

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Thirty-third meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 12 – 19 July 2024

Strategic matters

ROLE OF CITES IN REDUCING RISK OF FUTURE ZOOBOTIC DISEASE EMERGENCE
ASSOCIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat and the co-chairs of the intersessional working group on the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade*.
2. At its 19th meeting (CoP19; Panama City, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 19.15 to 19.19 on the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade* as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

19.15 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *issue a Notification to the Parties, requesting Parties to report on any measures they have in place to prevent and mitigate the risk of pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains including markets, and make the results available on the CITES website as a compilation of responses that could be useful to other Parties;*
- b) *review its Cooperation Agreement with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) to identify any necessary updates to reflect guidance provided by the Animals and Standing Committees and work with WOAH to, inter alia, develop a joint programme of work to identify effective and practical solutions for reducing pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains;*
- c) *collaborate with the Convention on Migratory Species to assess the potential risk of pathogen spillover and identify practical solutions for reducing pathogen spillover risk from wildlife;*
- d) *following any necessary consultations, prepare a report summarizing existing activities or formal agreements with other entities (such as, among others, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and other relevant biodiversity-related agreements, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO) and International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) as well as possible emerging opportunities, and identify opportunities for additional practical collaboration towards reducing the risk of pathogen spillover or zoonotic disease transmission in international wildlife trade supply chains, including consideration of a possible CITES advisory body; and*
- e) *report to the Animals and Standing Committees on the implementation of Decision 19.15, paragraphs a) to d).*

Directed to the Animals and Plants Committee

19.16 *The Animals and Plants Committee shall review the report of the Secretariat under Decision 19.15 and make recommendations to the Standing Committee, including on proposed effective and*

practical solutions for reducing pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains, opportunities for practical collaboration under the direction of existing Resolutions, Decisions or agreements, and consideration of a possible CITES advisory body.

Directed to the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees

19.17 *The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *review the report of the Secretariat under Decision 19.15, taking into account the recommendations of the Animals and Plants Committees under Decision 19.16;*
- b) *taking into account the information provided by the Secretariat and the Animals and Plants Committees, consider the establishment of a CITES advisory body to provide guidance based on best available science to Parties, in their efforts to reduce the risk of zoonotic pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains, including markets;*
- c) *taking into account proposals in document CoP19 Doc. 23.2 and in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees, consider the need for and development of a Resolution on actions CITES Parties and others could take to advance a 'One Health' approach as it pertains to international wildlife trade; and*
- d) *provide its guidance to the Secretariat and its recommendations, which may include a new draft Resolution, to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Directed to the United Nations Environment Programme

19.18 *The Conference of the Parties invites the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to share information from relevant work carried out under the Quadripartite Collaboration for One Health or other relevant initiatives, with the Parties via the Secretariat.*

Directed to Parties

19.19 *Parties are invited to:*

- a) *endorse the Quadripartite's (FAO/UNEP/WHO/WOAH) definition of the term zoonoses as "infectious diseases that can be spread between animals and humans; can be spread by food, water, fomites or vectors".*
- b) *take into consideration a multi-sectoral approach such as defined by the One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) when implementing the Convention, contributing to managing, preventing and mitigating the risk of pathogen spillover and zoonotic disease emergence by:*
 - i) *ensuring live animals are being traded in accordance with Articles III, IV, V and VII, which require that living specimens are so prepared and shipped as to minimise the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment, and Article VII which further requires that all living specimens, during any period of transit, holding or shipment, are properly cared for so as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment;*
 - ii) *regulating, registering, or otherwise administering captive-breeding, farming, and ranching facilities, including in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes, Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on Specimens of animal species bred in captivity, and Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) on Ranching and trade in ranches and specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II;*
- c) *develop and strengthen synergies with appropriate national and international animal and public health authorities, taking account of relevant definitions, standards and guidance from the WHO, WOA, FAO, UNEP and other international bodies and expert organizations as appropriate; and*

- d) *building on such synergies, ensure that CITES Authorities, if requested, work with relevant national authorities including national WOH and WHO focal points to develop and implement strategies that aim to identify and reduce the risk of transmission and spillover of zoonotic diseases and pathogen emergence from traded wildlife.*
3. At the 26th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC26; Geneva, June 2023) and the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee (AC32; Geneva, June 2023), the Committees considered document [PC26 Doc. 10 / AC32 Doc. 10](#) prepared by the Secretariat that contained information relating to the implementation of the above mentioned Decisions.

