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The "Office International des Epizooties" its role in improving awareness and prevention of international transfers of diseases in aquaculture

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Abstract — *The Office International des Epizooties (O.I.E.), is an international veterinary organisation (established in 1924) comprising 110 member countries worldwide. Its main objective is to promote awareness of serious animal disease problems associated with trade in live animals and of means for control and prevention. It acts as a central source of information on the occurrence and progress of epizootics of listed diseases and the methods being applied for their control in individual countries. This information is disseminated through a monthly bulletin and a yearly report on the animal health situation worldwide. The Animal Health Code lays down recommended procedures for health surveillance of animals for domestic and international trade.*

The O.I.E. has dealt with fish disease matters for many years through its Fish Diseases Commission (F.D.C.), which produces an annual report on the main developments regarding current diseases, new pathogens, diagnostic methods and control methods worldwide. The F.D.C. has produced a separate section on fish diseases in the Animal Health Code and has recently had its responsibilities enlarged to encompass diseases of molluscs and crustacea for which it is currently extending the Code. This will produce a model on which a standard health certification system for international trade in live aquatic animals might be based. In the meantime, disease specialists in aquaculture are encouraged to fully utilise the disease information collection and dissemination service of the O.I.E. : the more it is used the more effective it will be. To further assist discussion of the problems, an O.I.E. international meeting on disease transfer associated with international trade in live animals for aquaculture is being planned for 1991 in Paris.

FISH DISEASES SESSION SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

The discussion period did not focus on specific areas, but covered a wide range of concerns. The general lack of information on tropical fish diseases and the small number of known laboratories and researchers in the field was noted. The following were important points from the discussion :

1. — Specific positive steps to advance tropical fish disease studies
 - A. — Develop a network (list) of researchers and laboratories with an interest in tropical fish diseases.
 - B. — List known tropical fish diseases of importance. Include host and geographic range, effect on host, mortality rate, diagnosis and therapeutic methods.
 - C. — Compile information on mortality rates and economic losses due to tropical fish diseases.
 - D. — The specific technical information (specific diseases and their effects) will be manageable if compiled on a regional rather than global basis.

2. — General ideas to advance fish disease prevention
 - A. — List steps which can be taken to reduce risks of infectious diseases.
 - B. — List groups of pathogens which appear to have wide range of host specificity (e.g. rhabdoviruses).

A general problem which was recognized is that most of the expertise and facilities for fish disease research and control are in temperate rather than tropical regions. Publication and distribution of the proceedings of this workshop and taking the steps listed above will help to draw attention to the needs of tropical aquaculture.

II. PATHOLOGY

II.3. PATHOLOGY OF MOLLUSCS

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Mollusc session discussion