

Action for Animal Health congratulates the Bureau on the inclusion of Articles 4 and 5 in the negotiating text.

We also welcome the expanded definition of One Health, and the inclusion of the need to maintain the capacity to carry out integrated surveillance (good animal disease surveillance needs an animal health workforce), as well as the acknowledgement that communities play a key role in disease surveillance (communities who live closely with wild and domestic animals will be the first to spot any change).

Member states are urged to keep both prevention and a One Health approach front and centre of the accord. Spill-over of pathogens from both wild and domestic animals to people is the predominant cause of emerging infectious diseases. The importance of prevention of spill-over cannot be overstated.

For example, the longer avian influenza circulates in wild and domestic birds, the more likely virus mutations or re-assortment will lead to potential human-to-human transmission ([A4AH, 2023](#)). The need to prevent, detect and respond to any potentially zoonotic disease outbreaks in animals in their earliest stage is paramount for maximum impact.

A One Health approach to the prevention of spill-over costs just one-third of the cost of managing a pandemic ([World Bank 2023](#)). It is an opportunity to pool resources between sectors for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, such as sharing lab capacity, human resources, cold chains, and existing vaccine production technologies.

Beginning to operationalise One Health does not have to be expensive; for instance integrated surveillance can be applied without the need for new expensive technologies. However, we still urge wealthier countries to provide support to less wealthy countries to build capacity in the long term to implement prevention of spill-over through ODA and the World Bank Pandemic Fund.

Our specific textual recommendations relate to making the obligations around prevention and One Health as precise as possible, without compromising on conciseness.

As a sample:

- The preamble needs to reaffirm that the majority of infectious diseases come from animals and acknowledge the drivers of zoonotic spill-over, including food systems, wild animal trade, climate change, and AMR
- Chapter 1 Article 1 should include a definition of integrated surveillance as linking human, animal and environmental health surveillance and a definition of prevention of pathogen spill-over
- Article 4 should reference veterinary laboratories, and relevant instruments other than the IHR (as it does not cover prevention) and re-word (4e) to better spell out animal health measures. (4g) should move to Article 5 and be broadened to acknowledge that One Health plans are relevant for prevention, preparedness and response
- All articles referencing surveillance should consistently use the term 'integrated surveillance'. For example, Article 6 (2c) should use 'Integrated surveillance' instead of 'collaborative surveillance', and include some examples of critical points at the human-animal-environment-interface where surveillance may be lacking
- The Quadripartite should be referenced in Article 16.1
- One Health should be referenced in Article 17.4

The full set of recommendations can be found here at www.actionforanimalhealth.org.

About us:

Action for Animal Health is a coalition of 13 civil society organisations and research institutions with technical expertise in animal health and One Health. We are an Annex E partner organisation.

Our member World Veterinary Association represents the global veterinary profession. It is the umbrella organisation for veterinary associations across the world. It has 'official relations' status with WHO.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact us at ellie.parravani@thebrooke.org or Susanna.Sternberg-lewerin@slu.se.