



# Launch of the Regional Aquatic Animal Health Network for North Africa (RAAHN-NA)

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**G. Yehia**  
WOAH Consultant for  
the Middle East  
Beirut - Lebanon







1. AQMENET includes the following countries, bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf:

**Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.**



## BACKGROUND

The Aquatic Middle East Network (AQMENET) was officially launched on 28 of November 2022, in Jeddah by the Representative of the Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Mekkah Region and the Director General of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

The main objective of the network is to assist Members to develop their aquaculture sector in a sustainable way, through implementation of WOAH standards to improve the prevention, early detection, and control of aquatic animal diseases.



# Steering Committee

- Chairperson – Dr Ali Elshaikhi (KSA) already elected.
- WOAHA Delegates/ Chief Veterinary Officers from the 13 Member Countries
- Representative from WOAHA Headquarters - Melanie Allan
- Chair of the Technical Committee – Dr Ahmad Abu Al Ata (Egypt) elected by the SC.
- Representative from FAO
- The WOAHA RR ME as secretariat of the SC

# Technical Committee

## *Permanent members*

- Chairperson - Dr Ahmad Abu Al Ata (Egypt)
- Focal Points on Aquaculture: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and KSA.
- Four representatives from WOAHA Reference Centres (Collaborating Centres and/or Reference Laboratories).
  - Edmund Peeler – Collaborating Centre for Emerging Aquatic Animal Diseases (CEFAS UK)
  - Larry Hamell – Collaborating Centre for Epidemiology and Risk Assessment of Aquatic Animal Diseases (AVC Canada)
  - Dr Chris Teale – Reference Laboratory for Antimicrobial Resistance (Animal and Plant Health Agency UK)
  - Reference Laboratory for viral encephalopathy and retinopathy (ISZVe, Padova, Italy)

## Technical Committee cont.

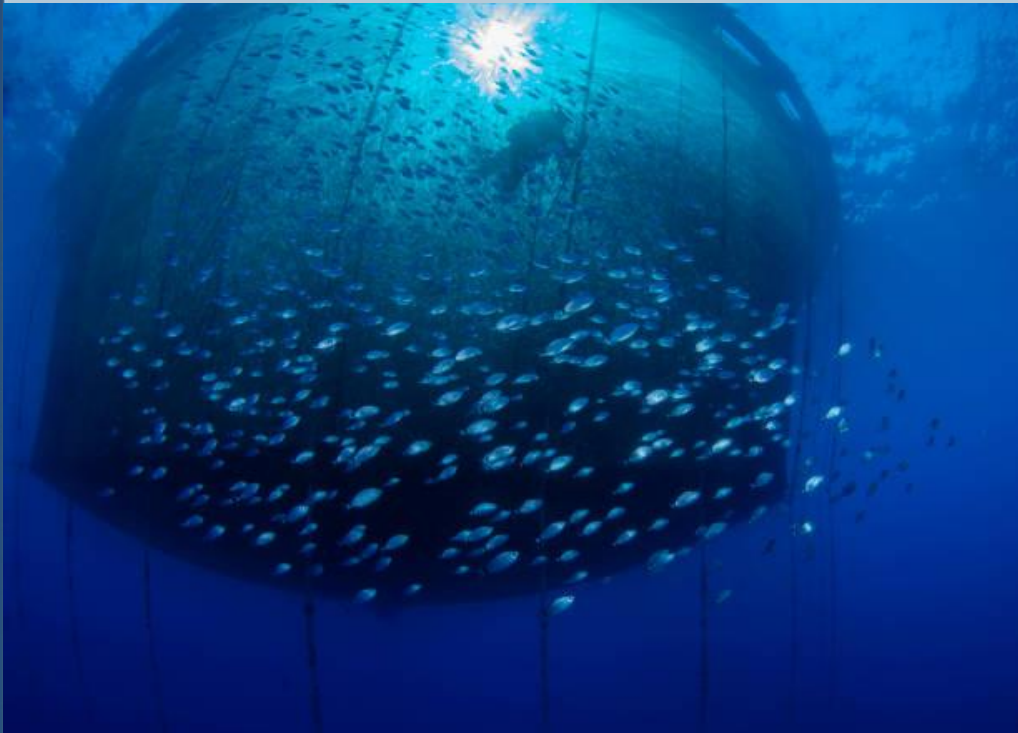
- Representative from the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission – Kathleen Frisch
- A representative from WOAHA Headquarters involved in the implementation of the Aquatic Animal Health Strategy – Melanie Allan
- An expert regional coordinator on the proposal of WOAHA Headquarters – Dr Yehia Ghazi

