# AQUAPLAN 2022-2027 - Progress Report 1 2023

## Progress snapshot

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity status (total 28 activities)** | | | |
| **Yet to commence** | **In-progress** | **Complete** | **On-hold** |
| 13 | 14 | 1 | 0 |

## Progress Update

### Objective 1 Border biosecurity and trade

| **Activity** | **Short title** | **Status** | **Expected outcome and progress** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1 | Two-way engagement on import policy and decision-making processes. | In-progess. | **Expected outcome:** Increased stakeholder understanding of, and engagement in, import policy setting processes, including risk analyses.  **Progress:** The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has drafted a project plan in consultation with industry representatives from the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association and the Australian Prawn Farmers Association. |
| 1.2 | R&D strategic priorities for aquatic risk analyses and import policies. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Strategic research priorities are identified to address significant gaps in aquatic animal health knowledge to inform import biosecurity policies.  **Progress:** To be informed by activity 1.1. |
| 1.3 | Strategic approach to meet technical requirements and support market access. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** A strategic approach to address technical market access opportunities and vulnerabilities is developed collaboratively by industries and governments.  **Progress:** The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has prepared a project plan. |

### Objective 2 Enterprise and regional biosecurity

| **Activity** | **Short title** | **Status** | **Expected outcome and progress** |
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| 2.1 | Enterprise biosecurity plan writing workshops. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** Workshop attendees have developed or refined an enterprise biosecurity plan that is specific to their business.  **Progress:** Included in the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation November 2022 Investment Opportunities and Open call for R&D. Applications were due 1 February 2023. |
| 2.2 | Enterprise biosecurity plan implementation support program. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Farm managers have worked with subject-matter experts to refine their biosecurity plan and solve challenges in implementing the plan.  **Progress:** To be informed by activity 2.1. |
| 2.3 | Evaluating and improving enterprise biosecurity plans. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome**: Farm managers and other interested industry members have been trained in tools to evaluate the effectiveness of their biosecurity plan and improve and adapt the plan over time to meet changing risks.  **Progress:** To be informed by activities 2.1 and 2.2. |
| 2.4 | Translocation of broodstock and genetic material. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Opportunities, needs, and barriers to domestic translocation of high value animals and genetic material have been clarified, and options for developing a national approach to domestic translocation have been identified.  **Progress:** Industry and government representatives have discussed the approach to this activity and a joint workshop is anticipated mid-2023. |
| 2.5 | Review current approaches for managing ornamental fish in Australia. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Aquatic animal health issues are considered in the review of the ‘strategic approach to the management of ornamental fish in Australia’ and where appropriate, the strategy is revised to support sound management of aquatic animal health risks associated with ornamental fish.  **Progress:** Yet to be commenced. |
| 2.6 | National ornamental fish communication campaign. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Target stakeholder groups have an increased understanding of the disease risks posed by ornamental fish species in Australia and have the information available to help them take greater responsibility for effectively managing those risks.  **Progress:** Yet to be commenced. |

### Objective 3 Surveillance

| **Activity** | **Short title** | **Status** | **Expected outcome and progress** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3.1 | National surveillance strategy. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** A national surveillance strategy is developed that guides how investors in aquatic animal health surveillance will strengthen the system and address changing needs and technologies.  **Progress:** Discussion paper provided to industry and governments to facilitate consideration of their needs, objectives and priorities for a national surveillance strategy (November 2022).An industry-government writing group will now be established to guide drafting of the strategy. |
| 3.2 | Sector-specific surveillance plans. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Interested industry sectors have identified and prioritised their surveillance objectives (including data sharing) in cooperation with governments and have a plan for how they will achieve these.  **Progress:** To be informed by activity 3.1. |
| 3.3 | Sensitivity of the passive surveillance system. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** The sensitivity of passive surveillance is quantified for an example sector and disease as a pilot study, and strengths and weaknesses of the system are identified.  **Progress:** Yet to be commenced. |

### Objective 4 Diagnostic capability

| **Activity** | **Short title** | **Status** | **Expected outcome and progress** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4.1 | Assess the future needs of Australia’s diagnostic system. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** The capability and capacity of Australia’s diagnostic system for aquatic animal diseases is assessed and the future needs of its end-users and service providers are identified.  **Progress:** Included in the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation November 2022 Investment Opportunities and Open call for R&D. Applications were due 1 February 2023. |
| 4.2 | Technical guidelines for validation of aquatic animal disease diagnostic tests. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** National technical guidelines for validation of aquatic animal disease molecular diagnostic tests are developed.  **Progress:** A team of experts has been formed to draft the technical guidelines. A draft is expected to be available for review in October 2023. |
| 4.3 | Diagnostic accuracy studies for priority aquatic animal diseases. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** The validation status of priority aquatic animal disease diagnostic tests is identified, and diagnostic accuracy studies are conducted for prioritised tests.  **Progress:** A project plan is being developed by the CSIRO Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness in consultation with key collaborators. |
| 4.4 | Novel and emerging diagnostic methods. | In-progress | **Expected outcome:** New and emerging diagnostic methods are prioritised for further assessment based on their suitability to address the needs of Australia’s aquatic animal health management system, and where warranted, national guidelines are developed for their evaluation, interpretation, and use.  **Progress:** A literature review of novel and emerging diagnostic methods has commenced. |
| 4.5 | Improve Neptune and its database. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Neptune’s database is enhanced to incorporate additional content and is promoted within the aquatic animal health community to increase access and contributions to its resources.  **Progress**: Yet to be commenced. |

