



The voice of fish and wildlife agencies

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For Immediate Release

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Bsal Rapid Response Plan Now Available

Washington D.C. (June 19, 2018) - The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) is pleased to announce a new [Bsal Rapid Response Plan](#) developed to address the emerging threat posed by the amphibian fungal pathogen *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* or Bsal. Although this lethal pathogen has not yet been detected in North America, experts believe that the chance of a future outbreak is high and may severely impact many of our nearly 200 species of salamanders and the ecosystems they inhabit.

Bsal, discovered in Europe in 2013, is a fungal pathogen that causes the disease chytridiomycosis in amphibians. It is considered one of the greatest disease threats to amphibian biodiversity and may lead to widespread mortality and extinctions worldwide. Already nearly one-third of amphibians are in decline across the globe. Recent research on Bsal has shown that many North American salamander species will be affected by this disease.

“Because the pathogen has not yet been found in North America, we have a rare opportunity to redefine what it means to be proactive by planning ahead of its expected arrival,” stated Priya Nanjappa, Amphibian and Reptile Program Manager for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The Bsal Rapid Response Plan template provides proactive tools for biologists to facilitate preparation in the event of an outbreak in both wild and captive amphibian species. This plan provides resources and potential actions that can be taken to minimize impact and maximize the chance of containing the disease.

The Bsal Rapid Response Plan template is the product of collaborative effort between the AFWA Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Committee and [the Bsal Task Force](#). The Task Force includes participation from Canada, Mexico, and the US and coordinates research, response, diagnostics, surveillance, data management, decision support, and communication related to Bsal. It represents a strong collaboration among state, federal, and academic scientists and other private and nongovernmental partners.

The Bsal Task Force’s Technical Advisory Committee and Response Working Group members will be reaching out to particular agencies and captive facility partners to help encourage, and assist as needed with, customization of the plan.

For additional information, please contact Priya Nanjappa, AFWA’s Program Manager for Amphibians & Reptiles at pnanjappa@fishwildlife.org or 202-838-3463.

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The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies represents North America’s fish and wildlife agencies to advance sound, science-based management and conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public interest. The Association represents its state agency members on Capitol Hill and before the Administration to advance favorable fish and wildlife conservation policy and funding and works to ensure that all entities work collaboratively on the most important issues. The Association also provides member agencies with coordination services on cross-cutting as well as species-based

programs that range from birds, fish habitat and energy development to climate change, wildlife action plans, conservation education, leadership training and international relations. Working together, the Association's member agencies are ensuring that North American fish and wildlife management has a clear and collective voice.