

Action Plan Development for AQMENET Implementation

AQMENET

“Enhancing aquatic animal health and biosecurity”

Steering & Technical Committees - National Aquatic Focal Points Training

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia/Jeddah, 26 to 29 October 2025

Dr Fayçal Meziani

WOAH Regional Representative for the Middle East



World
Organisation
for Animal
Health

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وزارة البيئة والمياه والزراعة
Ministry of Environment Water & Agriculture
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia المملكة العربية السعودية



PROPOSED DIRECTIONS FOR 2023-2025

2

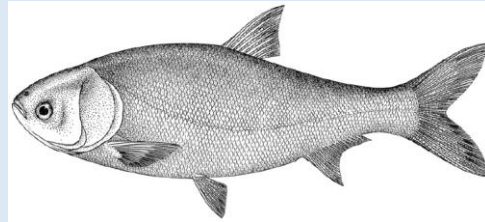
The draft workplan is validated by the TC & SC on June 6th, 2023

1. SC & TC

2. Biosecurity

6. PVS Evaluation

5. EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS AND
RESPONSES



8. Guidelines

3. LABORATORY CAPACITY
BUILDING AND DISEASE DIAGNOSIS

4. ANTIMICROBIAL USE (AMU)
AND ANTIMICROBIAL
RESISTANCE (AMR)

7. RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT
AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Communication



2. BIOSECURITY

- Increasing awareness of farmers, particularly small-scale farms, by promoting existing **best practice guidelines** and awareness tools
- **Assess** available **guidelines for biosecurity** and biosafety **identify gaps** and areas for **improvement**
- Promote best practice for **disease prevention**
- Assessment at Regional level of pathways for **exotic pathogen introduction** and effectiveness of current mitigation
- **Sharing information** on the occurrence of **WOAH listed diseases**, other **pathogens of regional significance** and **emerging diseases** in the Region.



3. LABORATORY CAPACITY BUILDING AND DISEASE DIAGNOSIS

4

- **Twinning project** between Padova and Jeddah
- **Identification of laboratories** for aquatic animal diseases in member countries
- **Harmonisation of laboratory methods**
- Evaluation of **available tests for the priority diseases** in the region
 - **develop and disseminate a questionnaire to national laboratories in the region**, aiming to understand the test methods that can be utilised by Members and the problems that they are facing currently
- **Distribution of reference materials for priority diseases** in the region
- **Facilitating collaboration between WOAH Reference Centres and national and regional aquatic animal disease laboratories** to facilitate capacity building and exchange of expertise
- **Development of WOAH Regional reference and collaborating centres via the WOAH twinning programme** to support development of aquatic animal health management





4. ANTIMICROBIAL USE (AMU) AND ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)⁵



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.



- Address prudent use of antimicrobials as well as monitoring and surveillance of AMR in aquaculture through the development of common standards and sharing information of the use of AM and the emergence of AMR
- Training of National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals on ANIMUSE for the reporting of data on antimicrobial use in the region
- Follow up of ANIMUSE utilisation

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*.

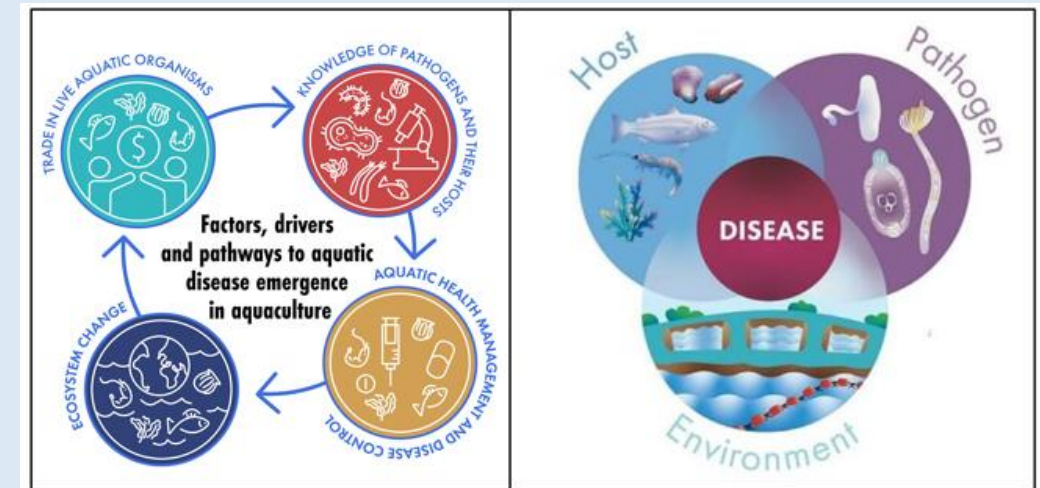
The collection of data on the use of *antimicrobial agents* in *aquaculture* may be constrained in some countries by the lack of available resources, lack of accurately labelled products, poorly documented distribution channels and lack of professional consultation or supervision. This chapter may therefore 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*.



5. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

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- **Develop regional collaboration** to respond to introduced and emerging aquatic animal diseases
- Develop a **series of guidelines** for emergency response
- Develop a **regional information sharing mechanism** for emerging aquatic animal diseases





6. PVS Evaluation

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- Promote the benefits of using the WOAH PVS Aquatic Tool, including in-country orientation training or webinar about the different aquatic veterinary services that will be evaluated under the PVS aquatic.
- PVS is important for the region because **WOAH provides external evaluation of the members**, and the report can be used as a strong tool to lobby with high level officials **to attract more investment and get more funding from the central government**. External evaluation can also **provide a more neutral suggestions or guidance to the members** to help them improve their system.





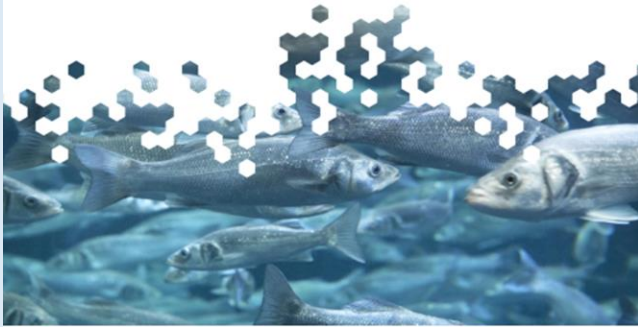
7. RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

8

Aquaculture Health Research Survey

March 2025

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



World Organisation
for Animal Health

www.woah.org
www.idaz-idaz.net



International
Research
Consultation on
Aquaculture Health

- Identify priority areas for the region, including disease prioritisation.
- Promoting research on aquatic animal diseases, epidemiology, pathology and one health in aquaculture
- Contributing to the standards setting process to further develop WOA standards for the validation of specific diagnostic methods of major diseases of concern in the region
- Regular webinar among National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals and experts to share information and knowledge on disease prevention, early detection, and control of aquatic animal diseases, including surveillance and diagnostics of specific diseases
- Development of guidance on the use of non-native species for aquaculture in the Region

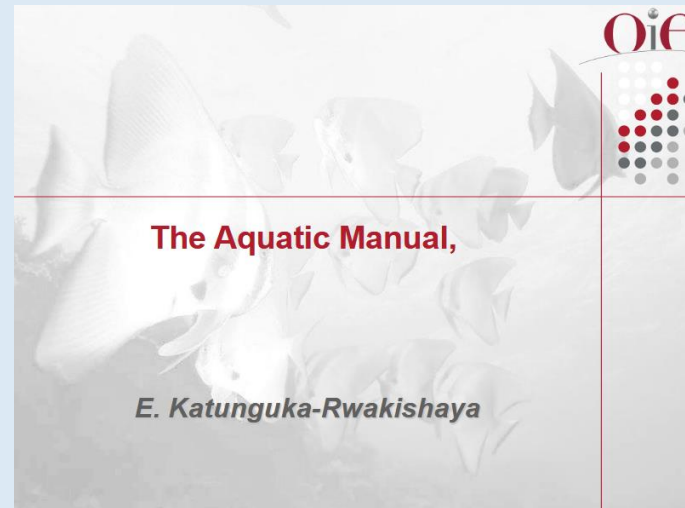




8. Guidelines

9

- **Assess status across the region of current preparedness/contingency plans**, identify gaps (survey) and develop new plans if necessary
- Conduct a **simulation exercises** to test plans



Regional Technical Guidelines on Early Warning System for Aquatic Animal Health Emergencies





- **Workplan + timeline**

Activities	Priority	Actions	Timeline																								Project	Status																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
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Governance bodies SC & TC

2 meetings since the creation of the network → objective: **at least 2 per meetings** year

Workplan endorsed with three levels of priority are defined : High priority (activities to be led within 6 months), medium priority (activities to be set up between 6 month and 1 year) and low priority (activities to be led within 2 years).