### Objective 5 Emergency preparedness

| **Activity** | **Short title** | **Status** | **Expected outcome and progress** |
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| 5.1 | National priority aquatic animal disease list. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** Priority aquatic animal diseases have been identified and agreed by industry and governments. A priority disease list has been developed.  **Progress:** Draft national priority aquatic animal disease list was provided to industry and governments in December 2022. The AQUAPLAN executive office is awaiting one final response before progressing the list to Animal Health Committee for their endorsement. |
| 5.2 | Biosecurity action plans for priority aquatic animal diseases. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** Biosecurity action plans have been collaboratively developed for each priority disease, and gaps identified where resources need to be applied to improve preparedness or risk mitigation.  **Progress:** A biosecurity action plan template has been developed. The first four action plans are expected to be drafted by June 2023. |
| 5.3 | Sector-specific simulation exercises. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** A series of sector-specific simulation exercises have tested existing contingency planning arrangements and identified opportunities to strengthen arrangements.  **Progress:** a national simulation exercise with the farmed barramundi industry, Exercise Flywheel, has been held. The exercise involved three activities: an online information sharing workshop, a face-to-face workshop where participants developed an initial response plan to a suspected disease outbreak scenario and an online evaluation workshop to address any gaps in preparedness identified during the first two workshops.  Refer to [FRDC project 2021-048](https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2021-048). |
| 5.4 | New or revised contingency planning arrangements. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** A work plan to review and revise existing AQUAVETPLAN manuals and develop new manuals or guidance documents (where they are prioritised) is developed and delivered.  **Progress:** To be informed by activity 5.3. |
| 5.5 | Practical disease investigation guidelines for new and emerging diseases. | Complete. | **Expected outcome:** Practical disease investigation guidelines are developed that outline the investigation process for new and emerging aquatic animal diseases.  **Progress:** The **‘**Outbreak!’ handbook presents guidelines to use in the event of a disease outbreak in aquatic animals including finfish, molluscs and crustaceans. Helps stakeholders understand if a disease event is an outbreak, what may be causing the disease, what controls to apply and ideally, how to prevent future outbreaks.  The handbook and its associated e-learning modules are available to view and download at: <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/aquatic-animal-diseases/outbreak!>  Refer to [FRDC project 2021-061](https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2021-061). |

### Objective 6 Veterinary medicines

| **Activity** | **Short title** | **Status** | **Expected outcome and progress** |
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| 6.1 | Understand existing veterinary medicine use. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** A cross-sectoral survey is undertaken to better understand veterinary medicine use and priorities across the aquaculture industry.  **Progress:** yet to be commenced. |
| 6.2 | Aquatic animal minor use permit applications. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** A nationally coordinated approach to facilitate applications for aquatic animal minor use permit applications to the APVMA and to maintain existing permits and registrations.  **Progress:** The project secured funding for 2 minor use permit (MUP) projects in 2022 and 3 MUP projects in 2023. Since the project onset it has successfully helped to renew another 32 MUPs, reducing loss of access for industry. It has decreased duplication of MUPs through increased data sharing and prioritisation of MUP projects that improve access for multiple industries and uses. Industry guidelines on available MUPs and registrations have been distributed nationally. A business plan is being developed in consultation with stakeholders to support ongoing national coordination.  Refer to [FRDC project 2020-094](https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2020-094). |
| 6.3 | Establish antimicrobial resistance baselines for aquaculture sectors. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome:** Baseline AMR data is established for interested sectors within the Australian aquaculture industry. The importance and key benefits of AMR surveillance in aquaculture are communicated with industry in an effective and collaborative manner.  **Progress:** yet to be commenced. |

### Objective 7 Research and innovation

| **Activity** | **Short title** | **Status** | **Expected outcome and progress** |
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| 7.1 | Research priority setting, engagement, and communication. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome**: An efficient research priority setting, engagement, and communication process is collaboratively developed.  **Progress:** A project planis being drafted by the activity lead (FRDC Aquatic Animal Health and Biosecurity Coordination Program). |
| 7.2 | Extension and adoption of aquatic animal health research. | Yet to commence. | **Expected outcome**: Barriers to and opportunities for extension and adoption inform RD&E system improvements that ensure that research is not considered complete until it is extended by end-users, and opportunities for adoption identified, maximising return on investment.  **Progress:** Yet to be commenced. |
| 7.3 | AQUAPLAN webinar series. | In-progress. | **Expected outcome:** A webinar series is delivered for Australia’s aquatic animal health community that provides meaningful engagement and extension opportunities for AQUAPLAN activities.  **Progress:** Two AQUAPLAN webinars were held in 2022 on diagnostics and international activities. One webinar has been held in 2023 thus far, celebrating the launch of AQUAPLAN 2022-2023 (held 9 March 2023) and providing updates for several projects. |