

Particular welfare needs in animal transport: aquatic animals

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1.Objectives & Scope

Objectives:

- Analyse particular welfare needs in transport
- Describe key causes of suffering in relation to the needs of fish
- Identify EU shortcomings of OIE standards
- Provide an overview of guidelines and good practices
- Provide policy recommendations

Scope:

- ‘Aquatic animals’ is a large and diverse group
- Study focusses on finfish in aquaculture

2. Fish Welfare during Common Transport Practices

Pre-transport planning and preparations:

- Life stages and production stages
- Number of fish and interacting water parameters
- Preparing fish, equipment, and resources

Loading:

- Crowding
- Gentle handling and appropriate equipment
- Water quality

2. Fish Welfare during Common Transport Practices

Transportation:

- Supplemental oxygen
- Monitoring and maintaining temperature, oxygen, pH, ammonia, and carbon dioxide
- Reducing vibrations and light

Unloading:

- Acclimation
- Gentle handling and appropriate equipment

Post-transport:

- Monitoring

3. Species-Specific Aspects

Atlantic Salmon:

- Smolt transfer, starvation periods, carbon dioxide

Rainbow Trout:

- Sensitive juveniles, active during transport, slow recovery

Gilthead seabream and European seabass:

- Stressed by handling, water quality challenges

Common carp

- Effective starvation period, handling and loading

African catfish

- Stressed by journey, sensitive to densities

Turbot

- Unsuitable and usually out of water at low temperatures

4. OIE Standards and Fish Transport in the EU

EU regulation 1/2005 and OIE standards

- Responsibilities
- Planning
- Loading
- Transporting
- Unloading
- Post-transport activities

Common EU practices and EU standards

- Driven by commercial imperative
- Contingency planning and water quality monitoring

5. Fish Welfare in Transport Guidelines

Authority Guidelines:

- Detailed information and criteria
- Contingency planning

Aquaculture Sector Guidelines:

- Information and some specific criteria

Third Party Certification Standards

- A few criteria

6. Recommendations

Pre-transport:

- Vehicles, vessels and operator competences and responsibilities
- Starvation periods
- Inspection for fitness to travel
- Planning loading, unloading, journey and for contingencies

Loading:

- Crowding
- Gentle handling
- Pumps rather than nets

6. Recommendations

Transportation:

- Gentle driving
- Reduce vibrations and light
- Monitor and maintain water quality parameters

Unloading:

- Gentle handling
- Pumps rather than nets
- Acclimation

Post-transport:

- Monitor health and welfare