Updates by the Secretariat

Memorandum of Understanding between the CITES Secretariat and the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH)

4. At its 32nd meeting, the Animals Committee considered the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the CITES Secretariat and WOH and the draft joint work programme included in Annex 3A and 3B to document [PC26 Doc. 10 / AC32 Doc. 10](#). The Animals Committee requested the Secretariat to incorporate the comments made during the meeting in its review of the draft MoU and joint work programme for consideration by the Standing Committee. The Secretariat revised the draft MoU and joint work programme and submitted document [SC77 Doc. 17.2](#) (with the draft MoU and draft joint work programme with WOH in Annex 2A and 2B) for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting (SC77; Geneva, November 2023). The Standing Committee invited the Secretariat, taking into consideration the comments made on the floor, to finalize the draft MoU and draft joint work programme with WOH (see summary record [SC77 SR](#)). The MoU was finalized after SC77 and signed by the CITES Secretariat and WOH on 1 March 2024, in the margins of the 6th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6). A copy of the signed MoU is available on the [CITES website](#).
5. WOH released the [Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade](#) in May 2024. The guidelines enable key actors in wildlife trade to identify and select pragmatic, flexible, practical, adaptable and relevant risk-management strategies based on identified disease risks and available capacity, and to ensure their effective and sustainable implementation.

Convention on Biological Diversity: 26th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice – Biodiversity and health

6. The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP15, Montreal, 2022) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) addressed matters relating to the One Health approach in CBD decision [15/29](#). In response to the request made by CBD CoP15 in this decision, the Secretariat of the CBD prepared a revised draft global action plan on biodiversity and health. The 26th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-26) considered the draft global action plan and adopted a draft recommendation including a draft decision for consideration by the CBD CoP at its 16th meeting scheduled to take place in October 2024 (see document [CBD/SBSTTA/26/L.8](#)). The draft global action plan includes voluntary actions for mainstreaming biodiversity and health interlinkages into the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. With regard to Targets 4, 5 and 9, the following voluntary action could be relevant for discussions in CITES processes: improve, in accordance with other international agreements and within national capabilities the regulation, management and use of and trade in wild species, such that it is sustainable and safe for human and wildlife health.

Implementation of Decision 19.15 paragraph c) – Collaboration with the Convention on Migratory Species

7. The Secretariat continued to collaborate with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) as directed in paragraph c) of Decision 19.15. The Secretariat attended the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species that took place from 12 to 17 February 2024 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan (CMS CoP14). A revised resolution on *Wildlife health and migratory species* [[Resolution 12.6 \(Rev. COP14\)](#)] was adopted. The CMS Resolution includes the following in the preambular text:

Acknowledging the impacts that some wildlife trade can have on biodiversity, especially on threatened or endangered species, and on food security, and *further acknowledging* the risk posed by wildlife trade, pet trade and other regional or international movements of animals and animal products in spreading pathogens and causing emergence of infectious diseases in wildlife, domestic animals and/or humans,

while, at the same time, welcoming the collaborative efforts of CITES and WOAHP to address risks from zoonotic pathogens.

8. [Decisions](#) on *Wildlife disease* adopted by CMS CoP14 encourage Parties and the CMS Secretariat to engage with the World Health Organization (WHO) in the ongoing development of a new instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. CMS Parties encourage the incorporation of the key elements¹ in the CMS resolution on *Wildlife health and migratory species* in the new instrument. The CMS Parties furthermore requested the CMS Secretariat to promote cooperation with the Quadripartite, One Health High-Level Expert Panel and CITES.
9. CMS Parties also adopted a resolution on *Avian influenza* that reflects on the risk associated with wild bird trade that could increase the likelihood of viral transmission by creating extensive interfaces between domestic and wild birds, with additional risks for onward spread of infection to people.

Implementation of Decision 19.18 – United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

10. Pursuant to Decision 19.18, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provided the Secretariat with an update on its One Health Quadripartite activities. The report received from UNEP is contained in Annex 1 to the present document and includes UNEP's engagements as an observer in the intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) process for the drafting of the text for the pandemic agreement. In particular, it has sought to incorporate and mainstream One Health as an approach that can address the risk of pathogen spillover of zoonotic disease transmission broadly. Moreover, the Quadripartite has championed the One Health approach, including at the High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response at UNGA. This High-Level Meeting led to a declaration on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, which constitutes the first time One Health is referenced in a UNGA declaration. Further, the Quadripartite is working with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on the revision of the Biodiversity and Health Action Plan, which was discussed at the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) in May 2024 and will be discussed at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CBD in October 2024.

