

Provisional declaration of disease-free status in accordance with chapter 4 of part II of Regulation (EU) 2020/689 and Article 11 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/2002

<i>Requirements/information needed</i>	<i>Information/further explanation and justification</i>
1. Date of submission	23 February 2026
1.1. Type of declaration	<p>Declaration of a zone free of VHS/IHN following a 4-year eradication programme (Article 77 of Regulation (EU) 2020/689); eradication programme was sent to the Commission on 12 March 2021 following the comments made by the Commission. Amendment of the declaration was presented at PAFF on 15 March 2021. No comment was received.</p> <p>Relevant general criteria in accordance with point (a) of Article 73(1) of Regulation (EU) 2020/689 are complied with.</p>
2. Declaring Member State	SLOVENIA
2.1. Competent authority (address, fax, e-mail)	<p>Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection (AFSVSPP), Dunajska 22, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia</p> <p>Fax: +386 1 300 13 56</p> <p>Phone: +386 1 300 13 00</p> <p>e-mail: uvhvvr@gov.si</p> <p>Contact: Boštjan Vidic, acting director general (e-mail: bostjan.vidic@gov.si)</p> <p>Contact for the declaration: Tina Arič, animal health expert (e-mail: tina.atic@gov.si)</p>
3. Name of the disease	<p>X VHS</p> <p>X IHN</p>
4. Identification of the grounds for recognition of disease free-status	
4.1. <input type="checkbox"/> Absence of listed species	

4.2. <input type="checkbox"/> Disease agents's incapacity to survive	
4.3. <input type="checkbox"/> Historical and surveillance data	
4.4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completion of an eradication programme	<p>Eradication programme was prepared in line with Model B and Table 1.B of Part 1 of Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2015/1554 (corresponds to Table 1B Chapter I Part II Annex VI of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689).</p> <p>All diagnostics was performed by National veterinary institute (NVI), which acts also as National reference laboratory for fish diseases.</p> <p>Used tests – isolation of VHSV and IHNV in cell culture followed by identification using antibody-based methods (indirect fluorescent antibody test) and molecular techniques.</p>
<p>4. Territorial scope with a description and demarcation and the names of the zones or compartments</p>	<p>The proposed zone consists of fish farm “Povh” and stream Ljubnica from the springs to the artificial dam near the water inlet to the fish farm, with the following tributaries: Žep, Robanšek, Kozlov graben, Krumpah, Suški graben, Redkov graben and Sopot.</p> <p>1. Fish farm “Povh” is managed by aquaculture production business operator SAPA Sahar Povh s.p. Fish farm is located near stream Ljubnica, which receives water from the mountains (Smrekovško pogorje). There is a concrete pond with 4 tanks and two earth ponds in the farm. 4 tanks (1,5 m x 20 m, depth from 0,90 to 1,20 m) are intended for the production of fingerlings. Part of this concrete pond is also settler (15 m2). Both earth ponds (40m x 6m, depth from 0,30 to 2 m) have a gravel ground and are intended for the production of fish for consumption and trophy fish.</p> <p>Fish species reared at the fish farm are rainbow trout (<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>), brown trout (<i>Salmo trutta</i>), danube salmon (<i>Hucho hucho</i>) and brook trout (<i>Salvelinus fontinalis</i>). Production cycle on the fish farm goes from fingerlings to fish for human consumption and trophies.</p> <p>2. Stream Ljubnica receives water from the mountains (Smrekovško pogorje). Stream Ljubnica with all its tributaries (part of the proposed zone) is part of the fishing district (Zgornjesavinski) which is managed by fishing family Ljubno ob Savinji. The stream is approx. 9 km long, 2 km under the fish farm is for fishing and 7 km above the fish farm is classified as breeding stream for the brown trout. Part of the stream under the fish farm is not included in the proposed zone.</p> <p>The only species used for the repopulation of open waters in the proposed zone is brown trout from the fish farm “Podvolovljek” which is part of the compartment free of VHS/IHN, managed by Fishing family Ljubno ob Savinji.</p> <p>Photos: 1 - 10</p>

