



Work programme for the FAO Reference Centre for Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation 2023/24

FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

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

In 2023/24 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, 2023/24

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 2023/24:

- Complete, review and publish e-learning modules 3 and 4 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.
- Complete 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, 3 and 4 (3 and 4 once published).
- Facilitate translation of modules published in 2023/24 into French language versions.

2. Update relevant laboratory protocols, and provide guidance on use of protocols, accreditation, and use of methods for bivalve mollusc testing to include in 2023/24:

- 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.

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*

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| <p>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.</p> | <p><i>*Open access availability to all guidance documentation and training material</i></p> |
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Provision of reference materials, characterization of material, outbreak testing and investigation

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| <p>5. Maintenance of the online risk and genomic tracking tools via a dedicated portal on the Cefas, FAO Reference Centre website (www.cefas.co.uk/faobivalves).</p> | <p><i>*Open access availability to epidemiological real-time information on pathogens and risk for LMICs and others</i></p> |
| <p>6. 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.</p> | <p><i>*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</i></p> |

Proficiency testing

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| <p>7. Plan, organize and distribute the annual PT scheme for faecal indicator bacteria for FAO country official laboratories. 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.</p> | <p><i>*Demonstration of competency of laboratories to undertake bivalve mollusc and water testing methods amongst FAO Member Countries</i></p> |
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Workshops and technical training

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| <p>10. Prepare and deliver a practical physical training workshop at the FAO Reference Centre in Cefas, Weymouth, UK for FAO Member Country Official Laboratories to provide training on methods to determine faecal indicator organisms in bivalve molluscs.</p> | <p><i>*Specific support on method training for FAO Member Countries</i></p> |
| <p>11. Continue to provide practical and advisory supporting activities to the work programme for the PPG/STDF/672 (MTF/SEN/079/STF) Senegalese project.</p> | <p><i>*Specific support for FAO Member Countries</i></p> |
| <p>13. On request, support for FAO Member Countries on topics related to contamination of bivalve molluscs with harmful algal biotoxins, including in 2023/24 assistance with the development of rapid test kits with application in FAO Member Countries.</p> | <p><i>*Specific support for FAO Member Countries</i></p> |
| <p>14. Provision of technical assistance to FAO Fisheries Division and WHO in activities in support of bivalve mollusc safety on request to include in 2023/24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at and contributions to the World Seafood Congress to co-present joint FAO/Cefas activities supporting bivalve molluscs. | <p><i>*Specific requested support for FAO with respect to bivalve mollusc activities</i></p> |

- Direct support for FAO with respect to the potential development of bivalve mollusc aquaculture in the Black Sea region.

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 Coordinator	FAO Reference Centre Director	FAO Project Lead
James Lowther	Rachel E. Hartnell	Esther Garrido Gamarro
27/06/23	27/06/23	27/06/23