

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2008 RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 7 **APPROVED**

SOURCE: USAHA/AAVLD JOINT COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE

SUBJECT MATTER: NATIONAL AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH PLAN

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A National Aquatic Animal Health Task Force, composed of representatives from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the United States Department of Commerce (USDOC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)-Fisheries and the United States Department of Interior (USDOI), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has been engaged in developing a National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP) for the United States (US). During multiple stakeholder meetings throughout the country with various aquatic industry and natural resource agency groups as well as state, federal and university personnel, the National Aquatic Animal Health Task Force has been soliciting input and drafting chapters for the NAAHP. Key elements of the plan include identification of diseases of regulatory concern, measures to protect US aquatic species from the introduction of exotic diseases, plans for control should an introduction occur, importation standards for aquatic species and wild species/cultured species interface issues. Implementation of the NAAHP will require significant resources.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS), the United States Department of Interior (USDOI), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the United States Department of Commerce (USDOC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)-Fisheries to request line item funding in future budgets to implement and maintain their respective portions of the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan (NAAHP).

RESPONSES:

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

As a member of the NAAHP Joint Task Force, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has been actively involved in the development of the plan, and we will fully support the efforts of the Joint Task Force as it moves forward to implement it.

The development of the plan showcased the successful collaboration among the many agencies and individuals involved in ensuring the health and safety of the American people and our aquatic environment. Staff members from the NOAA Aquaculture Program and the NMFS Seafood Inspection Lab were integral to the process.

But our work is not done. As you point out, to fully realize an integrated aquatic and marine animal health plan, industry, governance organizations, and private organizations must continue to work together. Aquatic animal diseases, both infectious and non-infectious, can have serious economic, conservation, and health consequences for the sustainable use and management of our natural resources. To address this threat in a coordinated way, we recognize that NOAA must continue to play a significant role in developing and implementing integrated health planning and operations for both farmed and wild marine animal resources.

In response to the USAHA resolution requesting that NMFS provide resources to support the implementation of the NAAHP, our agency will continue to fund individuals to work cooperatively with the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior to implement the plan. NOAA also intends to help support the national advisory committee, which is in the formative stages and awaiting final approval by the Secretary of Agriculture.

USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) appreciates the United States Animal Health Association's interest in the National Aquatic Animal Health Plan. VS considers the plan a priority to support aquaculture production in the United States and will continue to seek the funding necessary for aquaculture activities through all appropriate channels within the USDA.