

**Launch of the  
Regional Aquatic  
Animal Health Laboratory  
Network for Africa  
(RAAHLN-AF)**

**5 – 7 December 2023  
Pretoria, South Africa**




**Lancement du Réseau  
régional des laboratoires  
de santé des animaux  
aquatiques pour l'Afrique  
RRLSAA-AF**


**5 – 7 décembre 2023  
Pretoria, Afrique du Sud**

## AGENDA

### DAY 1 - Tuesday 5 December 2023

<b>08:00-09:00</b>	Welcoming of participants		
<b>OPENING SESSION</b>			
<b>09:00-09:30</b>	Opening remarks	<p>Mohamed Sirdar</p> <p>Botlhe Michael Modisane</p> <p>Nelly Isyagi</p> <p>Beleman Semoli</p>	<p>WOAH Southern Africa</p> <p>Chief Director for Animal Production and Health, and WOAH Delegate, RSA</p> <p>FishGov II Coordinator, AU-IBAR</p> <p>Chief Director for Freshwater Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, RSA</p>
<b>09:30-09:40</b>	Background and objectives of the workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do we want to achieve?</li> <li>What do we need to get there?</li> </ul>	Patrick Bastiaensen	WOAH Eastern Africa
<b>09:40-10:00</b>	Icebreaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-introduction and what are your expectations of the workshop?</li> </ul>		<i>all participants</i>
<b>SESSION 1 : THE INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL LANDSCAPE</b>			
<b>10:00-11:00</b>	World Organisation for Animal Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Strategy</li> <li>Provisions of the WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Manual</li> </ul>	<p>Larry Hammell</p> <p>Kevin Christison</p>	<p>WOAH Regional Activities Department (and University of Prince Edward Island, Canada)</p> <p>WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission (Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, South Africa)</p>

	<p>Food and Agriculture Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAO Aquatic Animal Health and Biosecurity Guidelines</li> <li>Codex Alimentarius standards on fish food safety</li> </ul>	Melba Reantaso	Food Safety, Nutrition and Health. Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<i>Coffee break and group photo</i>		
<b>11:30-11:50</b>	<p>African Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa</li> <li>Africa Blue Economy Strategy</li> <li>Animal Health Strategy for Africa</li> <li>Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa</li> </ul>	Nelly Isyagi	FISH-GOV II Project African Union - Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR)
<b>SESSION 2 : SITUATION ANALYSIS</b>			
<b>11:50-13:00</b>	<p>Taking stock of existing aquatic animal health (laboratory) networks in other regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International : Network of WOAHP Reference Laboratories in aquatic animal health</li> <li>Regional : Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA)</li> <li>International : FAO/WOAH World Reference Laboratory for FMD (WRLFMD) Network</li> </ul>	<p>Nick Moody</p> <p>Eduardo Leano</p> <p>Mohamed Sirdar</p>	<p>Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness, CSIRO</p> <p>Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA)</p> <p>WOAH Southern Africa (Member of the Global FMD Working Group)</p>
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<i>Lunch</i>		
<b>14:00-15:00</b>	<p>Taking stock of existing laboratory networks in other sectors (terrestrial diseases, public health)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International : Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VETLAB) Network (IAEA) </li> <li>Regional : ERFAN Laboratory Network</li> <li>Regional : Laboratory and diagnostics Sub-Committee of the SADC Livestock Technical Committee </li> <li>National : US-CDC </li> </ul>	<p>Charles E. Lamien</p> <p>Itumeleng Matle</p> <p>Pious Makaya</p> <p>Ryan Wallace</p>	<p>Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture, Vienna.</p> <p>Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Institute (OVRI), South Africa</p> <p>Chair of the SADC LSC (Zimbabwe)</p> <p>Division of High-Consequence Pathogens and Pathology, US-CDC</p>