<p>5. A description of the epidemiological situation for each zone, compartment or region if more than one region is included in the territorial scope of the programme:</p>	
<p>a) the number of approved aquaculture establishments and the number of registered aquaculture establishments keeping animals of the targeted animal population, by type of production and by health status (2) at 31 December</p>	/
<p>b) listed species kept in the aquaculture establishments referred to in point (a) by health status;</p>	All fish species reared at the fish farm (rainbow trout, brown trout, danube salmon and brook trout), or intended for repopulation of open waters in the proposed zone originate from fish farms declared free of VHS/IHN
<p>(c) maps indicating: (i) the geographical location of the aquaculture establishments referred to in point (a) and the relevant water catchment areas; and (ii) the geographical distribution of cases of infection with the relevant category B or C disease covering at least the past 5 years;</p>	Photo 11 /
<p>(d) information as regards the epidemiological situation in wild aquatic animals, where relevant.</p>	/
<p>5.4. The notification to the competent authority of the suspicion and confirmation of the disease(s) in question has been compulsory since when (date)?</p>	<p>VHS and IHN have been compulsory notifiable in Slovenia since 1987 (Law on animal health, Official Gazette of SRS, no. 37/85)</p> <p>Notification of VHS and IHN is to be performed in line with Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Regulations (EU) 2020/689 and 2020/2002, which are directly applicable. In line with national Rules on animal diseases (UL RS, 81/07 and 24/10) which corresponds to the provisions of the EU legislation every suspicion (clinical signs or increased mortality) has to be notified to the specialists for fish diseases at NVI, who are responsible for the fish health. NVI has to notify the suspicion to the Regional office of AFSVSPP. Official veterinarian than performs the epidemiological inquiry and prescribes measures according to the legislation.</p> <p>AFSVSPP must notify the presence of VHS or IHN in line with point 1(c) Article 3 of Regulation</p>

	2020/2002/EU to the European Commission, the World organisation for animal health (WOAH), and other member states using ADIS.
5.5. Early detection system in place throughout the Member States, enabling the competent authority to undertake effective disease investigation and reporting since when (date)?	<p>Since 1987 (Law on animal health, Official Gazette of SRS, no. 37/85)</p> <p>According to Regulation (EU) 2016/429 (points 1(b) and 1(c) of Article 18) operators are obliged to notify to NVI specialists for fish diseases every suspicion of VHS or IHN or any increased mortality. NVI has to confirm or rule out the disease as soon as possible and notify the official veterinarian who prescribes measures according to Regulation (EU) 2020/689.</p>
6. A description of the disease control strategy of the eradication programme in accordance with Article 46 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 including at least:	
a) the sampling schemes and diagnostic methods to be used in accordance with Annex VI to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 for: i) health visits and sampling in aquaculture establishments ii) targeted surveillance in wild populations, where relevant;	Health visits and sampling according to the approved eradication programme are attached to this declaration.
b) the disease control measures to be applied in the event of a confirmed case	<p>VHS and IHN have been compulsory notifiable in Slovenia since 1987 (Law on animal health, Official Gazette of SRS, no. 37/85)</p> <p>AFSVSPP must notify the presence of VHS or IHN in line with point 1(c) Article 3 of Regulation 2020/2002/EU to the European Commission, the World organisation for animal health (WOAH), and other member states using ADIS.</p> <p>According to Regulation (EU) 2016/429 (points 1(b) and 1(c) of Article 18) operators are obliged to notify to specialists for fish diseases at National veterinary institute (NVI) every suspicion of VHS or IHN or any increased mortality. NVI has to confirm or rule out the disease as soon as possible and notify the official veterinarian who prescribes measures according to Regulation (EU) 2020/689.</p>
c) the biosecurity and risk mitigating measures to be implemented	<p>Breeding at the fish farm is performed on the basis of good hygiene practice (regular cleaning and disinfection of equipment, disposal of dead fish, etc.). All equipment and vehicles used in the proposed zone are cleaned and disinfected after every use.</p> <p>Fish farm "Povh" is fenced partly with wire (1,75 m high) and partly with electric fence (1,10 m high).</p> <p>According to national legislation in place, each aquaculture establishment that applies for approval, needs to establish a plan of hygiene measures before the approval. Biosecurity measures are in accordance with Article</p>

