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INTRODUCTION

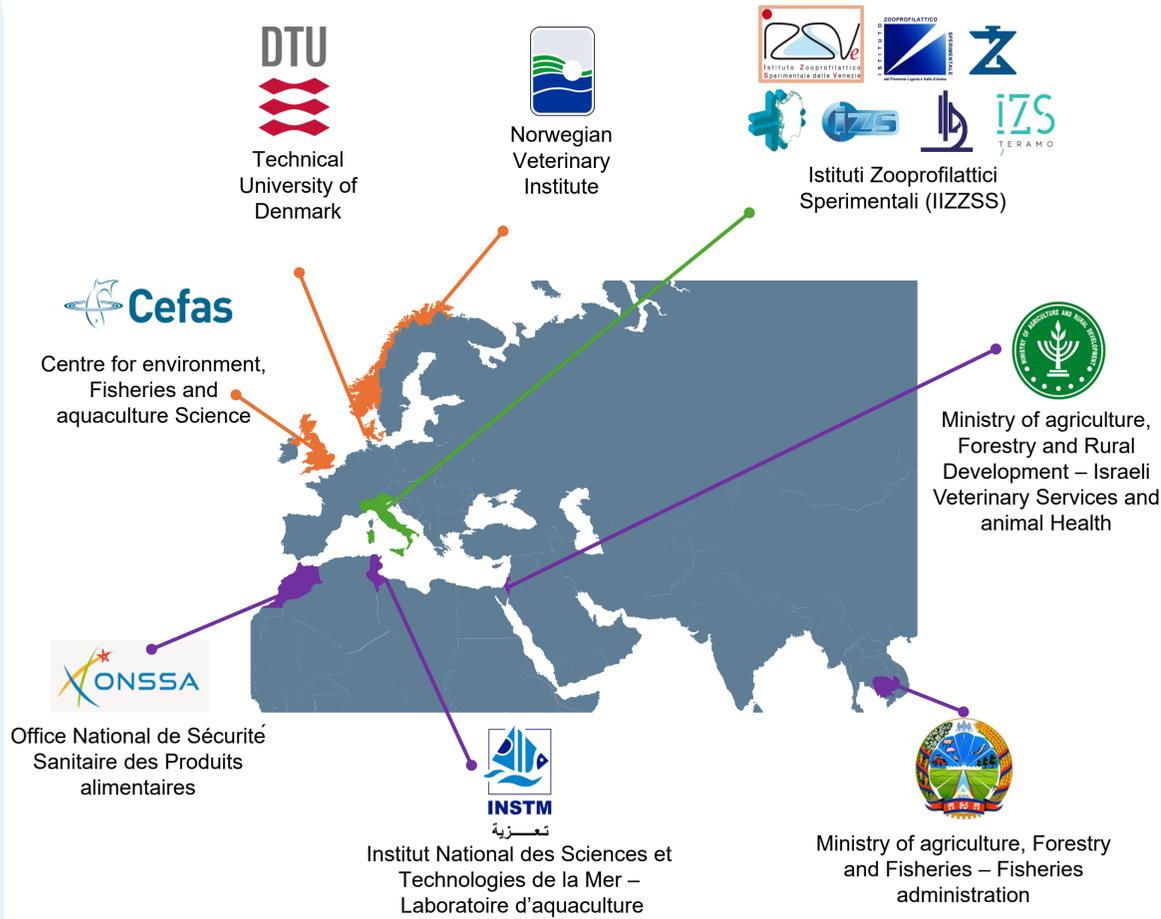
Aquaculture has emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors in animal production, largely driven by the rising global demand for sustainable sources of protein. However, the sector continues to face significant challenges from fish diseases, highlighting the need for innovative strategies to improve productivity and health management.