<b>15:00-15:30</b>	Feedback from the two regional aquatic animal health networks launched in 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAAHN-NA</li> <li>• RAAHN-SA</li> </ul>	 Francesco Valentini Mohamed Sirdar	WOAH North Africa WOAH Southern Africa
<b>15:30-16:10</b>	<u>Member states contributions : International Reference Laboratories:</u>  The Designated Expert of the selected Reference Laboratories present their facilities, services and challenges encountered in assisting Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United States</li> <li>• United Kingdom</li> </ul>	Arun Dhar  David Stone	Aquaculture Pathology Laboratory, Arizona State University Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, CEFAS
<b>16:10-16:40</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>		
<b>16:40-17:20</b>	<u>Member states contributions : International Reference Laboratories:</u>  The Designated Expert of the selected Reference Laboratories present their facilities, services and challenges encountered in assisting Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Norway</li> <li>• Australia</li> </ul>	Haakon Hansen  Nick Moody	Norwegian Veterinary Institute, NVI  Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness, CSIRO
<b>17:20-17:50</b>	<u>Member states contributions : National Reference Laboratories:</u>  The representative of the selected National Laboratories present their facilities, services and challenges encountered in assisting their governments and the industry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nigeria</li> <li>• Ghana</li> </ul>	Modupeola 'Dupe' Ogunnoiki  Stanley Henry Ekow Obresi	Nigeria Fisheries Laboratory  National Fisheries Commission
<b>After 19:00</b>	<i>Welcome dinner</i>		

**DAY 2 - Wednesday 6 December 2023**

<b>09:00-09:15</b>	Summary and commentary of the first day's presentations and discussions	<i>all participants</i>
<b>09:15-09:45</b>	<p><u>Member states contributions : National Reference Laboratories:</u></p> <p>The representative of the selected National Laboratories present their facilities, services and challenges encountered in assisting their governments and the industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egypt</li> <li>• Tunisia</li> </ul>	<p>Refaat El-Gamal</p> <p>Nadia Chérif</p> <p>Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research National Institute for Marine Science and Technologies</p>
<b>09:45-10:30</b>	<p><u>Member states contributions : International Collaborating Centres:</u></p> <p>The Contact Points for the selected Collaborating Centres present their facilities, services and challenges encountered in assisting Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada</li> <li>• United Kingdom</li> <li>• Norway</li> </ul>	<p>Larry Hammell</p> <p>Ed Peeler</p> <p>Haakon Hansen</p> <p>University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) Norwegian Veterinary Institute (NVI)</p>
<b>10:30-11:00</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>	
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<p><u>Member states contributions : National Reference Laboratories:</u></p> <p>The representative of the selected National Laboratories present their facilities, services and challenges encountered in assisting their governments and the industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Africa</li> <li>• Zambia</li> </ul>	<p>Livio Heath</p> <p>Bernard Hang'Ombe Mudenda</p> <p>Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Institute (OVRI) School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zambia (UNZA)</p>