	<p>10 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429.</p> <p>All movements of fish have to be documented in the log which is present at the fish farm. Only fish from free status can enter the proposed zone.</p> <p>Fish tanks are checked daily for the presence of dead or moribund fish. Data has to be entered in the log present at the farm.</p> <p>Migration of fish from open waters to the proposed zone is prevented by the artificial dam on stream Ljubnica (1,5 m high) where the proposed zone ends.</p> <p>According to the fishing family Ljubno ob Savinji which manages the stream Ljubnica in this area, the position of the dam and very shallow water prevent the migration of fish upstream.</p> <p>Photos: 7, 11</p>
<p>7. A description of the organisation, supervision and roles of the parties involved in the eradication programme including at least:</p>	
<p>a) the authorities in charge of coordinating and supervising the implementation of the programme</p>	<p>1. Administration for food safety, veterinary sector and plant protection (AFSVSPP), Regional Office Celje</p> <p>2. National Veterinary institute (NVI)</p>
<p>b) responsibilities of all stakeholders involved</p>	<p>AFSVSPP acts as the competent authority and is organised as affiliated body to the Ministry of agriculture, forestry and food. AFSVSPP – Regional office Celje, carries out inspection and control of the programme and maintaining the free status.</p> <p>Fish farm in the proposed zone is classified as “medium risk” for the introduction or spreading of VHS/IHN and clinical inspections are performed by NVI according to Chapter 3 Part I Annex VI of the Regulation (EU) 2020/689. Official veterinarians perform inspections based on the risk and yearly plan prepared by inspection and animal health and animal welfare division.</p> <p>Specialists for fish diseases from National Veterinary Institute (NVI), once per year, take organs from 30 fish for the detection of VHS/IHN virus (Rules on the carrying out of systematic surveillance of animal diseases and vaccination of animals, issued at the end of each year).</p> <p>For the purpose of animal health monitoring, AFSVSPP has set up the information technology system called CIS AFSVSPP EPI, which enables the traceability of samples from the point of sampling to a final assessment of test results.</p> <p>VHS and IHN have been compulsory notifiable in Slovenia since 1987 (Law on animal health, Official Gazette of SRS, no. 37/85)</p>

	<p>Notification of VHS and IHN is to be performed in line with Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Regulations (EU) 2020/689 and 2020/2002, which are directly applicable. In line with national Rules on animal diseases (UL RS, 81/07 and 24/10) which corresponds to the provisions of the EU legislation every suspicion (clinical signs or increased mortality) has to be notified to the specialists for fish diseases at NVI, who are responsible for the fish health. NVI has to notify the suspicion to the regional office of AFSVSPP. Official veterinarian than performs the epidemiological inquiry and prescribes measures according to the legislation.</p> <p>AFSVSPP must notify the presence of VHS or IHN in line with point 1(c) Article 3 of Regulation 2020/2002/EU to the European Commission, the World organisation for animal health (WOAH), and other member states using ADIS.</p> <p>According to Regulation (EU) 2016/429 (points 1(b) and 1(c) of Article 18) operators are obliged to notify to NVI specialists for fish diseases every suspicion of VHS or IHN or any increased mortality. NVI has to confirm or rule out the disease as soon as possible and notify the official veterinarian who prescribes eradication measures according to Regulation (EU) 2020/689.</p> <p>Operator of the approved fish farm in the zone is responsible for maintaining a high level of biosecurity, following restrictions, observation of fish health and notification if needed.</p> <p>River Ljubnica with all its tributaries (part of the proposed zone) is part of the fishing district (Zgornjesavinski) which is managed by fishing family Ljubno ob Savinji. This fishing family manages a compartment declared free of VHS/IHN with their 3 fish farms and river Savinja, so their fish management is already focused only to transfers inside the free compartment, from farms/compartments with free status or from their compartment to farms with lower health status.</p>
<p>8. The estimated duration of the eradication programme.</p>	<p>/</p>
<p>9. The intermediate targets of, and the disease control strategies for implementing, the eradication programme including at least:</p>	
<p>(a) the expected annual decrease of the number of infected aquaculture establishments and where relevant, sampling points in wild populations;</p>	<p>/</p>
<p>(b) the expected annual increase of the number of aquaculture establishments and, where relevant, sampling points in wild populations that tested negative;</p>	<p>/</p>

(c) the expected vaccination coverage, where relevant.

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Submission of information on sampling and clinical examinations according to Chapter I of Part II of Annex 6 of Regulation (EU) 2020/689

Data on testing animals

zone with stream “Ljubnica” from the springs to the artificial dam near the water inlet to the fish farm, with the following tributaries: Žep, Robanšek, Kozlov graben, Krumpah, Suški graben, Redkov graben and Sopot and fish farm “Povh”

Disease: VHS/IHN..... **Year:** ...2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.....

Date of health visit	Date of sampling	Water temperature at sampling	Aquatic species present	Species sampled	Number of animals sampled (total and by species)	Laboratory carrying out the analysis	Result of health visit	Result of laboratory tests
21/04/2021	21/04/2021	8,6° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative
09/11/2021	09/11/2021	7,1° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative
07/06/2022	07/06/2022	13,5° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative
22/11/2022	22/11/2022	5,3° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative
29/03/2023	29/03/2023	4,4° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative
05/03/2024	05/03/2024	9,3° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative
03/12/2024	03/12/2024	3,3° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative
25/11/2025	25/11/2025	6,2° C	Rainbow trout	Rainbow trout	30 fish (organs)	NVI	negative	negative