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AQUACULTURE AFRICA 2024
Hamamet Tunisia, Nov 20-23



Joint FAO/IAEA Centre
Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture

AFRAQ24: The International Atomic Energy Agency Special Session:

Defining Critical Aquatic Animal Health R&D Needs for Sustainable Aquaculture Development in Africa

Despite the promising advancements in the aquaculture sector in Africa, there are significant diseases challenges that need to be addressed. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through its mandate of peaceful uses in nuclear technologies, helps member states to achieve enhanced and superior agricultural products, better nutrition and health, conserving environment and sustainable livelihoods among other initiatives. The Department of Technical Cooperation and the Animal Production and Health Section of the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture (NAFA) within IAEA have taken the leadership in these activities in Africa and other regions. Therefore, the IAEA is dedicated and eager to provide assistance and guidance in respect of R&D requirements for the sustainable development of the African Aquaculture Industry aligning with IAEA FAO initiative Atoms4Food, an initiative to help countries boost food security and to tackle growing hunger.

This special session is a call to action for member states to engage in a meaningful dialogue and collaborate on the critical yet often overlooked challenges in the African aquaculture industry. With a focus on sustainable practices, the session will feature insightful presentations from member states and experts detailing specific R&D gaps and needs, and potential solutions.

The session aims to pinpoint essential R&D avenues that are pivotal for the industry's sustainability. The IAEA stands ready to bridge these gaps, offering robust support through capacity building and knowledge transfer. The culmination of this collaborative effort will be the creation of a white paper—a strategic document that will condense the collective insights and recommendations. This paper will be presented to the IAEA and other key stakeholders.

Session Chair: Viskam Wijewardana

Date: Friday 22 November 2024

Venue: Oliver Room

Time: 10.40-12.40

Session Agenda:

1. Opening remarks: Abdou Salam Ndiath, Programme Management Officer, Department of Technical Cooperation, IAEA (05 minutes)
2. "Overview of aquatic animal health status and ways to combat emerging threat in Africa". Rohana Subasinghe, Founder and Director, FUTUREFISH (20 minutes)
3. "Diagnostics as a tool for biosecurity: gaps and needs". Victoria Alday-Sanz, Director of Biosecurity, Breeding Programmes and R&D, NAQUA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Melba Reantaso, Team Leader (NFIMF: Food Safety, Nutrition and Health), Fisheries and Aquaculture Division Food and Agriculture Organization (15 minutes)
4. "Fish and fish product export - challenges for food safety laboratories in Cameroon and Africa". Teubobe Gilbert, Acting Director of LANAVET Annex DOUALA and Head of the Food Safety Laboratories, Cameroon. (10 minutes)
5. "Overcoming Challenges in fish disease control through advanced diagnostic and vaccination: the Tunisian experience" Nadia Cherif, Disease of Aquatic organism service, Aquaculture Laboratory, National Institute of Sea Sciences and Technologies, Tunisia. (10 minutes)
6. "Innovative tools and technologies for tackling livestock diseases and their potential applications in aquaculture". Charles Lamien, Technical Officer, Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture, IAEA (15 minutes)
7. Q&A session (10 minutes)
8. Panel discussion: opportunities and gaps for IAEA support in aquaculture in Africa (20 minutes)
 - Moderator: Haïtham Sghaier National Center for Nuclear Sciences and Technology (CNSTN), Tunisia)
 - Expert panellists: Teubobe Gilbert, Nadia Cherif, and Balkiss Bouhaouala-Zahar, Prof. of Biochemistry-BMC, Medical School Tunis, University Tunis-El Manar, Tunisia
9. Concluding remarks: Viskam Wijewardana, Laboratory Head (APHL), Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture, IAEA (5 minutes)