



WORLD VETERINARY
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**WORLD VETERINARY
ASSOCIATION (AISBL)**

Avenue de Tervueren 12
1040 Brussels, Belgium

T +32 2 533 70 22
F +32 2 537 28 28
E secretariat@worldvet.org

www.worldvet.org

WVA/WAVMA Policy position on

Accountability for Aquatic Medicine

Introduction:

With the rapid growth of aquaculture and its importance in the global food chain as well as increasing concern regarding animal and environmental contamination with antimicrobial agents and other medicines, there is a critical need for identifying, recognising and delegating appropriate responsibilities to veterinarians and aquatic veterinary paraprofessionals in national and international aquatic animal and welfare programmes.

While there are increased numbers of veterinarians involved with aquatic veterinary medicine, in some regions of the world, the number of veterinarians involved with aquatic animal health and welfare may not be currently sufficient to fulfil all aquatic animal health and welfare needs, or to provide adequate veterinary services to aquatic animal clients and aquaculture industries.

Position/Policy:

As a temporary measure until a sufficient number of aquatic veterinarians are available, those countries that delegate some responsibilities to fisheries biologists and other non-veterinarians should hold these individuals accountable at the same level as veterinarians. When sufficient numbers of aquatic veterinarians are available, legislation, regulations and international standards should clearly identify the supportive functions of aquatic non-veterinarians and ensure that veterinary services only be performed under the supervision of a veterinarian.