SECTION 7.

WELFARE OF FARMED FISH

CHAPTER 7.1.

INTRODUCTION TO RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WELFARE OF FARMED FISH

Article 7.1.1.

Guiding principles

1) Considering that:

   a) the use of fish in harvest or capture fisheries, in research and for recreation (e.g. ornamentals and aquaria), makes a major contribution to the wellbeing of people; and

   b) there is a critical relationship between fish health and fish welfare; and

   c) improvements in farmed fish welfare can often improve productivity and hence lead to economic benefits.

2) WOAH will develop recommendations for the welfare of farmed fish (excluding ornamental species) during transport, slaughter, and destruction for disease control purposes. In developing these, the following principles will apply:

   a) The use of fish carries with it an ethical responsibility to ensure the welfare of such animals to the greatest extent practicable.

   b) The scientific assessment of fish welfare involves both scientifically derived data and value-based assumptions that need to be considered together, and the process of making these assessments should be made as explicit as possible.

Article 7.1.2.

Scientific basis for recommendations

1) The basic requirements for the welfare of farmed fish include handling methods appropriate to the biological characteristics of the fish and a suitable environment to fulfil their needs.

2) There are many species of fish in farming systems and these have different biological characteristics. It is not practicable to develop specific recommendations for each of these species. These WOAH recommendations therefore address the welfare of farmed fish at a general level.

NB: FIRST ADOPTED IN 2008.