For each activity, an **implementation plan** and a **working group** responsible for the implementation will be defined.



No follow up has been ensured



The draft workplan is validated by the TC & SC on June 6th, 2023¹²

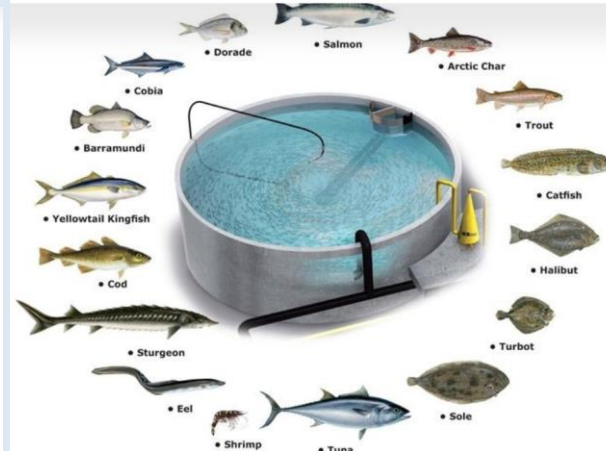
The website will be hosted by the WOAH Regional representation website. WOAH communication team will work to give members access to the website to download and share documents with the network. Exchanges of knowledge

(AQMENET) Regional Network for Aquatic Animal Diseases

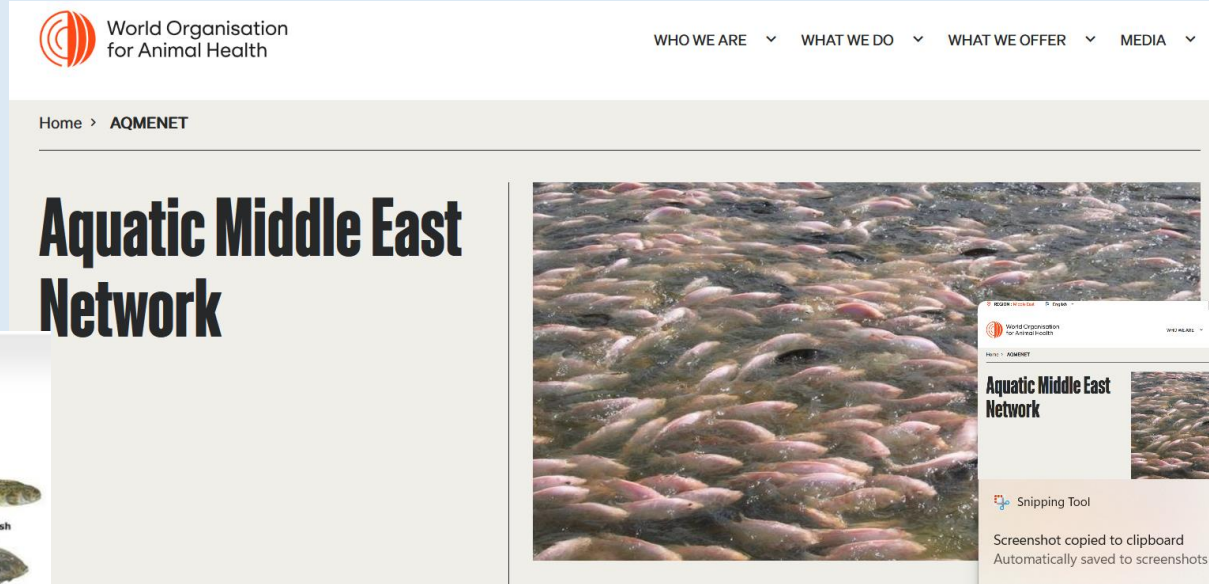
AQMENET

Aquatic animal diseases: (Aquatic Animal Health Code)

- [Crayfish plague](#) (*Aphanomyces astaci*)
- Enteric septicaemia of catfish (*Edwardsiella ictaluri*)
- [Epizootic haematopoietic necrosis](#)
- Infection with *Aphanomyces invadans* ([epizootic ulcerative syndrome](#))
- Infection with [Bonamia exitiosa](#)
- Infection with [Bonamia ostreae](#)
- Infection with abalone herpesvirus



A number of the activities will be initiated through a survey of members which will be managed by WOAH HQ with input from the Technical Committee.



