

Terms of Reference for the OIE National Focal Point for Aquatic Animals

During the 76th General Session in May 2008 the importance of the focal point for information on animal diseases was re-iterated and Delegates were also requested to nominate additional focal points for wildlife, veterinary products, animal production food safety, animal welfare and aquatic animals.

As detailed in the final report of the 76th OIE General Session in May 2008, the responsibilities of the focal points are under the authority of the OIE Delegate. Any information transmitted to the OIE from the different focal points needs to be transmitted under the designated authority of the OIE Delegate. This practice would equally apply, if focal points are located in other Departments or Ministries not under jurisdiction of the Veterinary Authority, as from a legal perspective, the OIE considers the official OIE Delegate to be the unique representative of the country.

Details on proposed tasks of the national focal point for aquatic animals:

1. to establish a network of aquatic animal health experts within his country or to communicate with the existing network;
2. to establish and maintain a dialogue with the Competent Authority for aquatic animal health in his country, and to facilitate cooperation and communication among several authorities where responsibility is shared;
3. under the authority of the OIE Delegate of his country, to support the optimal collection and submission of aquatic animal disease information to the OIE through WAHIS (immediate notifications and follow-up reports, six-monthly reports, and annual questionnaires) to enable the OIE Delegate to more efficiently manage his OIE Member obligations;
4. to act as a contact point with the OIE Animal Health Information Department on matters related to information on aquatic animals including aquatic animal diseases;
5. to receive from the OIE Central Bureau copies of the reports of the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission and other relevant reports, and conduct the in-country consultation process with recognised aquatic animal health experts on draft texts of standards proposed in those reports; and
6. to prepare comments for the Delegate on relevant meeting reports reflecting the scientific view and position of the individual OIE Member Country or Territory and/or the region, including comments on the proposals for new or revised OIE standards related to aquatic animals.