national dataset



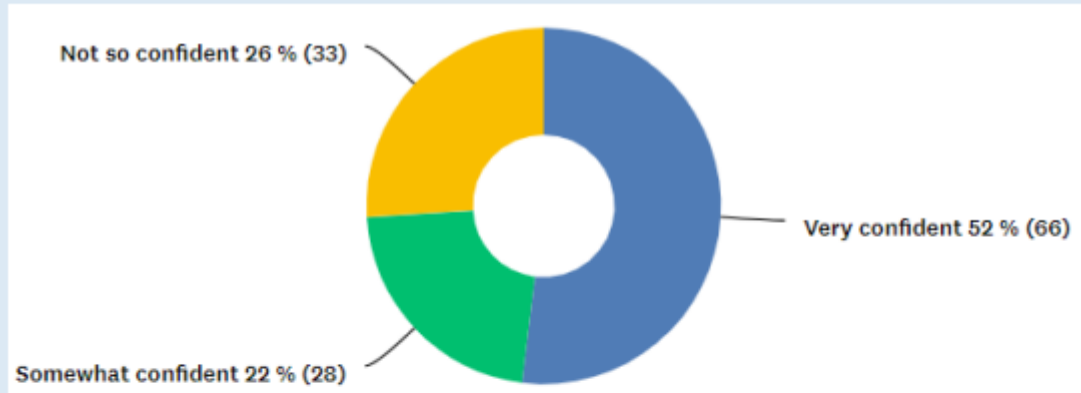
The three most important barriers to aquatic animal disease surveillance and data collection at national/central level