Feedback and Comments of the AQMENET Survey



DVM Amedeo Manfrin

WOAH Reference Laboratory for Viral Encephalopathy and Retinopathy
Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie, Legnaro, Italy



Members noted that the item in the workplan on vaccines would only include development of a protocol for local vaccine production, and not vaccine development/production.



To remain within AQMENET's coordination mandate, ensure feasibility, respect regulatory limits, and prioritize capacity-building over direct production activities.



Financial support

Financing the workplan : Steering Committee Chair

The activities can be financed by WOAHA world fund, countries in-kind or fundings, regional donors or private sector.



All the AQMENET members are invited to support the network.



Observation: Certain activities were not implemented as planned during the reporting period.

Main causes identified: Limited technical capacity / unclear roles
Insufficient coordination or follow-up, Resource and time constraints

Identified Challenges

- Insufficient follow-up and monitoring mechanisms.
- Lack of clear allocation of responsibilities.
- Limited technical and financial support.
- Insufficient communication between partners.



Proposed Next Steps

- ✓ **Prioritize and streamline activities** – focus on realistic, high-impact actions.
- ✓ **Establish clear focal responsibilities** and timelines for each task.
- ✓ **Enhance coordination and reporting** through quarterly follow-ups.
- ✓ **Mobilize support** (technical, financial, or partner engagement).
- ✓ **Reassess the work plan** to align with current priorities and capacities.

شكرا
Thank you

12, rue de Prony, 75017 Paris, France
T. +33 (0)1 44 15 19 49
F. +33 (0)1 42 67 09 87

woah@woah.int
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Ministry of Environment Water & Agriculture
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Identifying Technical, Capacity Building and FP Training Needs in Member Countries

AQMENET

“Enhancing aquatic animal health and biosecurity”

Steering & Technical Committees - National Aquatic Focal Points Training)

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia/Jeddah, 26 to 29 October 2025

Dr Fayçal Meziani

WOAH Regional Representative for the Middle East



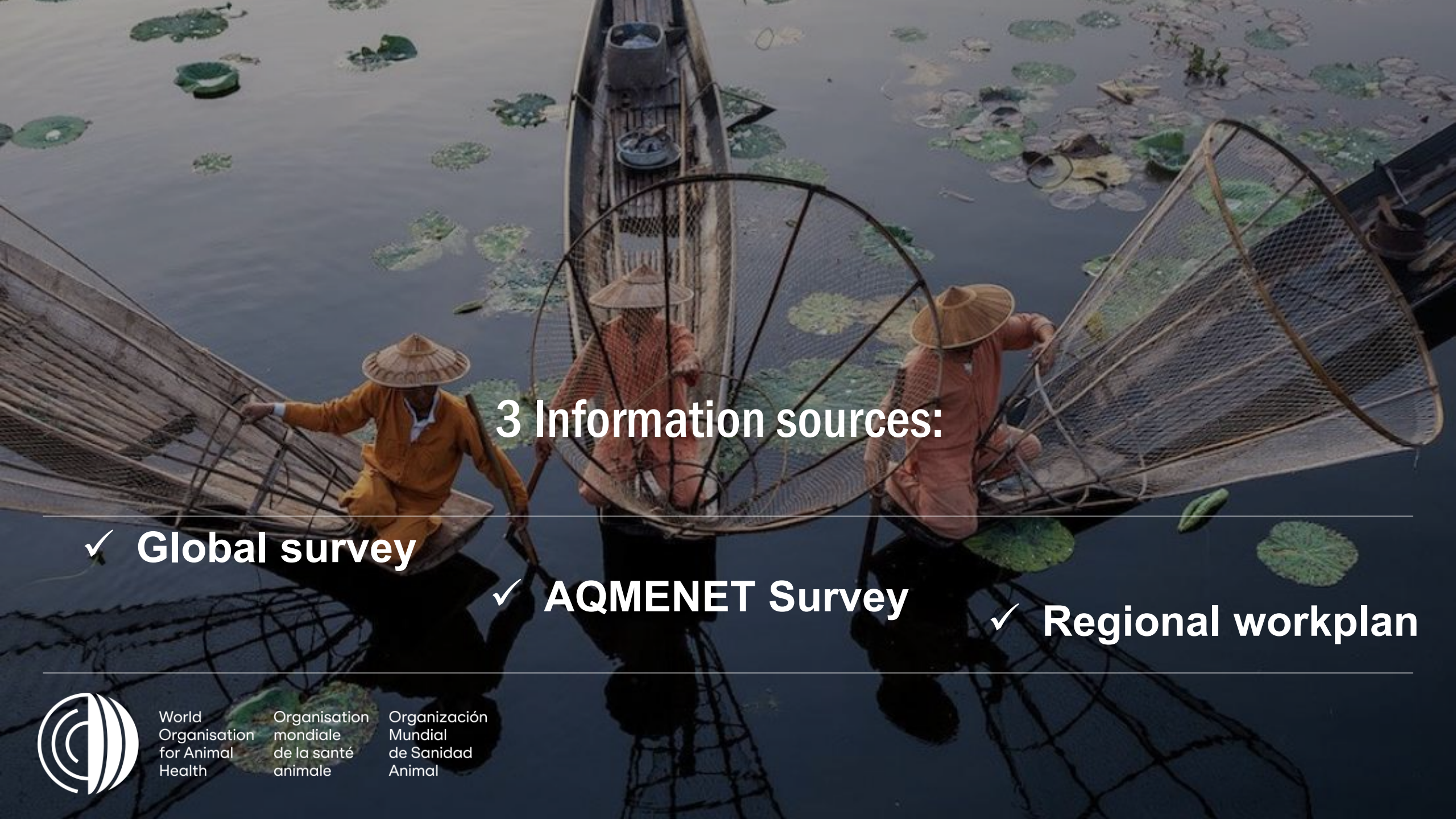
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3 Information sources:

✓ **Global survey**

✓ **AQMENET Survey**

✓ **Regional workplan**



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✓ Global Survey

20

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

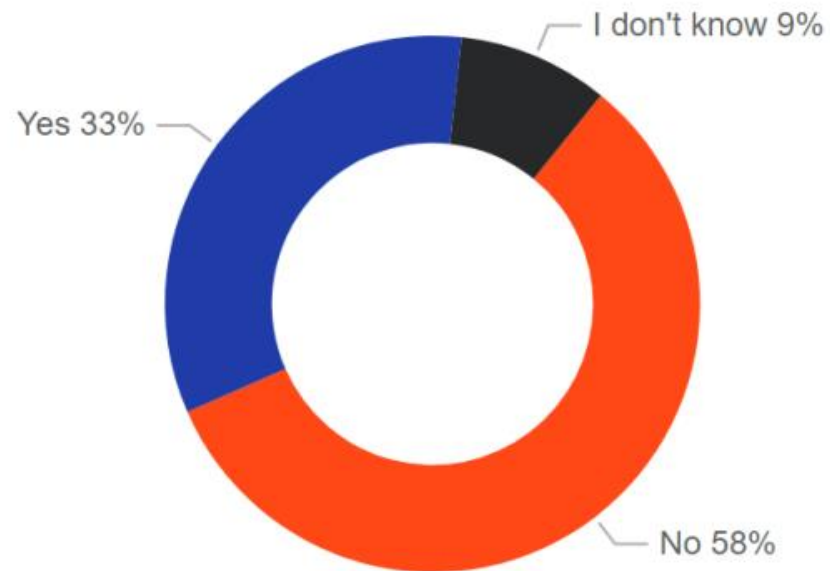
48 question survey

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

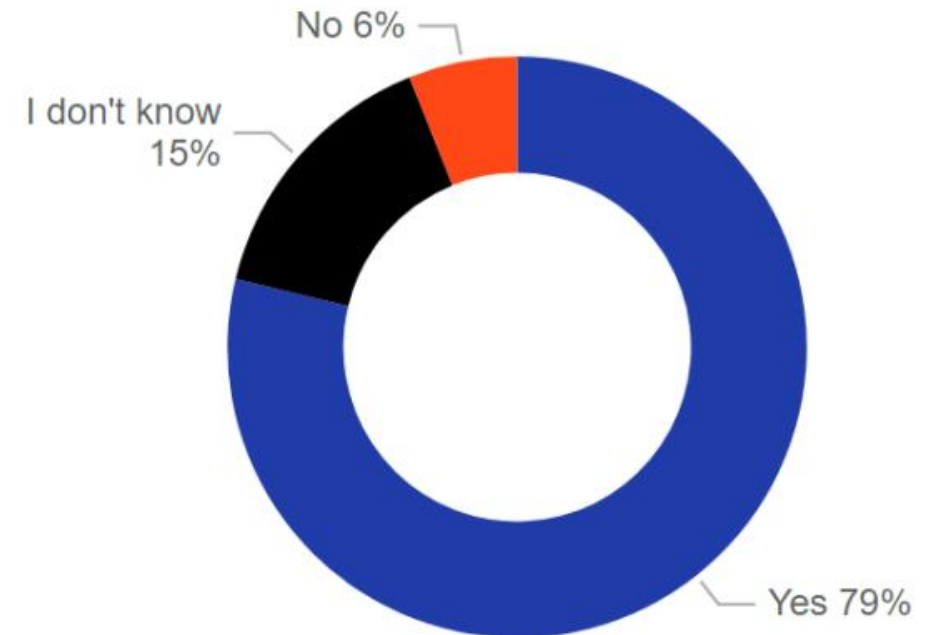