Intersessional working group

11. At its 32nd meeting, the Animals Committee furthermore established an intersessional working group on zoonotic diseases with the mandate to review the information provided by the Parties, organizations and the United Nations Environment Programme and contained in Annex 2 to document [PC26 Doc. 10 / AC32 Doc. 10](#) and to prepare recommendations for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting on:
 - a) proposed effective and practical solutions for reducing pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains; and
 - b) opportunities for practical collaboration under the direction of existing Resolutions, Decisions and agreements.
12. The membership of the intersessional working group was agreed as follows:

Co-Chairs:	alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Diesmos) and nomenclature specialist (Mr. van Dijk);
Members:	alternate representative for Africa (Mr. Diouck) and alternate representative for North America (Mr. Leuteritz);
Parties:	Argentina, Australia, Benin, Canada, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

¹ *Key elements in the resolution: Urges the Secretariat and further urges CMS focal points and ministries responsible for wildlife to engage with their representatives to WHO, to ensure that mechanisms to prevent pathogen emergence at source and One Health approaches, wildlife issues and pandemic prevention at source are reflected in the WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response under negotiation.*

IGOs and NGOs: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, World Organisation for Animal Health, International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Animal Welfare Institute, Association of Western Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Born Free Foundation, Center for Biological Diversity, Dallas Safari Club, Defenders of Wildlife, European Animal Research Association, European Pet Organisation, German Society of Herpetology, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, International Fur Federation, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, National Association for Biomedical Research, Organization of Professional Aviculturists, Pet Advocacy Network, Pro Wildlife, SUCO-SA, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, Zoological Society of London

13. The working group worked through electronic means to implement the mandate. The co-chairs invited the members of the working group on 12 March 2024 to provide inputs based on the mandate as contained in paragraph 10, with a deadline of 10 April 2024. Two Parties responded (Canada and the United States of America), the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Organization on Animal Health and 10 other observer organizations². The consolidated responses received arranged per question posed to the working group are contained in Annex 2 to the present document.

Draft proposals by the working group for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting

14. With regards to proposed effective and practical solutions for reducing pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains, the intersessional working group proposed the following:
 - a) The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Animals Committee, is requested to update the webpage on the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international trade* and create a Communication Portal where Parties could rapidly access up to date information on pathogens and wildlife trade.
 - b) Taking into consideration that not all Parties have detailed and robust Standard Operating Procedures (SoP) for wildlife health surveillance, the Animals Committee may consider developing guidelines based on existing material from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNEP, World Health Organization (WHO) and WOAHA and on the international trade from World Customs Organization (WCO) and World Trade Organization (WTO) for Parties to use as a model in developing or improving their SoP for wildlife health surveillance.
 - c) Gather tangible good practices for one or two high-risk taxonomic groups included in the CITES Appendices, and make this information available to the Parties. Possible taxonomic groups of focus could include old World monkeys (Cercopithecidae) or other non-human primates; bats (Pteropodidae); or certain rodent groups, in CITES trade.
 - d) Through the CITES-WOAH partnership, apply CITES' expertise on wildlife trade in the Quadripartite's work and enhance Parties' capacity for steps recommended by WOAHA and the Quadripartite (including compliance with WOAHA international standards, collaboration with national veterinary services, development of SoPs for wildlife surveillance, connect with existing Quadripartite information and tools to mitigate zoonotic risks.
 - e) Continue to work on improving standards and protocols for transport of live animals and veterinary samples.
15. The following opportunities for practical collaboration under the direction of existing Resolutions, Decisions and agreements were proposed by the intersessional working group:
 - a) encourage Parties to take appropriate measures to ensure their national laws implement the standards and best practices of WOAHA and to implement a functional surveillance network to monitor the pathogen spillover risks

² Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Born Free Foundation, International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, International Fur Federation, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, German Society of Herpetology, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, Zoological Society of London

- b) consider undertaking a review of the existing approach by Parties relating to the transport of live animals to identify means to enhance/improve the process, including the review of the Scientific Authority of a CITES permit application, the issuing of the CITES permit and the transport of live specimens to ensure collaboration at each step of the process for a rapid and safe transport of the specimen;
 - c) invite Parties to collaborate with their national Veterinary Services to ensure national implementation of International Standards and Guidelines relevant to wildlife trade risk management, and to advocate through their Veterinary Services for strengthening of existing International Standards and tools;
 - d) promote the coordination of relevant competent authorities involved in the process of authorisation, certification, and control of international trade of live animals and products of animals (importation, transit, and exportation) to ensure the proper implementation of all necessary measures in respect of the different existing relevant international agreements and mechanisms.
 - e) The CITES Secretariat, as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW), could advise on how the work being conducted by the Animals Committee can contribute to this CPW joint initiative focused on embedding the sustainable use and management of wildlife in the One Health agenda, including assisting countries in piloting the WOA *Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade*.
16. The Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) [workplan for 2023-25](#) contains a joint initiative focused on embedding the sustainable use and management of wildlife in the One Health agenda, including assisting countries in piloting the aforementioned WOA *Guidelines*.

