

**Written statement by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)\***

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) aligns itself with the statement of the Quadripartite delivered by WOAHA.

As part of the Quadripartite, FAO promotes a One Health approach, among other areas, to the prevention, control and management of infectious diseases with pandemic potential at the animal source, including those related to antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Most human pandemic-causing pathogens have animal origin, and several drivers underpin the emergence and spillover of pandemic threats including environmental degradation, encroachment on wildlife habitat, increased interactions between humans and animals, unregulated trade and consumption of wild-sourced food, climate change and others.

Prevention is the first and most critical step to avert the risk of pathogen spillovers and subsequent public health and socio-economic impacts of pandemics, which requires strong coordination and collaboration across sectors.

The One Health approach is inherently tied to prevention and expands to the preparedness and response on pandemics. Incorporating One Health would not alter the scope of mechanisms under this instrument, but it would strengthen them by facilitating appropriate multi-sectoral actions that connect the health of humans, animals and the environment in the prevention, preparedness, and response to human pandemics.

It is of the utmost importance that the Pandemic Agreement explicitly references AMR as a thematic area fully integrated to the One Health approach. AMR could also have a more relevant role in Article 5 as a distinct One Health issue that would require specific multi-sectoral actions to address it. This could be achieved by inserting a new subparagraph 5.4. with the following text:

*“The parties shall promote prevention and control measures through multisectoral and transdisciplinary collaboration at the national level and cooperation at the international level, to mitigate the development of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and the uncontrolled spread of antimicrobial resistant organisms. In pursuit of this objective, the Parties will support actions for integrated surveillance of AMR, prudent use of antimicrobials and the exchange of data among relevant national institutions responsible for AMR management”.*

FAO recommends the inclusion of One Health as a guiding principle and OHHLEP definitions of “prevention of zoonotic spillover to humans” and “One Health surveillance”.

Finally, we would recommend that the wording of Article 5.5. is explicitly framed in the context of Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response.

FAO, as a UN specialized agency, with its technical expertise and longstanding experience in One Health implementation, is ready to support and collaborate with the WHO Secretariat on the effective implementation of the Pandemic Agreement and the recommendations from the

UNGA Declaration on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPPR) under the UN system coordination mechanism.

We are sure that the inclusion of the OH approach in the Pandemic Agreement will save human lives, promote sustainable livestock, preserve wildlife and plant biodiversity, and enhance environmental health. As we have seen with COVID-19 pandemic, we live in an era of interconnectedness. In this context not having a strong One Health lens for the Pandemic Agreement could be seen as a missed opportunity to prevent effectively the next pandemic.

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