14 RECOMMENDATIONS

Knowledge about the PVS Aquatic and interest for future evaluation

Has the knowledge of the OIE PVS Tool-Aquatic been distributed to relevant stakeholders in your country/territory?

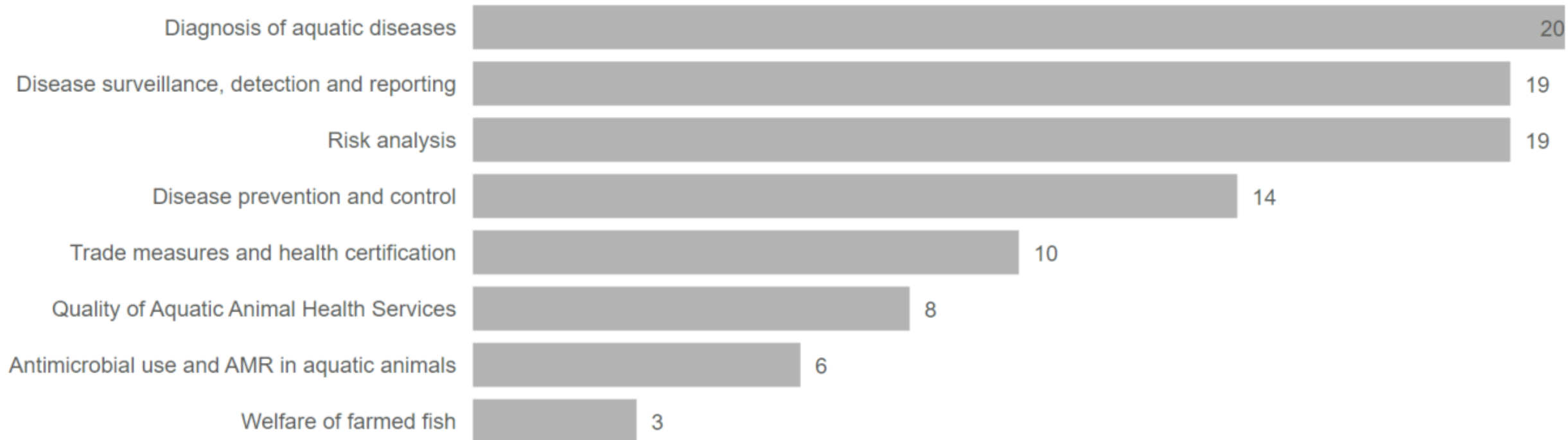


Would your country/territory be interested in conducting a PVS Aquatic mission in the next 5 years?