Recommendations

17. The Animals Committee is invited to:

- a) note:
 - i) the Memorandum of Understanding between the CITES Secretariat and WOA signed on 1 March 2024 and the *Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade* released by WOA in May 2024;
 - ii) the update relating to the implementation of paragraph c) of Decision 19.15 on collaboration with the Convention on Migratory Species; and
 - iii) the update provided by the United Nations Environment Programme on relevant work carried out under the Quadripartite Collaboration for One Health or other relevant initiatives;
- b) share the proposed effective and practical solutions for reducing pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains and opportunities for practical collaboration as contained in paragraphs 14 and 15 with the Standing Committee through its intersessional working group; and
- c) agree that Decision 19.16 has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION 19.18 – UPDATE PROVIDED BY THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

On Quadripartite

As Chair of the Quadripartite collaboration on One Health between March 2023-March 2024, UNEP has continued to raise the environmental dimension of One Health, through its Quadripartite activities.

This includes engaging as an observer in the intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) process for the drafting of the text for the pandemic agreement, which will be submitted to the 77th session of the World Health Assembly for adoption by Member States. In particular, it has sought to incorporate and mainstream One Health as an approach that can address the risk of pathogen spillover of zoonotic disease transmission broadly. Moreover, the Quadripartite has championed the One Health approach, including at the High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response at UNGA. This High-Level Meeting led to a declaration on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, which constitutes the first time One Health is referenced in a UNGA declaration. Further, the Quadripartite is working with the CBD Secretariat on the revision of the Biodiversity and Health Action Plan, which will be discussed at SBSTTA in May and is anticipated to be adopted at COP 16.

The One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP), that independently advises the Quadripartite organisations, completed its first term in December 2023. During its first term, OHHLEP produced several deliverables that touch on the transmission of zoonotic diseases, including the recent publication [on the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1](#), and the development of One Health case studies, from which a first round of five cases were selected to be published in a peer reviewed journal in 2024. The selection of the members of the second term of OHHLEP has been completed. The panel will continue to provide support in the roll out of the JPA and provide the Quadripartite with policy relevant scientific assessments on the emergence and spread of health risks arising at the human-animal-ecosystem interface.

The Quadripartite has moreover produced and launched two resources for country-level work, with relevance for the implementation of the One Health approach, including on zoonotic disease transmission. At the COP 28, the Quadripartite launched the [Implementation Guide](#) for the OH Joint Plan of Action (JPA). The Joint Plan of Action and its Implementation Guide are further complemented by a [Guidance Note for UN Resident Coordinators to mainstream the OH approach into UNSDCF](#)s. The Quadripartite has also held regional One Health workshops to support the implementation of the Joint Plan of Action in countries.

The second Quadripartite Executive Annual Meeting (QEAM2) was held in Nairobi, alongside the United Nations Environment Assembly, from 29th of February to the 6th of March 2024. This presented an opportunity to build greater synergies and understanding for multilateral environmental decision-making processes within the Quadripartite. The meeting discussed joint strategic planning and actions to mainstream and operationalise the One Health approach at all levels. This included in particular how the Quadripartite can:

- Promote and support the implementation of the [One Health Joint Plan of Action](#) at country level, including with reference to zoonotic disease transmission
- Generate and share science and evidence for the implementation of the One Health approach, including around zoonotic disease transmission
- Maintain the political engagement and advocacy for One Health, including on the approach to zoonotic disease transmission

On N4H:

As the Secretariat for the Nature4Health (N4H) initiative, UNEP has continued to focus on reducing the risks of pandemics and other health risks through the strengthening of the environmental dimension of One Health. With the inception phase of N4H having come to a close, the programming of the initiative has moved into the scoping phase. All of the 6 N4H Phase I partners (Zambia, Vietnam, Ghana, Ecuador, Mongolia, Rwanda) have submitted their scoping documents and 5 of 6 have kicked off their scoping projects through scoping

workshops in order to support the implementation at the country-level through a systemic approach. The scoping workshops conducted aim to have in-depth discussions with stakeholders on the ground and analyse the situations at hand, prioritise key activities and identify potential solutions pathways for the main issues of national concern.