<b>11:30-12:00</b>	<u>Member states contributions : Private sector / industry needs and aspirations:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Madagascar</li> <li>• South Africa</li> </ul>	<p>Marc Le Groumellec</p> <p>David Huchzermeyer</p>	<p><i>Aquaculture de la Mahajamba (Aqualma)</i> Department of Ichthyology and Fisheries Science, Rhodes University</p>
<b>12:00-13:00</b>	<u>Plenary discussion</u>		<i>all participants</i>
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<i>Lunch</i>		
<b>SESSION 3 : DEVELOPMENT OF RAAHLN TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>			
<b>14:00-14:20</b>	Plenary presentation of the draft Terms of Reference for the RAAHLN		WOAH/AU-IBAR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Terms of Reference for the regional diagnostic network that elaborate on options for establishing linkages with existing national animal health diagnostic services, relevant recognised aquatic animal health reference laboratories within the region (service laboratories) and internationally (WOAH / FAO Reference Laboratories), private sector, R&amp;D and other technical and development partners.</li> </ul>		
<b>14:20-15:20</b>	<u>Group discussion 1 :</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three groups - no rotation, each group will focus on one section of the draft Terms of Reference (30 min) + report back (30 min)</li> </ul> <p>[Background documents and a template will be provided]</p>		WOAH, FAO, AU-IBAR, NACA, facilitators
<b>15:20-15:50</b>	<u>Plenary discussion:</u> Validation/approval of all the points of the draft Terms of Reference		
<b>15:50-16:20</b>	<i>Coffee Break</i>		
<b>SESSION 4 : DEVELOPMENT OF RAAHLN INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK</b>			
<b>16:20-16:30</b>	Plenary presentation of the draft Institutional Framework for the RAAHLN		WOAH/AU-IBAR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals for institutionalising the proposed <i>Regional Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory Network</i> (draft institutional framework) into the most appropriate Regional Economic Community (AU)</li> </ul>		
<b>16:30-17:15</b>	<u>Group discussion 2 :</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three groups - no rotation, each group will focus on one section of the Draft Institutional Framework (30 min) + report back (15 min)</li> </ul> <p>[Background documents and a template will be provided]</p>		WOAH, FAO, AU-IBAR, NACA, facilitators
<b>17:15-17:45</b>	<u>Plenary discussion:</u> Validation/approval of all the points of the Institutional Framework		<i>all participants</i>

**DAY 3 - Thursday 7 December 2023**

<b>09:00-09:15</b>	Summary and commentary of the second day's (group) discussions	<i>all participants</i>
<b>SESSION 5 : DEVELOPMENT OF RAAHLN INAUGURAL ACTION PLAN</b>		
<b>09:15-09:30</b>	Plenary presentation of the draft Action Plan for the RAAHLN	WOAH, AU-IBAR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft inaugural three-year action plan to facilitate the official inauguration of the regional diagnostic network and the establishment of mechanisms to strengthen regional control and surveillance of aquatic animal biosecurity and biosafety that include reporting to the continental and global aquatic animal health and food-safety reporting systems (i.e. AU-IBAR's ARIS and WOA's WAHIS, Codex Alimentarius' GLASS).</li> </ul>	
<b>09:30-11:00</b>	<p><u>Group Discussion 3:</u></p> <p>Prioritizing actions with indicative timelines and resource requirements to facilitate the institutionalization and operationalization of RAAHLN into the REC and animal health (SPS) infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Near future (12 months) priorities</li> <li>Long term (3 years) priorities</li> </ul> <p>Three groups - no rotation, each group will focus on one section of the draft Action Plan (60 min) + report back (30 min)</p>	WOAH, FAO, AU-IBAR, NACA, facilitators
	<p>Suggested topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of additional laboratories for aquatic animal diseases in member countries.</li> <li>Using the Network to advocate for increased and better investments in diagnostic infrastructure and improved reporting from private laboratories to the Competent Authority.</li> <li>Potential laboratory twinning projects.</li> <li>Quality-assurance and ISO certification, laboratory management systems.</li> <li>Assess available guidelines for biosecurity and biosafety, identify gaps and areas for improvement.</li> <li>Sharing information on the occurrence of WOA listed diseases, other pathogens of regional significance and emerging diseases in the Region.</li> <li>Promoting research on aquatic animal diseases, epidemiology, pathology and one health in aquaculture.</li> </ol> <p>[Background documents and a template will be provided]</p>	
<b>11:00-11:30</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>	
<b>11:30-12:00</b>	<p><u>Plenary discussion:</u></p> <p>Validation/approval of all the points of the Regional Action Plan</p>	<i>all participants</i> WOAH, FAO, AU-IBAR, NACA, facilitators
<b>OFFICIAL CLOSURE</b>		
<b>12:00-13:00</b>	List of recommendations – bullet points Closing remarks	<i>all participants</i> WOAH, AU-IBAR
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<i>Lunch</i>	
<b>FIELD TRIP</b>		
<b>14:00-17:00</b>	Visit of the facilities at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Institute	Host country (RSA)