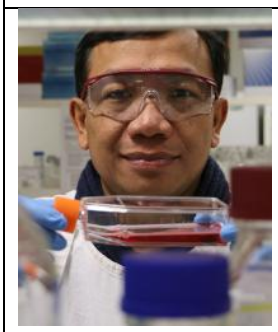
Profiles of Executive Committee
Fish Health Section - Asian Fisheries Society
2025-2028

 **Chairperson** **Dr. P. K. Pradhan (India)** Principal Scientist and Head, Exotics and Aquatic animal Health Division, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (NBFGR), Lucknow, India e-mail: pradhanpk1@gmail.com	Dr. P.K. Pradhan, currently working as a Principal Scientist and Head of the Exotics and Aquatic Animal Health Division at ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBFGR), Lucknow. He has 23-years of research and academic experience which include 17 years as a researcher at ICAR-NBFGR and 6 years as an academician at the College of Fisheries, Central Agricultural University, Tripura, India. He has successfully managed 20+ research projects and authored over 70 research publications in international journals. Notable achievements include unravelling molecular mechanisms in susceptibility and resistance against infection with *Aphanomyces invadans* and tilapia lake virus disease. He played a pivotal role in developing 'OoNIL' for treating freshwater diseases like epizootic ulcerative syndrome and saprolegniosis. Dr. Pradhan actively contributes to the National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Disease, and development of 'ReportFishDisease' app for strengthening farmer-based disease surveillance. As an Assistant Professor, he provided transformative mentorship to undergraduate Fisheries Science students. Dr Pradhan has been designated as World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) expert for infection with *Aphanomyces Invadans.*
 **Vice-Chairperson** Dr. Goshi Kato (Japan) Associate Professor Department of Marine Biosciences, Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology e-mail: gkato00@kaiyodai.ac.jp	Dr. Goshi Kato is currently an Associate Professor at the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT). He obtained a BSc (2006) of Agriculture from Utsunomiya University (Japan), MSc (2008) and PhD (2011) of Marine Sciences from TUMSAT (Japan). He is an active member of Japanese Society of Fish Pathology (2021-, Council Member) and Japanese Society of Fisheries Science. His field of specialization is fish immunology, bacteriology and vaccinology. He received Encouragement Award from Japanese Society of Fisheries Science in 2016, Achievement Award for Young Scientists from The Foundation of Agricultural Sciences of Japan in 2016, and Encouragement Award from Japanese Society of Fish Pathology in 2025.

 **Secretary/Treasurer** Dr. Desrina (Indonesia) Aquaculture Department, Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences, Diponegoro University Jl. Prof. H. Soedarto, S.H, Tembalang, Semarang, 50275. Indonesia Email: rinadesrina@yahoo.com desrina001@lecturer.undip.ac.id	Dr. Desrina is a Professor at the Aquaculture Department. She obtained her doctoral degree from the Aquaculture and Fisheries Department, Wageningen University, The Netherlands. She is a fish pathologist with 30 years-experience as a lecturer and researcher in the field of fish diseases and fish health management. Her areas of interest are bacterial diseases of fish specially Vibriosis, fish parasites ecology and control, the white spot syndrome virus (WSSV) ecology in ponds, and blood cockle health assessment for seed production. She has been the principal investigator of research in above areas funded by Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education through various funding schemes as well as international agencies. She was an invited guest speaker on Workshops, and conferences. She is also active in the Indonesian Network of Fish Health Management. Currently she is the head of Aquaculture Department, Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences, Diponegoro University, Indonesia and the chair of Association of Indonesian Aquaculture Study Programs. She published papers in peer reviewed journals and also reviewer of reputable journals in the Fisheries and Aquaculture field.
Members	
 **Past-Chairperson (2022-2025)** Dr. Kua Beng Chu (Malaysia) Deputy Senior Director Fisheries Research Institute Headquarters, Department of Fisheries Malaysia, FRI Batu Maung 11960 Penang, Malaysia e-mail: kuaben01@dof.gov.my	Dr. Kua Beng Chu has been a Research Officer since 1996 and is currently a Deputy Senior Director of Research, Fisheries Research Institute under Department of Fisheries Malaysia. She obtained a Bachelor of Fisheries Science (Aquaculture) and Master of Science (Fish Health Management) from University Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 1993 and 1996 respectively. She completed her PhD in fish parasitology from University of Science, Malaysia (USM) in 2002. Over the past 27 years, she has been involved in research on fish health, focusing on fish parasites, pathology, disease prevention and management. She has been a Project Leader for more than 10 grants and has written more than 80 technical papers. She has patented six innovations and one of them has won the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Innovation for Sustainable Development Awards in 2021. In addition, she has written a book on Ectoparasites in Aquaculture to assist farmers to overcome the ectoparasite problems, and a series of children books on diseases in fisheries with the purpose of creating awareness to the younger generation.
 Dr. Agus Sunarto	Dr Agus Sunarto is a senior research scientist and Team Leader of Aquaculture Biotechnology at CSIRO, Australia. He joined CSIRO in 2013 after leading the Fish Health Research Laboratory in Indonesia, where his team first reported outbreaks of white spot syndrome virus (WSSV) in Indonesian shrimp (1994) and koi herpesvirus (KHV) in carp (2002). Agus holds a PhD in molecular virology from the University of Queensland, where he discovered a new genetic lineage of KHV (C07 isolate) that is highly virulent in Australian carp.