RESPONSES RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE INTERSESSIONAL
WORKING GROUP ON THE ROLE OF CITES IN REDUCING RISK OF FUTURE ZOOLOGIC DISEASE
EMERGENCE ASSOCIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE

a) Practical actions that the Animals Committee could consider to reduce pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains

Canada

- The AC could consider working with the Secretariat to update the webpage on the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international trade* and create a Communication Portal where Parties could rapidly access information on pathogens. Currently, the webpage includes information on CITES working groups, hyperlinks to reports and scientific papers and on OneHealth Action Plan. The AC should collaborate with the Secretariat and Parties in establishing a process for keeping this website up to date with the most pertinent information. In addition, the Communication Portal could be designed to be interactive and contain useful and current information on pathogens and wildlife trade.
- Not all Parties have detailed and robust Standard Operating Procedures (SoP) for wildlife health surveillance. The AC could consider developing guidelines based on existing material from FAO, UNEP, WHO, and WOAHA and on the international trade (WCO and WTO) for Parties to use as a model in developing or improving their SoP for Wildlife Health Surveillance.

United States of America

The Animals Committee could make progress by considering strategies that both (a) answer Parties' more immediate need for practical, tangible, on-the-ground recommendations, such as good practices related to rearing, handling, processing, and transport of live animals considered high-risk, and (b) enhance CITES' longer-term and higher-level collaborations that will strengthen Parties' capacity to follow WOAHA International Standards, work with national veterinary services, and take other steps to mitigate infectious disease transmission and zoonotic spillover risks. We envision that the Animals Committee could:

- 1. Gather tangible good practices for one or two high-risk taxonomic groups and make this information available:** To provide Parties with some practical recommendations in the more immediate term, it will be helpful to focus – as a starting point – on one or two CITES-listed taxonomic groups with *known* zoonotic potential (e.g., as summarized in [SC77 Inf. Doc. 12](#) provided by the UK). We appreciate related comments from TRAFFIC, AZA, and others about identifying specific taxa. Possible taxonomic groups of focus could include Old World monkeys (Cercopithecidae, as highlighted in the JNCC report) or non-human primates; bats (Pteropodidae); or certain rodent groups, in CITES trade. The Animals Committee could work with relevant experts/organizations to compile existing “good practices” for working with the chosen taxonomic groups along the supply chain (e.g., for rearing, care, and transport, with information on sanitation, personal protective equipment, housing conditions, etc.). The Animals Committee could then convene Parties and relevant experts through a workshop to discuss the taxa-specific good practices, listen to the Parties' challenges and needs related to these, and (as per the CITES-WOAH MOU) share the higher-level *Guidelines for Reducing the Risk of Disease Spillover Events at Markets Selling Wildlife and along the Wildlife Supply Chain*. While scientific evidence will continue to grow, this risk-focused step will help reduce vulnerabilities to zoonoses now, based on current knowledge, and may deepen CITES Parties' engagement with this issue. It would also provide a framework through which further data on zoonotic diseases can be fed as the evidence base expands over time.
- 2. Use the CITES-WOAH partnership to:**
 - **Apply CITES' expertise on wildlife trade in the Quadripartite's work:** CITES Authorities hold unique knowledge on international wildlife trade that is sometimes missing from global discussions on zoonotic spillover risk mitigation, pandemic prevention, and One Health operationalization. The activities identified in the [CITES-WOAH joint programme of work](#) could help to fill this gap, and we

consider here how to further utilize this partnership. The Quadripartite (WHO/FAO/WOAH/UNEP) is actively institutionalizing One Health and building frameworks to prevent and prepare for pandemics and zoonotic threats. CITES can position itself to inform and supplement these ongoing efforts with its expertise, instead of duplicating efforts. One Health implementation will better account for zoonotic risks in wildlife trade if CITES trade data can inform the efforts of the Quadripartite, via WOAH. Per the existing CITES-WOAH programme of work, CITES will be helping to: update WOAH standards/guidelines, exchange information on wildlife (host) species and specimens of mutual interest, become involved in relevant activities of the One Health Joint Plan of Action (2022-2026) of the Quadripartite, co-lead trainings with WOAH, and other activities. We recommend, additionally: (a) data-sharing from CITES to WOAH on wildlife trade volumes (by country/region/species/years) and the complexity and patterns of international wildlife supply chains; and (b) consideration of a mechanism through which WOAH could engage CITES and its international wildlife trade expertise to inform the Quadripartite's next One Health joint plan of action for beyond 2026 and to (as appropriate) inform WOAH's selection of additional WOAH-Notifiable Diseases in the future. Further: Depending on the needs of WOAH and the Quadripartite for such data and to ensure a more holistic understanding of wildlife trade trends, Parties might also be encouraged to monitor, collect, and share species-specific data on wildlife trade with regard to all wildlife, as appropriate, in accordance with national laws.

