

Advisory note to inform Pandemic Instrument negotiations in 2023

This note outlines Action for Animal Health's recommendations for a new pandemic accord.

We are pleased that One Health has received attention from many member states in 2022's INB meetings, and has prominence within the zero draft. However, it is vital that the final accord includes obligations to *prevent the spillover of zoonotic diseases*. This is the major gap in global health policy that this instrument can fill.

The need for integrated surveillance systems, and the engagement of communities in surveillance of emerging infectious diseases is welcome, but more obligations must be included for true prevention at source. There needs to be capacity in the animal health workforce to report and respond to outbreaks in animal populations, and to support community engagement in zoonotic disease management and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) prevention.

Rationale

Major infectious disease threats come from the way we treat wildlife and domestic animals. We must limit the circulation of zoonotic diseases in animals to protect everyone, everywhere.

Animal health services are critical to the prevention of disease, the early detection of pathogens, reporting, control, and prevention of spread ([World Bank 2022](#)). Yet many are under-resourced and cannot comply with the core competencies outlined by the World Organisation for Animal Health. Practitioners have varying levels of training and skills and are in short supply in some zoonotic disease spill-over hotspots.

Poor animal welfare in food systems facilitates transmission of disease and AMR. This includes poor animal care, poor biosecurity, unsustainable wildmeat harvesting, and agricultural encroachment on wildlife. Animal-based food systems are a bigger driver of zoonosis events than the wildlife trade ([IUCN 2022](#)).

Outbreaks of zoonotic disease and AMR infections are the impact of underinvestment in animal health systems.

Recommendations for the accord

Below we make recommendations for explicit obligations related to prevention, and the integration of One Health throughout the accord.

Preamble

The preamble should include references to the Quadripartite (FAO, UNEP, WHO, WOAH). We suggest:

Recalling the World Health Assembly resolution WHA74.7, which calls on the Quadripartite “to build on and strengthen the existing cooperation to develop options, for consideration by their respective governing bodies, including establishing a common strategy on One Health, including a joint workplan to improve prevention, monitoring, detection, control and containment of zoonotic disease outbreaks”

Acknowledging the Quadripartite One Health Joint Plan of Action, which aims to guide the four organizations in working together on One Health with the aim of supporting their Members, Member States and State Parties in building One Health capacities, providing a framework for action and proposing a set of activities to advance and sustainably scale up One Health

Recognising the importance of working synergistically with other relevant areas, under a One Health approach, as well as the importance and public health impact of growing possible drivers of pandemics - including land use change, unsustainable intensification of food systems, biodiversity loss, the loss, fragmentation and degradation of ecosystem, human-wildlife conflict, wildlife trade, weak animal health systems and management, climate change,

and antimicrobial resistance - which need to be addressed as a means of preventing future pandemics and protecting public health.

Chapter 1

Chapter I, Article 1 should include:

- 1) A definition of “One Health Approach” that aligns with the One Health High Level Expert Panel’s definition, as endorsed by the Quadripartite (FAO, UNEP, WOA, WHO). We suggest:

A One Health approach aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals, and ecosystems. It recognizes the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and interdependent. In this context, the approach mobilizes multiple sectors, disciplines, and communities at varying levels of society to work together to prevent pandemic threats at source, as well as prepare for, respond to and recover from pandemics.

- 2) A definition of “One Health Surveillance” that aligns with the One Health High Level Expert Panel’s definition, as endorsed by the Quadripartite (FAO, UNEP, WOA, WHO). We suggest:

In this context, One Health Surveillance is the systematic and timely collection, validation, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of data - collected from and shared across human, animal and environmental sources at local, national and international level – to inform cross sectoral actions to prevent, prepare for, respond and recover from zoonotic and anti-microbial resistance related events.

- 3) Definitions of both primary and secondary pandemic prevention as follows:

Primary pandemic prevention is actions to prevent an outbreak in humans of a pathogen that has the potential to cause an epidemic or pandemic, particularly through reducing risk of spillover

Secondary pandemic prevention is actions that aim to curb human-to-human spread of a pathogen that has caused an outbreak in humans so that neither an epidemic nor a pandemic occurs.

Chapter 1, Article 2 should include:

- 1) Links to existing frameworks governed by Quadripartite partners. This includes the One Health Joint Plan of Action, and to relevant guidelines and instruments such as the World Organisation for Animal Health’s Terrestrial Animal Health code and Performance of Veterinary Services tool.

