



Work programme for the FAO Reference Centre for Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation 2022/23

FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

The functions and duties of the FAO Reference Centre are set out in the **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE DESIGNATION**.

In 2022/23 work programme aims to support FAO Member Countries wishing to develop, enhance or expand their production of safe bivalve molluscs for domestic consumption or for international trade.

WORK PROGRAMME, 2022/23

Outputs

Dissemination of information and technical guidance

1. Provide support for the development and maintenance of FAO resources on bivalve mollusc sanitation to include in 2022/23:

- Complete, review and publish e-learning module 3 covering technical guidance for growing area monitoring, classification and management.
- Hosting of all modules on the Cefas, FAO Reference Centre website www.cefas.co.uk/faobivalves under the designated FAO Reference Centre training section.
- Introduce e-badging according to FAO learning academy criteria and publish examination-based unit for formal Continuous Professional Development.
- Provision of support for any reviews and updates to e-learning modules 1, 2 and 3 (the latter once published).

2. Provide guidance on relevant laboratory protocols, accreditation, and use of methods for bivalve mollusc testing to include in 2022/23:

- Continued development of protocols for microbiological methods and associated guidance with applicability for testing bivalve molluscs and water for dissemination via the Cefas, FAO Reference Centre website www.cefas.co.uk/faobivalves
- Maintenance and updating as appropriate of protocols currently hosted on the Cefas, FAO Reference Centre website.
- Dissemination of protocols and supporting information on request of FAO member countries.

3. On request provide technical and scientific advice to FAO member countries on issues related to bivalve mollusc sanitation and international trade.

4. Maintenance and continued development of the Cefas, FAO Reference Centre website (www.cefas.co.uk/faobivalves) as the main route of dissemination of relevant material for FAO Member Countries.

Expected outcomes

**Open access availability to training modules and technical guidance through FAO and Cefas websites*

**Open access availability to laboratory protocols and guidance documents*

**Specific support for FAO Member Countries*

**Open access availability to all guidance documentation and training material*

Provision of reference materials, characterization of material, outbreak testing and investigation

5. Maintenance and further expansion of the online risk and genomic tracking tools via a dedicated portal on the Cefas, FAO Reference Centre website (www.cefas.co.uk/faobivalves).
**Open access availability to epidemiological real-time information on pathogens and risk for LMICs and others*
6. Continued development of the bivalve mollusc-related pathogen strain and genome bank, to include in 2022/23,
 - Biochemical and molecular characterization of *Vibrio* (and other pathogens) associated with seafoods specifically those derived from legacy reference collections transferred from University of Kyoto.
**Open access resource for characterized reference materials for research and development, proficiency testing, method development / standardization and comparisons*
7. Provision on request of support with investigations into human illness outbreaks linked to bivalve mollusc consumption, including advice on investigations and interventions, and testing and characterization of associated samples and strains. For *Vibrio* spp., full sequencing of any isolated strains will feed into outputs 4 and 5 and provide considerable added information at no cost to FAO Member Countries.
**Increased awareness of bivalve mollusc-related health risks and good practice in outbreak situations amongst FAO Member Countries. Increased understanding of global circulation of *Vibrio* strains*

Proficiency testing

8. Publication of results of the pilot programme of proficiency testing (PT) for faecal indicator bacteria to support bivalve mollusc sanitation programmes for FAO Member Country laboratories in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.
**Demonstration of competency of laboratories to undertake bivalve mollusc and water testing amongst African and Asian FAO Member Countries*
9. Plan, organize and distribute second pilot PT scheme for faecal indicator bacteria to include FAO regions Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and The Caribbean. To, (i) to build laboratory capability in official laboratories where currently it does not exist (ii) to enable additional demonstration of competence in designated official laboratories undertaking testing of bivalve molluscs or growing waters and (iii) identify opportunities for further assistance by the FAO Reference Centre.
**Formation of a demonstrably competent network of Official Laboratories across Latin American and the Caribbean region with responsibility for the development and operation of bivalve mollusc sanitation programmes*

Workshops and technical training



10. Prepare and deliver regional training workshop(s) on bivalve mollusc sanitation and marine biotoxins to support Responsible (Competent) Authorities Official Laboratories to develop and enhance bivalve production.
**Increased proficiency in methods and programmes supporting bivalve mollusc safety programmes amongst FAO Member Countries*
11. Further to the above, undertake activities and follow up subsequent to the workshops, to include support within the work programme for the PPG/STDF/672 (MTF/SEN/079/STF) Senegalese project.
**Specific support for FAO Member Countries*

12. On request, deliver training¹ and support to include provision of microbiological testing protocols, reference materials (where available) and access to additional proficiency testing programmes. In addition, provide advice on the setting up of microbiological monitoring programmes, including approaches to sanitary surveys and the assessment of classification data. **Specific support for FAO Member Countries*
13. On request, support for FAO Member Countries on topics related to contamination of bivalve molluscs with harmful algal biotoxins. **Increased utilization of FAO Reference Centre expertise by FAO and WHO*
14. Provision of technical assistance to FAO Fisheries Division and WHO in activities in support of bivalve mollusc safety on request to include in 2022/23: **Greater awareness of the activities of the FAO Reference Centre within FAO and FAO Member Countries*
- Technical advice on PPG/STDF/672 (MTF/SEN/079/STF) *Senegalese project*
 - Assistance in the development of Guidance for Development and Implementation of Monitoring Programmes for Harmful Algal Biotoxins in Bivalve Molluscs

Reporting

15. Production of annual report describing activities undertaken within the scope of the work programme, other reporting requirements identified within the scope of the work programme.

Plan approved by:

FAO Reference Centre Scientist	FAO Reference Centre Director	FAO Project Lead
Louise Stockley	Rachel E. Hartnell	Esther Garrido Gamarro
09/05/2022	09/05/2022	<i>pending</i>
		

¹ Provision of training, other support and advice to be provided (where suitable Reference Centre staff have sufficient time available) within the existing baseline budget (including consumables and time for staff). However, travel and subsistence expenses for trainees from FAO Member Countries if required for physical onsite training are excluded from the baseline budget and will require additional financial contributions from third parties.