- **Enhance Parties' capacity for steps recommended by WOAH and the Quadripartite:** As suggested by WOAH, Canada, and others, Parties could benefit from receiving information and support that will help them:
 - Comply with WOAH international standards;
 - Collaborate with national veterinary services;
 - Develop Standard Operating Procedures for wildlife surveillance plans, and add surveillance data on diseases of concern to the World Animal Health Information System-Wild (WAHIS-Wild);
 - Connect with existing Quadripartite information and tools to mitigate zoonotic risk, including the [Tripartite Zoonoses Guide](#) and related documents that help countries: identify and prioritize zoonotic threats ([Joint Risk Assessment Operational Tool \(JRA OT\)](#)), coordinate on One Health to manage zoonotic diseases ([Multisectoral Coordination Mechanisms Operational Tool](#)), and establish or improve surveillance/information-sharing on zoonoses ([Surveillance and Information Sharing Operational Tool](#)).
 - Wildlife surveillance and veterinary capacity are often highlighted as insufficient in the Joint External Evaluations conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO). CITES could assist with sharing information with Parties and working to understand Parties' challenges and successes in implementing these recommendations.
3. **Provide a way for CITES Parties to communicate (such as through the Communications Portal suggested by Canada) and to share information on positive pathogen tests during pre-export and post-import quarantine:** We are supportive of this idea and eager to further discuss what form this might take. We also suggest that Parties use this as a way to share pathogen screening information on specimens in CITES trade.
4. **Continue to work on improving transport of live animals:** Through the existing MOU between CITES and the International Air Transport Association (IATA), it would be helpful for CITES to identify a few selected taxa around which IATA could consider updating the *IATA Live Animal Regulations*, specifically to take wildlife disease and zoonotic disease risk into account. This would be helpful to CITES, because CITES Parties are required to follow these regulations (and the CITES non-air transport guidelines) to comply with proper transport under CITES.

International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

- The CIC agreed with comments by WOAH that the Animal Committee should closely collaborate with other international organizations that already have a mandate to actively work on issues relating to reducing pathogen spillover.

- The CIC supports and encourages strong collaboration between CITES and Quadripartite on the matter and agrees with the comment submitted by Canada in advising the AC to develop guidelines based on existing material from FAO, UNEP, WHO and WOAHA directed to Parties to use for improving their National Health Surveillance processes.

World Organization for Animal Health

For reducing pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains, the Animal Committee could consider the existing international organisations which are mandated to work on reducing pathogen spillover risk, in line with a One Health approach, (in particular the Quadripartite [FAO, UNEP, WHO, and WOAHA]) and on the international trade (e.g. WCO and WTO) and should ensure coordination to make best use of the existing mechanisms and tools developed by these organisations, recognising the opportunities to strengthen existing tools in the areas of wildlife trade risk management (for example for WOAHA, the Guidelines for addressing disease risks in wildlife trade and the upcoming e-learning modules for surveillance and wildlife trade that should be available for 2025).

Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)

- We support the comments made by the Wildlife Conservation Society (and other working group members) that prevention at the source is critical, and implementing (and promoting) a One Health approach will strengthen our ability to reduce the risk of future pandemics.
- Multiple disciplines must work together to ensure the health of environments, humans, and non-human animals by recognizing the interconnection between them, and ensuring we utilize existing tools and guidance on wildlife trade risk management, including those of the Quadripartite.
- The Animals Committee could also collaborate with entities that are working to identify CITES-listed species which are likely to pose a higher risk of pathogen spillover.
- We agree with TRAFFIC's comments that the Animals Committee could provide expertise on the work of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and UNEP-WCMC (SC77 InfDoc34).
- We also urge the Animals Committee to collaborate with organizations that track animal data, such as Species360. The Zoological Information Management System (ZIMS) collects and curates data on more than 22,000 species and could be instrumental in identifying high-risk taxa.