THE PROJECT

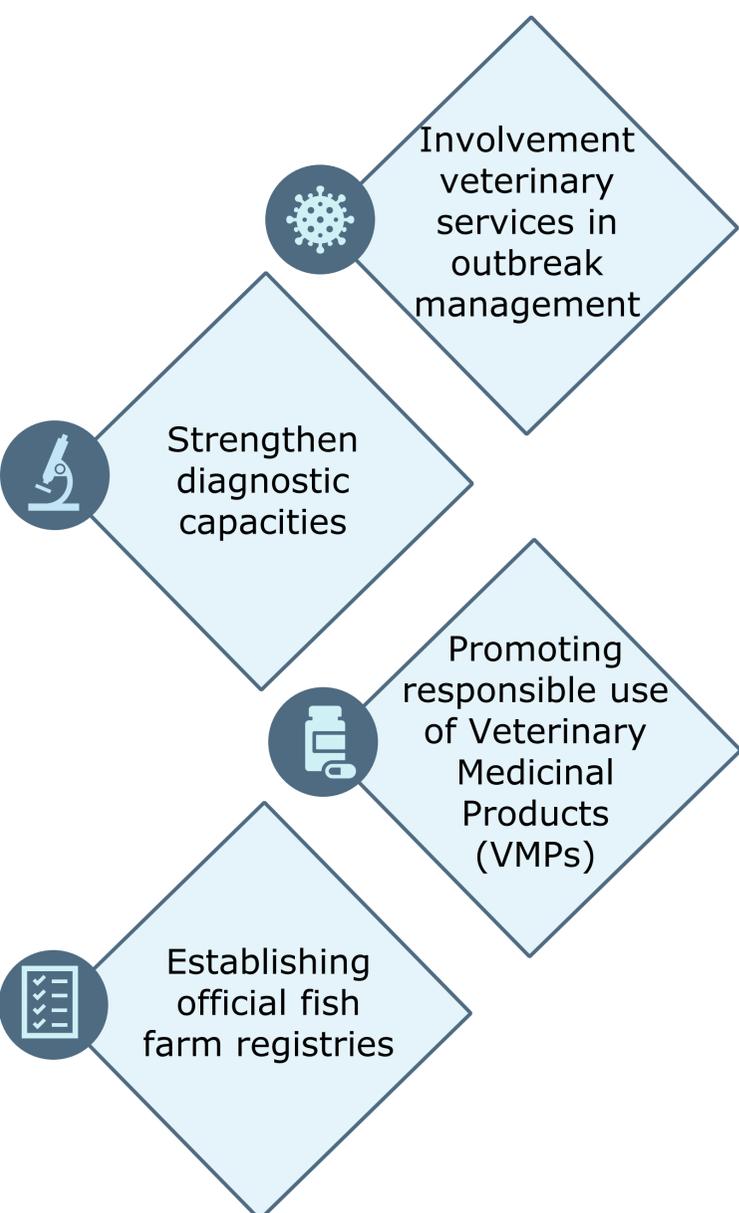
The project, titled "**Strengthening Capacity on Aquatic Animal Health and Epidemiological Surveillance**", supports the WOA Aquatic Animal Health Strategy.

It is led by a consortium of seven Italian institutes, in collaboration with international advisory partners from the UK (Cefas), Denmark (DTU), and Norway (NVI).

The project began with online webinars to introduce its main objectives to stakeholders, followed by in-person assessments in beneficiary countries to evaluate fish pathogen diagnostic capacities. These assessments included questionnaires, farm and laboratory visits, and meetings with local teams to identify gaps and guide future actions.



MAIN FOCUS AREAS:



PROJECT'S PROGRESS AND FUTURE STEPS

The project highlighted the need to implement antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST) in diagnostic laboratories, while identifying major challenges such as the lack of fish farm registries and limited diagnostic facilities, which hinder effective epidemiological monitoring and compliance with EU standards.

Targeted training activities were conducted for different stakeholders both locally and within consortium laboratories. Overall, the project strengthens fish health management, improves disease response, and supports sustainable aquaculture development within a One Health framework.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie (IZSVe) leads the project and all the WPs activities. The project has been financed by the Italian Ministry of Health and supported by the World Organisation for animal Health (WOaH).



Ministero della Salute



World Organisation for Animal Health



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