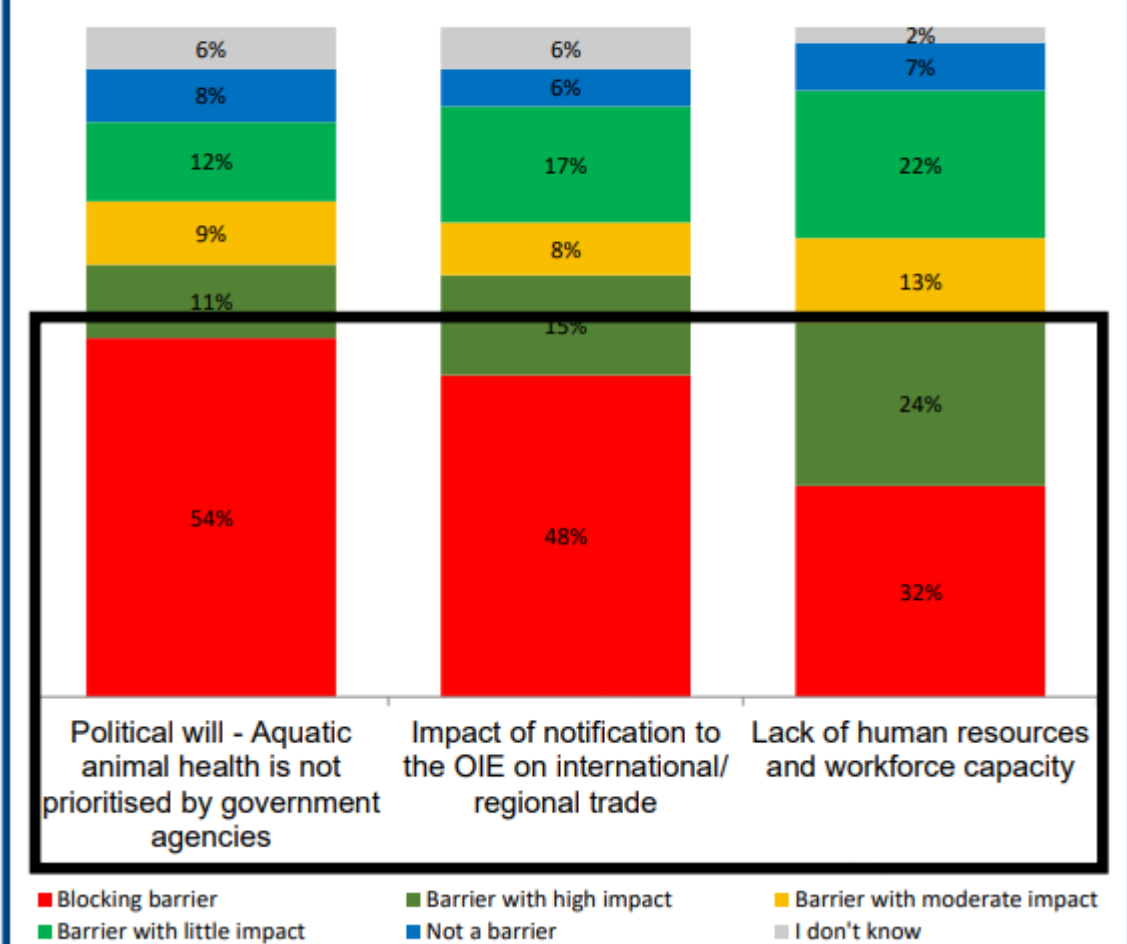


Reporting to WOA

Percentage of Members confident that the aquatic animal diseases have been TIMELY notified to the WOA



The three most important barriers to aquatic animal disease notification to the WOA

