

THE NOTICE OF IMPORT CONDITIONS FOR LIVE FISH INTO MALAYSIA

Movement of live fish has been generally recognized as a major cause of disease and pathogen transfer from one area to another. Many studies have shown that international live fish trade contributed to the spread of diseases to many countries over the years. Import activities of ornamental fishes into Malaysia also introduced many new pathogens such as *Koi Herpes Virus (KHV)* and *Spring Viraemia Carp Virus (SVCV)*. Some pathogens such as SVC, EUS and others may affect both food and ornamental fish.

Malaysia is now implementing an Aquatic Animal Health Action Plan to solve problems of transboundary pathogens or diseases transfer after European Union (EU) banned the import of coldwater ornamental fish from Malaysia such as Koi (*Cyprinus carpio*) and Gold Fish (*Carassius auratus*) since July 2008. The strategic plans for aquatic animal health are as follows; (1) Strengthening law and legislation, (2) Tightening import/ export procedures, (3) Introducing disease surveillance, monitoring and control systems, (4) Enhancing Research & development on aquatic animal disease, (5) Establishing diagnosis units, (6) Improving capacity building, (7) Encouraging efficient technology and knowledge transfer, (8) Promoting public awareness, (9) Developing contingency plan to control disease outbreak and (10) Providing funding support. Some of the strategies have been implemented since January 2009.

Malaysia currently controls aquatic animal diseases by enforcing the Fisheries (Prohibition of Import, etc., of Fish) Regulations, 1990 Fisheries Act 1985. This regulation will be amended to include fish which cannot be cultured in Malaysia and fish that are vector to OIE Notifiable Listed Diseases, for examples trout, salmon and sturgeon.

Under Section 40 on Control of Live Fish, Fisheries Act 1985 (Act 317), the Department of Fisheries (DOF) will introduce new measures to control transboundary movement of live fish. Malaysia is notifying all countries regarding these new measures.

The main contents of the notification are as follows:

1. Exporting country shall ensure that the fish are sourced from approved farm and under official control of the Competent Authority (CA).
2. Health Certificate shall be issued by the Competent Authority (CA) of the exporting country.
3. Exporting country shall ensure that the fish consignment originated from OIE listed diseases free zone. There should not be any disease outbreak for a period of two years prior to export.

Conditions for importation of live fish into Malaysia

The exporting country shall ensure that the importer in Malaysia is registered with Department of Fisheries Malaysia.

A health certificate must be presented at the entry point together with the live fish consignment. The health certificate must be issued by the competent authority of the exporting country, signed by authorized officer and contained information as follows;

1. Name and address of exporter
2. Name and address of destination/importer
3. Name (scientific and common name), size and number of live fish.
4. Origin of the live fish.
5. The live fish must come from an officially recognized country, zone, farm or establishment unaffected by the OIE listed diseases. The live fish have been subjected to a health surveillance program according to the procedures as described in the "*Diagnostic Manual for Aquatic Animal Diseases*" from *Office International Des Epizooties* (OIE).
6. The live fish have been inspected by the competent authority of the exporting country within **72 hours** of export date and showed no clinical sign of diseases.
7. The live fish must not come from any source that had an unusual mortality during the previous six (6) months, which the cause could not be confirmed. The fish have not been subjected to any prohibitions due to unresolved increased mortality.
8. Live fish must be quarantined for at least 14 days in approved quarantine area in the exporting country and showed no clinical sign of diseases prior to export.
9. Exporting country shall ensure that the fish consignment originated from OIE listed diseases free zone. There should not be any disease outbreak for a period of two years prior to export.

The imported live fish is subjected to quarantine at the registered importer's premise within 7 to 21 days depending on the species. Registered importers shall also comply to any post import measures imposed by the Department of Fisheries.