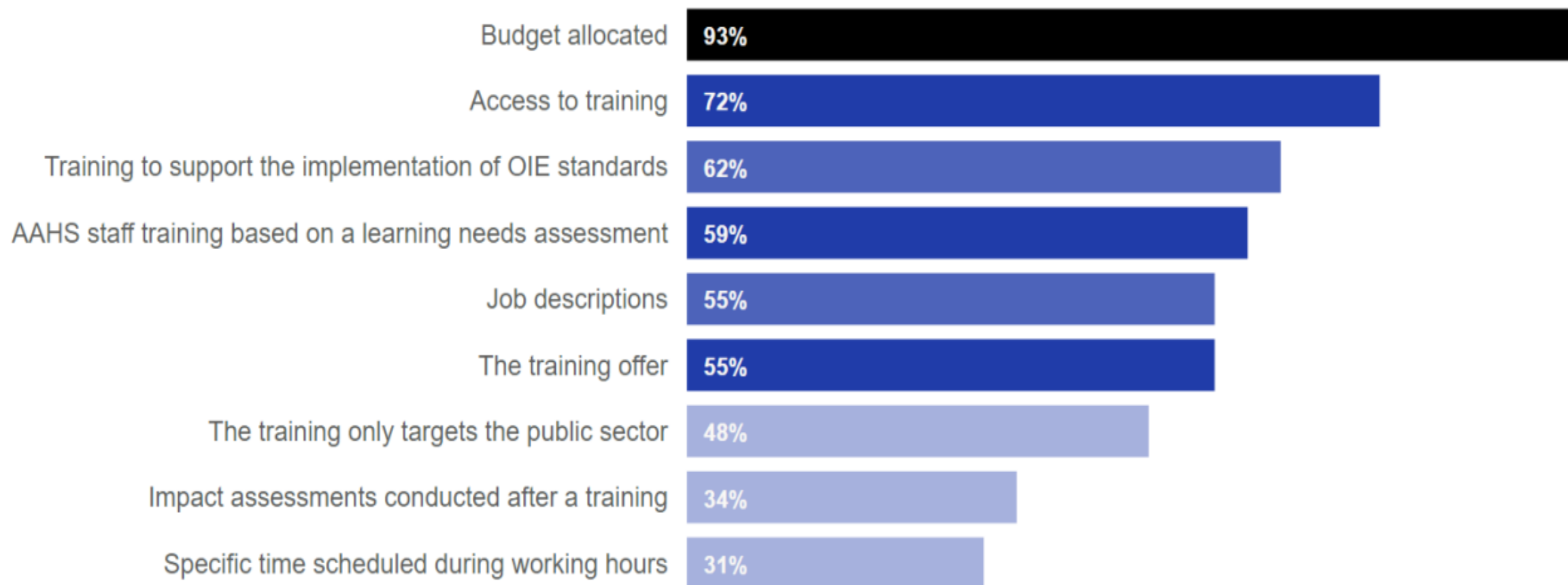


Main topics of interest for training programmes for Aquatic Animal Health Services





Main barriers to continuing education on aquatic animal health and welfare, (percentage of Members ranking them as blocking or high impact barriers)

