

Dear distinguished co-chairs, vice-chairs and delegates

We are submitting this statement on behalf of the organisations, networks and experts PREZODE, FOUR PAWS, Action for Animal Health, Born Free Foundation, Brighter Green, Preventing Pandemics at the Source, Proyecto ARPA Mexico, The Global Initiative to End Wildlife Crime, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Federation for Animals and Ian Redmond OBE DSc(hc), Chairman, Ape Alliance and Head of Conservation at Ecoflox.

We stand at a pivotal moment in designing global health architecture and protecting our collective future. Articles 4 and 5 of the Pandemic Agreement wisely recognize that One Health is a critical way to prevent future pandemics.

Yet, an important gap remains in the PABS Annex regarding the definition of "Pathogens with Pandemic Potential." Currently, this definition is focused almost entirely on human pathogens. This overlooks the fundamental reality that over 70% of emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic, originating in animals with the potential to spillover to humans. From SARS-CoV-1 and Ebola, Marburg to MERS and Nipah, epidemics and pandemics arise at the human-animal-environment interface.

Including pathogens with the potential to spillover from animals to humans in the scope of "Pathogens with Pandemic Potential" represents a proactive, cost-effective and feasible way to reduce the risk of disease emergence and spillover and protects us all from the next pandemic. A critical step of disease prevention is mitigating health threats when high-risk zoonotic pathogens still circulate in animal reservoirs before they are transmitted into human populations.

Preventing disease spillover protects everyone everywhere before communities in most vulnerable situations suffer, significantly reducing mortality, morbidity, economic crises and enabling equity which is one goal of PABS. Including animals provides scientific necessity and operational efficiency. It strengthens integrated surveillance, improves rapid detection and accuracy of early warning systems, and ensures that vital data from animal health monitoring is shared within the PABS system to inform the development of countermeasures and to provide equitable benefits for countries sharing this information. Furthermore, it creates legal coherence, aligning the PABS Annex with the core principles already established in the main body of the Pandemic Agreement.

We propose amending the language of the PABS Annex draft text by referencing key Articles of the Pandemic Agreement that aim to prevent pandemics, at source at the human-animal-environment interface as outlined in Articles 4 and 5 to explicitly include the capacity for spillover between animals and humans. This is a conceptual shift toward prevention at the source. It is about ensuring our global framework is coherent and science-based. You have the opportunity to ensure the world's future pandemic architecture prevents outbreaks at their source, protecting lives and livelihoods and enabling equity.