Born Free Foundation

- We urge the Committee to promote the adoption of a holistic One Health approach to international and domestic trade in CITES-listed species, and associated activities including wildlife collection, breeding, farming, handling, transport, markets and sale, recognising the intimate relationship between human health and well-being, animal health and welfare, and the health of the wider environment.
- We also urge the Committee to engage in and encourage meaningful collaboration between the authorities responsible for human, animal and environmental health and well-being within and between State Parties.
- The Committee should promote the need for a highly precautionary approach to activities along the wildlife trade chain where the risk of zoonotic pathogen emergence and spillover is considered to be significant or uncertain.
- The Committee should incorporate demand reduction considerations into this work, and (as provided in the Joint Programme of Work with WOAHA) advocate for increased support for the development of sustainable alternative economic opportunities for local communities who currently rely on high-risk activities.
- The advisory role of CITES on international wildlife trade issues to the Quadripartite organisations involved in the development of the WHO-led Pandemics Agreement should be strengthened. In addition, CITES authorities should be encouraged to familiarise themselves with and act upon relevant guidance emerging from the Quadripartite and its member organisations.

TRAFFIC

The Animals Committee could consider how to further build upon the work done by JNCC and UNEP-WCMC, as highlighted by the UK as [SC77 InfDoc34](#), to focus attention on particular CITES-listed taxonomic groups in international trade associated with WHO R&D Blueprint Priority Diseases, to ensure that any additional resources are focused on those traded CITES taxa which are likely to pose higher risk of pathogen spillover. Expertise from Animals Committee members (whether in specific higher risk taxonomic groups, wildlife supply chain dynamics, or particular human behaviours and practices which increase risks of pathogen spillover at human-animal interfaces in wildlife supply chains) will be essential to continue building the evidence base for addressing known hazards as well as risks of zoonotic disease emergence associated with CITES species in international trade. AC expertise may also be applied to monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks to assess the relative practicality and success/failure of risk reduction interventions based on past, current and future experience, which will in turn support adaptive management of identified risks.

IWMC-World Conservation Trust

IWMC—World Conservation Trust recommends to delegate matters concerning pathogen spillover risk to organisations most adept at addressing such concerns, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) or the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH). It is notable that the Terms of Reference of the CITES Animals Committee, as outlined in Resolution Conf. 18.2, do not explicitly address human health considerations. Nevertheless, the Animals Committee could engage in collaboration with specialised entities by furnishing trade data pertaining to species with significant zoonotic potential on a recurring basis.

World Conservation Society (WCS)

Recent papers and agenda items discussed by the [Sessional Committee of the Scientific Council \(SCSC\)](#) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) are also of relevance to the work of the Animals Committee. The SCSC discussed issues involving the use of wild terrestrial, avian, and aquatic species for human consumption (wild meat). We recommend that the CITES Animals Committee coordinate with the CMS SCSC on these issues, and that Parties' focal points on CMS and CITES coordinate internally (for those CITES Parties that are also CMS Parties). CITES deals with international trade in listed species, and CMS deals with domestic use of listed species (and other threats), as well as habitat issues; a One Health approach would benefit from increased coordination at the national level—on environmental, conservation, veterinary, animal health, and human health issues.

b) Practical actions the Animals Committee could recommend to Parties and other appropriate stakeholders, that would reduce pathogen spillover risks;

Canada

The AC could encourage Parties to take appropriate measures to ensure their national laws implement the standards and best practices of WOAH and to implement a functional surveillance network to monitor the pathogen spillover risks. This could be facilitated by developing and implementing an effective SoP. The AC could also strongly encourage Parties to use existing databases and platforms such a Wildlife Health Intelligence Platform (WHIP) designed for wildlife health surveillance and to collaborate with other levels of government and NGOs and other stakeholders to monitor wildlife health and to share information with various implicated agents and partners.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- FAO also recommends CoP to consider adopting the Progressive Management Pathway for Terrestrial Animal Biosecurity (PMP-TAB)³, a framework developed by FAO for stepwise improvements in biosecurity along animal value chains. This approach identifies risks and develops evidence-based intervention measures to reduce the impact of diseases to both animals and humans and should be promoted by the Animals Committee based on its relevance to wildlife value chains and associated spillover risks. Related to this, FAO plans to pilot and implement PMP-TAB in countries across Africa and Asia and South America focusing on improvements to the wild meat value chain, and with the

³ <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en?details=cc5771en>

Wildlife Health Intelligence Network (WHIN) who are working towards global improvements of wildlife health surveillance systems.