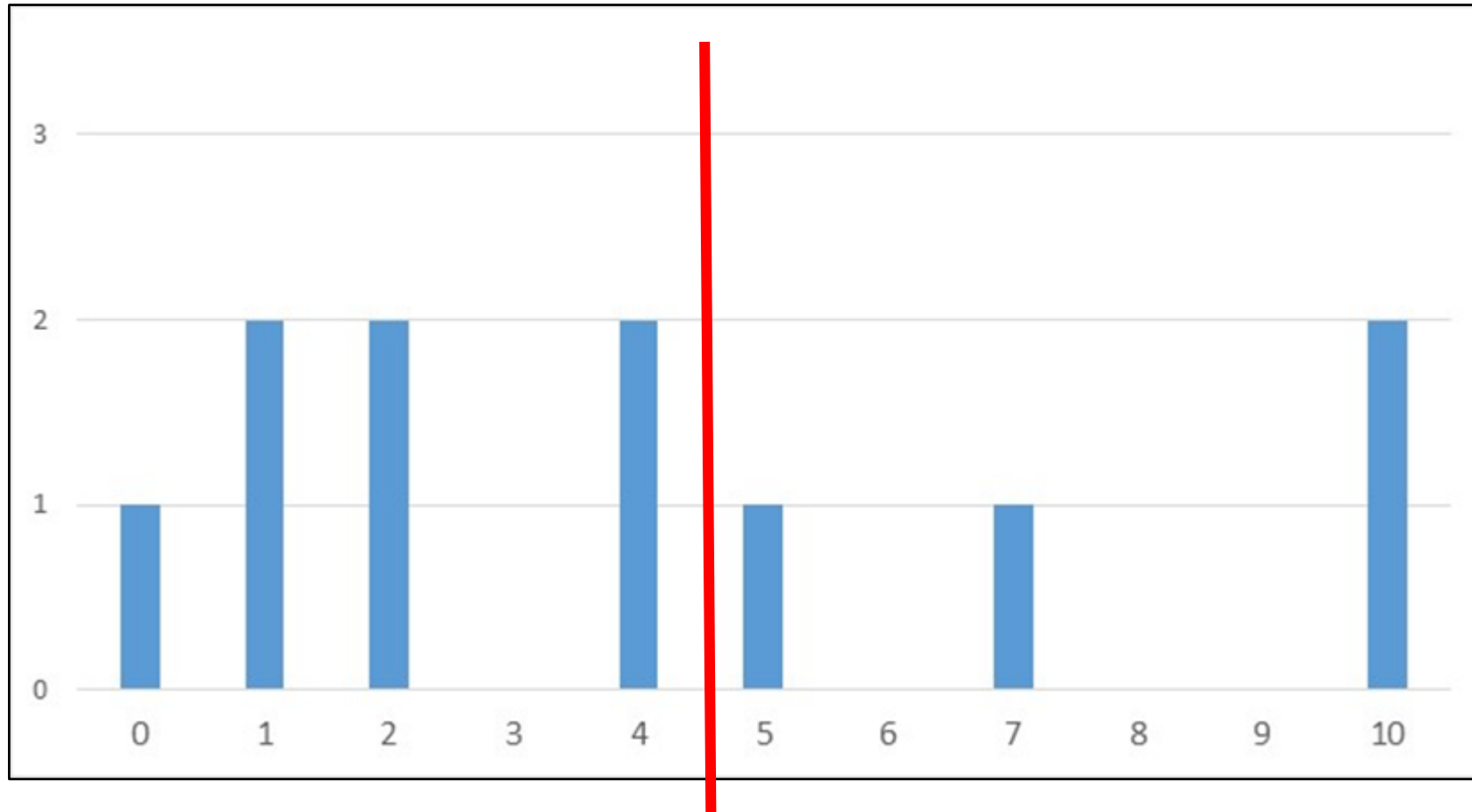




✓ AQMENET Survey

✓ AQMENET Survey

How is your country prepared for an aquatic animal health emergency?



- 4 prepared
- 7 not or low prepared

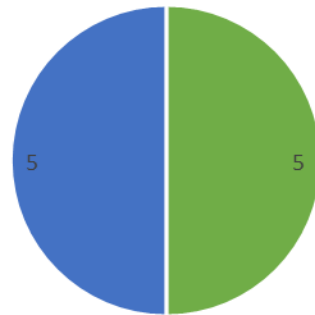
(Scale: 1 = Not Prepared, 10 = Very Prepared)



✓ AQMENET Survey

Lack of specific training on aquatic Animal Health

Are there training programs in place for personnel working in aquatic animal health?



■ Yes ■ No

What are the main areas where additional training or capacity building is required?





✓ Regional workplan

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Capacity building

Training in appropriate field sampling in the face of an outbreak as well as risk assessment and risk management

Promote the benefits of using the WOAH PVS Aquatic Tool, including in-country orientation training or webinar about the different aquatic veterinary services that will be evaluated under the PVS aquatic.

PVS self-assessments to set the base line and identify training needs

PVS Aquatic Evaluations



What is common?

Technical Focus Areas:

- Diagnosis of aquatic diseases (highest-ranked)
- Disease surveillance, detection, and reporting
- Risk assessment and outbreak management
- Disease prevention and control: biosecurity, GMP, vaccination

Governance Strengthening:

- Promote and apply the WOAH PVS Aquatic Tool
- Conduct national PVS self-assessments and evaluations
- Build institutional awareness and training based on PVS findings



Integrated Regional Priorities & Next Steps

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Integrated Regional Priorities:

1. Build diagnostic and surveillance capacity
2. Strengthen farm-level biosecurity and management
3. Enhance risk analysis and outbreak response
4. Improve institutional capacity through the PVS Aquatic Tool
5. Address AMR, fish welfare, and trade compliance

Next Steps:

- Develop a regional training roadmap
- Mobilize partners and technical resources
- Foster peer-to-peer learning across countries
- Monitor progress using PVS Aquatic framework

شكرا
Thank you

12, rue de Prony, 75017 Paris, France
T. +33 (0)1 44 15 19 49
F. +33 (0)1 42 67 09 87

woah@woah.int
www.woah.org

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