### *Members engaged on and ad hoc basis*

- Private sector
- Research institutions
- Donors



# AQMENET Operational Plan



## Immediate activities

### Pre-workshop action: Meeting of the Technical committee (June) to:

- Update the workplan and develop a timetable for implementation.
- Develop and disseminate a questionnaire for:
  - Evaluation of priority aquatic diseases in the region.
  - Identification of laboratories for aquatic animal diseases in member countries.
  - Review the test methods that can be utilised by Members and the problems that they are facing currently, in the diagnosis of Aquatic animal diseases.
  - Establish a financial plan and terms of reference for Governance and coordination.



## Immediate activities

### Workshop for National Focal Points on Aquatic animal health

**Objective:** Share information and knowledge on disease prevention, early detection, and control of aquatic animal diseases, including surveillance and diagnostics of specific diseases.

- **Topics of the workshop:**

- Analysis of the questionnaire results.
- Identify priority areas for the region, including disease prioritisation.
- WOAHA listed diseases, other pathogens of regional significance and emerging diseases in the Region.
- Benefits of WOAHA PVS Aquatic Tool.
- Twinning in Aquaculture.
- Prudent use of antimicrobials, monitoring and surveillance of AMR in aquaculture.

Cases study: 2 diseases prevailing in the region:

1. Spring viremia of Carp.
2. Red Seabream iridoviral disease

## Short term activities (2023 – 2024)

### PVS EVALUATIONS

- PVS is important tool for the region as WOAHP 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.
- **Organisation of a series of PVS Aquaculture evaluation missions to concerned countries to assess progress and identify needs.**
- Promote the benefits of using the WOAHP PVS Aquatic Tool, including in-country orientation training or webinar about the different aquatic veterinary services that will be evaluated under the PVS aquatic.



# Short term activities (2023 – 2024)

## ❖ BIOSECURITY

### ❖ (organising seminar/webinar focussing on Biosecurity issues)

- Promote best practice for disease prevention.
- Assess available guidelines for biosecurity and biosafety, identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- Assessment at Regional level of pathways for exotic pathogen introduction and effectiveness of current mitigation.
- Increasing awareness of farmers, particularly small-scale farms, by promoting existing best practice guidelines and awareness tools.

## ❖ LABORATORY CAPACITY BUILDING AND DISEASE DIAGNOSIS:

- **organisation of a series of workshops on surveillance and control of Aquatic diseases,**
- Harmonisation of laboratory diagnostic methods. (Complying with WOAHA manual)
- Distribution of reference materials for priority diseases in the region where needed. (After PVS)
- Encourage countries to submit dossiers to WOAHA specialist commissions for official recognition.
- Promotion of WOAHA twinning programme to support development of aquatic animal health management and facilitate capacity building and exchange of expertise.

## Medium and long terms activities (2023 – 2025)

### Organisation of a special workshop on ANTIMICROBIAL USE (AMU) AND ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)

- Training of National Focal Points for Aquatic Animals on ANIMUSE for the reporting of data on antimicrobial use in the region.
- 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.
- Follow up of ANIMUSE utilisation (to become a pilot region for ANIMUSE and its applications for the AMR prevention in member countries) (Special activity).



# Medium and long terms activities (2023 – 2025)

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSES

(Organise workshop/s to validate actions)

- Develop regional collaboration to respond to introduced and emerging aquatic animal diseases.
- Develop a series of Guidelines for emergency response.
- Develop a regional database for emerging disease/s.

## RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- **Design of the AQMENET website and enriches it with relevant data.**
- Promoting research on aquatic animal diseases, epidemiology, pathology and one health in Aquaculture
- Contributing to the standards setting process to further develop WOAHA standards for the validation of specific diagnostic methods of major diseases of concern in the region.
- Development of guidance on the use of non-native species for aquaculture in the Region.





Discussion

Thank You!