(Indonesia/Australia) Senior Research Scientist Team Leader Aquaculture Biotechnology, Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Tasmania, Australia e-mail: Agus.Sunarto@csiro.au Website: Agus Sunarto - CSIROpeople	Funded by the Australian Government, the discovery led to the investigation of KHV as a biocontrol agent for invasive carp, contributing to the development of the National Carp Control Plan. Building on this expertise, Agus led Tilapia biocontrol research funded by the CISS. Modelling showed that combining viral and genetic biocontrol is the most effective strategy for invasive species, leading Agus to join CSIRO's Genome Engineering team to develop integrated solutions. Gene technologies not only enable innovative biocontrol solutions but also improve aquaculture traits. This link naturally positioned Agus to lead CSIRO's Aquaculture Biotechnology team. Today, his team focuses on biotechnology and precision genome engineering (PGE) to deliver sustainable and resilient aquaculture.
 Dr. Ha Thanh Dong Associate Professor Laboratory of Aquatic Animal Health and Alternatives to Antibiotics (A4 Lab) Aquaculture and Aquatic Resources Management Program Asian Institute of Technology Thailand Email: htdong@ait.asia	Dr. Dong is an aquaculture pathologist specializing in infectious and emerging diseases, diagnostics, disease pathogenesis, host-pathogen interactions, and vaccine development for tropical fish species. His work also explores fish immunology, sustainable alternatives to antibiotics, and innovative nanobubble applications to enhance immersion vaccines. Dong has authored over 120 peer-reviewed articles, serves on advisory boards, and acts as a guest editor for several journals in his field. He was listed among the top 2% most-cited fisheries scientists worldwide by Stanford University for three consecutive years (2023–2025). He has served as an expert resource for the FAO, WOAH and WorldFish Center and was recently appointed Adjunct Professor at James Cook University, Singapore.
Dr. Sonia Somga	
 Dr. Stephen Pyecroft (Australia) School of Animal and Veterinary Science, Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Technology, The University of Adelaide, South Australia, Australia e-mail: stephen.pyecroft@adelaide.edu.au	Dr. Stephen Pyecroft is a Senior Lecturer in veterinary pathology at the University of Adelaide. He has worked in diagnostic veterinary pathology and research of animal disease for most of his 38-year veterinary career. He holds a PhD from the University of Queensland where he defined systemic granulomatosis in goldfish and is a member by examination of both the chapters of Pathobiology and Aquatic Animal Health of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientist. His research interest is wide in scope including stem cell research in Tasmanian Devils, development of clinical biochemistry reference ranges in Southern rock lobsters and Pacific oysters, and Black soldier fly production for fish nutrition. He has supervised PhD and Honours (by research) candidates, published in peer reviewed journals and textbooks, and regularly reviews journal submissions for publication. An active promotor of evidence-based science his passion is aquatic animal health and management through sustainability.