Chapter 2

Chapter II, Article 3 should expand the objective as follows:

*The WHO CA+ aims to comprehensively and effectively address systemic gaps and challenges that exist in these areas, at national, regional and international levels, through substantially reducing the risk of pandemics, increasing pandemic **prevention**, preparedness and response capacities, progressive realization of universal health coverage and ensuring coordinated, collaborative and evidence-based pandemic **prevention, preparedness** and response and resilient recovery of health systems at community, national, regional and global levels.*

Chapter II, Article 4 should be expanded as follows:

14. One Health - Multisectoral and transdisciplinary actions should recognize the interconnection between people, animals, plants and their shared environment, for which a coherent, integrated and unifying approach should be strengthened and applied with an aim to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems, including through, but not limited to, attention to the **prevention of health threats at the human-animal-environment interface including AMR and zoonoses.**

Chapter IV

Chapter IV, Article 12 should:

- 1) Expand the meaning of 'health workforce' in Chapter IV, in line with growing recognition of the role of One Health within the global health architecture. We suggest:

The Parties shall invest in establishing, sustaining, coordinating, and mobilising an available, skilled, and trained One Health workforce, including through training health workers on One Health and upskilling the animal health workforce, in order to prevent outbreaks at the human-animal environment interface.

A strong animal health workforce is vital for prevention, preparedness and response. A One Health approach to strengthening health workforces will encourage sharing of resources and logistics across supply chains, strengthening of regulation and enforcement for medicines, and sharing specialist laboratory staff, facilities or surveillance platforms.

Chapter V

Chapter V, Article 18 (One Health) should:

- Include obligations to meet existing minimum standards for animal health services as set out by Quadripartite partners, including WOA's Animal Terrestrial Animal Health Codes and Manuals. The core competencies described in WOA's Performance of Veterinary Services Pathway, which supports countries to meet core competencies, are critical to prevention ([World Bank 2022](#))
- Include obligations to improve biosecurity in the production, transportation, slaughter and retailing of animals to reduce transfer of pathogens between animals and the transmission of diseases.
- Include obligations to improve care and welfare practices on farms to both reduce the use of antimicrobials, but also to support ecosystem health (a reduction in livestock death and disease means fewer animals will need to be reared for the same output and will use fewer natural resources as a result ([GBADS 2021](#))).
- Encourage countries to undertake their own risk assessments based on the drivers of emerging infectious diseases and come up with their own tailored package of interventions as part of a pandemic prevention plan ([World Bank 2022](#)).
- List unsustainable intensification of food systems as a potential driver of pandemics. Whilst we understand that drivers are not limited to what is written in Article 18.3, animal-based food systems are a bigger driver of zoonosis events than the wildlife trade for example ([IUCN 2022](#)). There are opportunities for transfer of pathogens all along the food systems chain ([World Bank 2022](#))

Chapter VII. (Institutional arrangements) should include a specific shared governance arrangement between the Quadripartite organisations should be established for proper implementation and monitoring of the One Health approach.

The negotiation process

We request for the following during the negotiation process:

- Member states to regularly consult with their counterparts in the animal health and environmental sectors to inform their positions
- Member states to regularly and meaningfully consult with civil society organisations from across the One Health spectrum.
- Endorse a Quadripartite working group to advise on One Health issues throughout the negotiation process



About Action for Animal Health

Action for Animal Health is an expert group that is willing to advise member states during this process, and is listed in Annex E. Our member, World Veterinary Association, has official relations with WHO.

Action for Animal Health (A4AH) was launched in 2021 and advocates for more investment in strong and resilient animal health systems that protect people, animals, and the planet. It is a coalition of partners, including African Union Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources, Brooke, Compassion in World Farming, Dogs Trust Worldwide, Farm Africa, GALVmed, Global Alliance for Rabies Control, International Livestock Research Institute, Ripple Effect, Soi Dog Foundation, SEBI-Livestock, Vétérinaires Sans Frontières International, and World Veterinary Association. Its partners include the NGO Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases, and the coalition for Preventing Pandemics at the Source.

For more information please visit Action for Animal Health website, or contact Ellie Parravani at ellie.parravani@thebrooke.org.