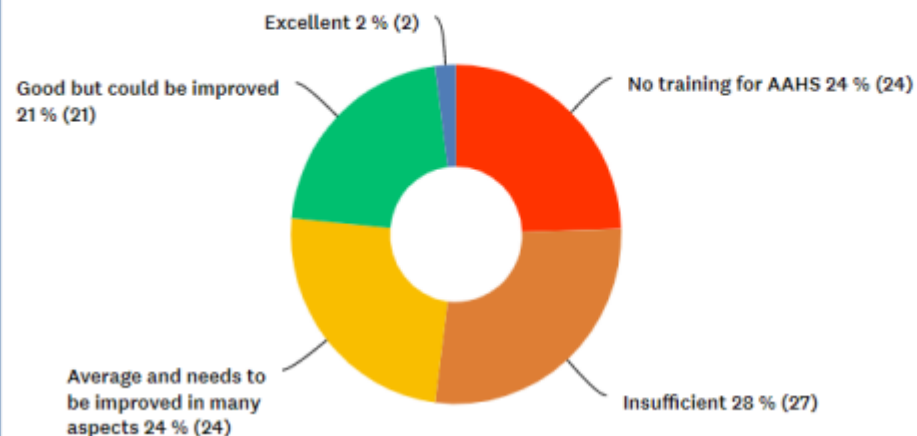




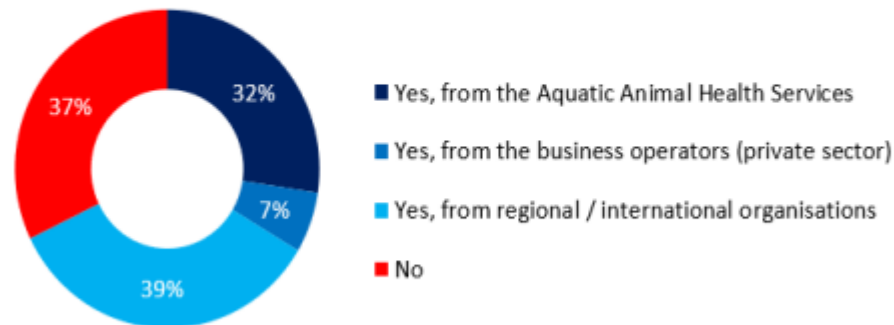
Findings regarding capacity building

25

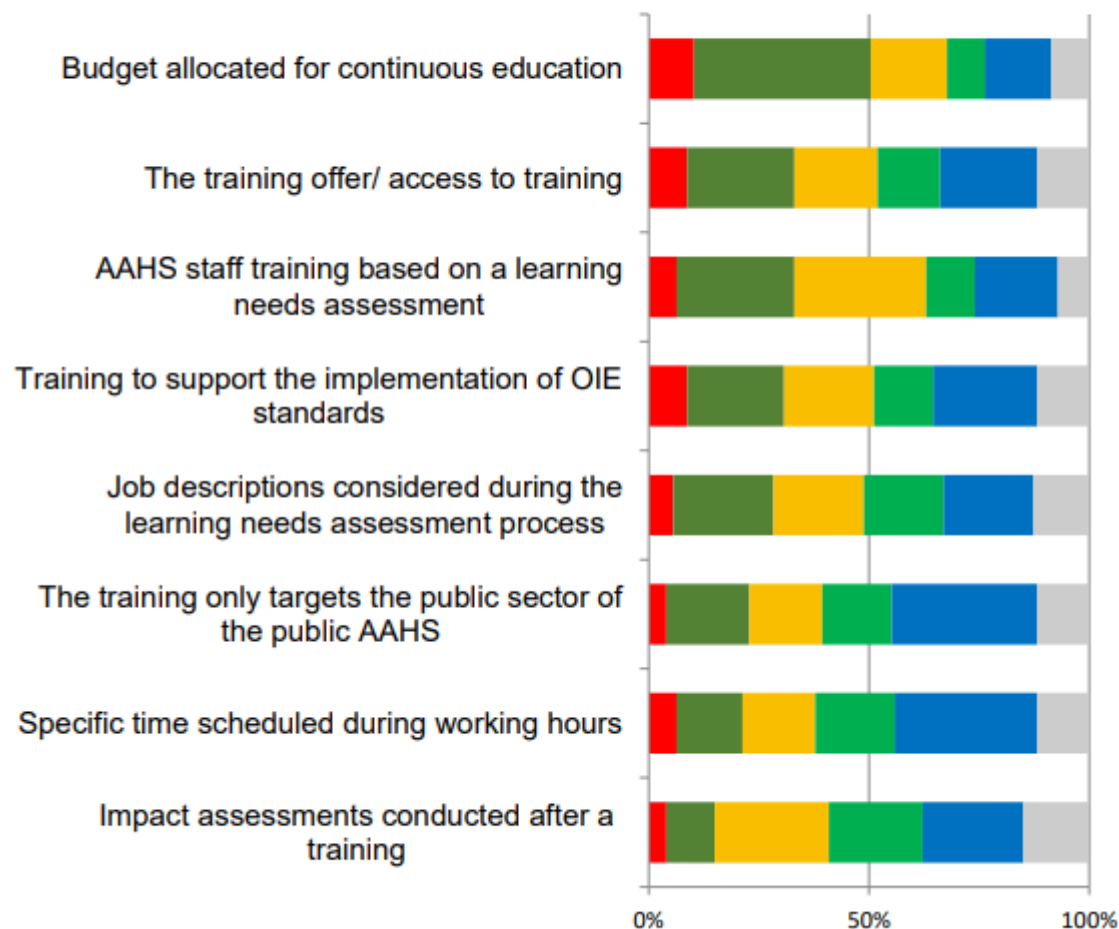
Feedback on the quality of AAHS education



Access to training material that could support the implementation of OIE aquatic standards



Importance given to the pre-listed barriers for continuing education on aquatic animal health and welfare





- **Findings and recommendations are published and provided to Members**
- **Activity leads will use findings to:**
 - ✓ identify and understand barriers to the implementation of standards and design and promote activities to overcome these barriers
 - ✓ contribute to the development of a training framework for aquatic animal health to strengthen Members' capacity
 - ✓ Increase the uptake of the PVS: Aquatic

Report: [survey-findings-barriers-to-the-implementation-of-aah-standards.pdf](#)





A good balance of invited experts among the four regions: Americas; Africa & Middle East; Asia & Pacific; and Europe. Additionally, some NCPs and Aquaculture network leaders requested to further disseminate the survey to additional key experts within their network, thus the survey was sent to a total of 440 people in 187 countries.

Form more information about the finding details:

<https://www.woah.org/app/uploads/2025/04/20250325-annex-report-fish-survey-final.pdf>



Aquaculture Health Research Survey

March 2025

Report of the pre-workshop global consultation on aquaculture research priorities: Finfish Section



Activities underway

Standards

- Provide more support to remove barriers to the implementation of standards

Capacity building

- Increase the use of the PVS Pathway
- Identify barriers to transparency in disease reporting

Resilience

- Provide and promote practical AMR guidance

Leadership

- Further development of international partnerships
- Identify the highest-priority research areas





Priorities for the years ahead

***Training and support for
WOAH Delegates and
focal points***

***Disease Identification Guide
for mobile devices***

***Emerging Disease Response
Coordination***

*Identify barriers to the
implementation of
standards*



Thank you

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