 Dr. Neeraj Sood (India) Principal Scientist, ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Lucknow e-mail: sood_neeraj@rediffmail.com	Dr. Neeraj Sood is working as Principal Scientist in Exotics and Aquatic Animal Health Division at ICAR-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBFGR), Lucknow. He has doctoral degree in Veterinary Pathology. He has 28 years of experience of working in the area of aquatic animal health and has published over 100 research articles. He has worked on understanding host-pathogen interaction of *Aphanomyces invadans* under Newton Fund Global Research Programme. He has been involved in development of new fish cell lines and monoclonal antibodies against fish immunoglobulins. He is the Consortium Principal Investigator of the National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Diseases in India.
 Dr. Xuan Dong (P.R. China) Senior Researcher Organism Diseases Control and Molecular Pathology Division, Yellow Sea Fisheries Research Institute (YSFRI), Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences (CAFS), Qingdao, P.R. China e-mail: dongxuan@ysfri.ac.cn	Dr Dong has over 15 years on diverse aspects of epidemiology and biosecurity, covering diseases, diagnostics, sanitary legislation and health management. He has collaborated as an expert for international organizations such as the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV), WOAH and FAO as well as the domestic organizations. He has years of experience in establishing the enterprise lever biosecurity and the national-level biosecurity. He has hosted and participated in more than 30 research projects. Dr Dong participated in the compilation of the bulletin on the health status of aquatic animals in China and other important monographs on aquatic animal epidemic prevention. He has published more than 90 papers in peer-reviewed journals, authored 23 books, obtained 7 patents, and developed 8 standards. Dr Dong is good at the identification of novel pathogens and engaged in the platform construction of new pathogen identification in aquatic animal. He has identified 128 novel viruses such as the Crustacea hepe-like virus 1 (CHEV1) and so on.
Observers	
 Joseph Carlo V. Vergel (Philippines/Japan) Department of Marine Biosciences Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology Japan	Mr. Joseph Carlo V. Vergel (The Philippines/Japan) is a MEXT scholar of Applied Marine Bioscience at Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology Japan. He obtained his Master's degree in Biological Sciences and BS Biology degree from University of Santo Tomas Philippines. He obtained a Diploma in Management Development Program from Ateneo Graduate School of Business and Diploma in International and Business Law from Yokohama National University Japan. He is a Fellow of the Pioneering Intellectual Property Programme for ASEAN Young Researchers in 2020 conferred by Licensing Executives Society International and ASEAN Young Scientists Network and a Fellow of the Ocean Network Education in Southeast Asia in 2023 conferred by the Institute of Fisheries Science, National Taiwan University. He is a Consultant & Technical Panel Chair (Blue Economy - Fishery

Email: vergelcarl@gmail.com / d231013@edu.kaiyodai.ac.jp	and Aquaculture) of the Department of Science and Technology - National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines (DOST-NCBP) and a Consultant & Aquatic health management/biosecurity specialist of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UN-FAO) (Project-based). He is a member of the Fish Health Section of the Asian Fisheries Society (FHS-AFS), European Association of Fish Pathologists (EAFP), Licensing Executives Society International (LESI), LES Philippines (LESP), and the Philippine Society for Cell Biology (PSCB). He has published scientific articles and reviews in the field of Blue Economy, Aquatic Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, Aquatic Immunology, Diagnostics, Aquatic Organisms Health Management, among others.
 Ms. Shu-Wen Cheng (Taiwan) Ph.D. Student Department of Biotechnology and Bioindustry Sciences, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan e-mail: l68121501@gs.ncku.edu.tw	Ms. Shu-Wen Cheng is a Ph.D. student under the supervision of Distinguished Professor Han-Ching Wang at the Department of Biotechnology and Bioindustry Sciences, National Cheng Kung University (NCKU), Taiwan. Her research focuses on white spot syndrome virus (WSSV) infection, metabolic reprogramming, and host–virus interactions in shrimp. She is currently investigating how WSSV modulates host metabolic enzymes, specifically ATP-citrate lyase (ACLY) and acyl-CoA synthetase (ACSS), to regulate cytosolic acetyl-CoA production and lipid metabolism during viral replication. Her studies aim to elucidate the molecular mechanisms by which WSSV reprograms host metabolism to facilitate efficient viral propagation.
 Abdul Salam Wafi Md Diah (Brunei) Fisheries Officer Block A, Muara Fisheries Complex, Department of Fisheries, Kg. Serasa, Brunei Darussalam. +6732774256 +6738608528/ +6738156288 wafi.diah@fisheries.gov.bn	Mr. Abdul Salam Wafi Md Diah is a Fisheries Officer and Head of the Diagnostics Unit at the Aquatic Animal Health and Laboratory Services Centre, Department of Fisheries, Brunei Darussalam. He completed his Master's degree in Aquaculture (By Research) at Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA), where his research focused on the effectiveness of mechanical control methods for marine leech infestations in groupers. Mr. Diah holds professional certifications in Biorisk Management, Biosecurity, and Biological Risk Assessment from the International Federation of Biosafety Associations. He also serves as Secretariat and National Focal Point for several national committees and ASEAN working groups related to fisheries, biosafety, and antimicrobial resistance. His professional interests include aquatic animal health, biosecurity, antimicrobial resistance, and sustainable aquaculture practices.

 Mr. Kazuma Yoshimura (Japan) Ph.D Student Laboratory of Genome Science Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology d251017@edu.kaiyodai.ac.jp k.yoshimura25mb@gmail.com	Mr. Kazuma Yoshimura obtained his Bachelor degree and Master's degree of Marine Science from Tokyo university of marine science and technology (TUMSAT) in 2022 and 2024, respectively. He goes on to a doctoral course, doing a research fellowship (JSPS) at the laboratory of genome science in TUMSAT in 2025. His main research area is genome characterization of Megalocytiviruses, fish immune system and development of DNA vaccine using novel technology.
 SONIA S. SOMGA, M.Sc, M.PA, DVM National Fisheries Laboratory Division Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources 860 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City Philippines Tel: 63 9087005784 Email: ssomga@bfar.da.gov.ph	Dr. Sonia S. Somga is the Chief of the National Fisheries Laboratory works at the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Philippines, with a position of Chief Aquaculturist, In-charge of the National Fisheries Laboratory Division (NFLD). The NFLD serves as the Competent Authority Laboratory for fisheries and the national reference laboratory for the Regional Fisheries Laboratories. The Division has three Sections, namely: Aquatic Toxicology Laboratory, Fish Health Laboratory, and Fisheries Product Testing Laboratory. It develops and implements laboratory methods in support of food safety control and aquatic animal health programs according to national and international standards. The laboratory is accredited with ISO/IEC 17025:2017 with the Philippine Accreditation Bureau. The NFLD also leads and implements national surveillance, monitoring and reporting programs of OIE listed and other significant diseases of shrimp and finfishes. It also implements the food safety control program for aquaculture products at the primary production, specifically, national residue control program, and antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance (AMU/AMR) in aquaculture, and shellfish sanitation program. Graduated Doctor of Veterinary Science and Medicine at the Central Luzon State University in 1990 and passed the licensure examination in the same year. Completed Master of Science degree in Aquaculture at the University Putra Malaysia in 1997, and Master in Public Administration at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in 2022. Obtained Fisheries Technologist license in 2021 without examination through the Philippine Regulatory Fisheries Code of 1998. Twenty seven (28) years in government service and has been working on fish health and food safety. Participated in several

	trainings/workshops, conferences and projects implemented by regional and international organizations (such as FAO, EU-TRTA, EU- ARISE, USDA, ASEAN, NACA and SEAFDEC) on fish health and food safety.