- FAO recommends the analysis and management of risks at the animal-wildlife interface including the uptake of biosecurity to effectively detect and mitigate the risk and spread of emerging zoonoses, such as HPAI, through interventions such as joint capacity building and training. In this regard, FAO's Virtual Learning Centers⁴ could be leveraged to develop and cascade such trainings powered by Communities of Practice to facilitate exchange of knowledge and good practices on wildlife health and pandemic prevention.
- It's important that CoPs leverage domestic and international financing instruments such as the Pandemic Fund to strengthen their animal health system and capacity for prevention, early detection and mitigation of the risk of zoonotic diseases at the animal source – through strengthening risk-based interface surveillance, laboratory diagnostics (genomic characterization) as well as adoption of risk reduction measures along the wildlife supply chain.
- As an important instrument of the OH JPA pathway of data and knowledge delivery, the Quadripartite has put forth a proposed architecture for a One Health Intelligence System (OHIS)⁵. The Quadripartite is currently seeking political engagement and financing to pilot OHIS at global level and in pilot countries. A modular development based on case studies is proposed. Engagement of CITES to identify case studies relevant for epidemic intelligence in wildlife would be invaluable.
- FAO is developing a Strategic Framework for Early Warning of Animal Health Threats to support countries in strengthening their risk monitoring, detection and preparedness against animal health threats. CITES collaboration and participation in the revision of the framework⁶ would be instrumental to ensuring that the role of wildlife is properly accounted for and countries get relevant guidance.
- Early detection of wildlife diseases is critical for effective prevention and mitigation of transmission among affected wildlife species as well as spillover to other species. As such, countries need to strengthen their wildlife diagnostic capacities to undertake accurate diagnosis locally and safely ship samples to reference laboratories for confirmation. However, to obtain CITES related permission for shipping samples abroad usually takes quite a long time, subsequently resulting and facilitating further spread of the disease under investigation. To address this, a special arrangement needs to be considered for fast-tracking shipment of diagnostic specimens of wildlife origin. FAO recommends a session to discuss further the 'need for fast-track procedure for diagnostic specimens of wildlife origin'.

International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

- The Animal Committee could recommend the Parties and other appropriate stakeholders to closely collaborate with their National Veterinary Services and encourage that the international guidelines be successfully implemented on the national level.
- In this regard, Parties and other appropriate stakeholders could also be encouraged to continuously review and identify gaps in the national veterinary checking process that should be reviewed and refined in turn informing the CITES convention and strengthening the existing international mechanisms.
- The Parties could further encourage national wildlife health monitoring efforts on the ground with the involvement of Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs), NGOs and other stakeholders and share the information with relevant competent authorities

World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH)

- For reducing pathogen spillover risk and the risk of international spread of diseases and pathogenic agents, the Animals Committee could recommend to Parties and other stakeholders to ensure the national implementation of the WOAH international Standards and Guidelines (for Animal health,

³ <https://virtual-learning-center.fao.org/>

⁵ <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en?details=cc4480en>

⁶ <https://www.fao.org/animal-health/news-events/news/detail/call-for-members-expert-advisory-group-to-support-the-development-of-the-strategic-framework-for-early-warning-of-animal-health-threats/en>

welfare, and veterinary public health) and their application for the surveillance at the national level of the wildlife diseases (e.g. notification of wildlife health events to national veterinary authorities and WOAAH to ease the disease risk analysis process) and at the international level in the framework of the international trade of live wild animals and wild animal products (Special attention should be paid to the importance of the systematic implementation of Sections 2 and 5 of the *Terrestrial animal health code* and the *Aquatic animal health code* to identify and define the sanitary measures necessary to manage such risks, as well as for their effective and fair implementation).

- In this framework, the Animal Committee could invite Parties to collaborate with their national Veterinary Services to ensure national implementation of International Standards and Guidelines relevant to wildlife trade risk management, and to advocate through their Veterinary Services for strengthening of existing International Standards and tools.
- The Animals Committee could also recommend to Parties and stakeholders to ensure coordination with and across national representatives of the different international organisations working on the One health concept and international trade. For example, regarding WOAAH, the Animals Committee could suggest to Parties and stakeholders to take an active participation in the WOAAH Standards Setting process, through the National WOAAH Delegate, to ensure that WOAAH International Standards are kept up to date and respond to CITES Parties' needs, including those to reduce the risk of zoonotic pathogen spill-over and transmission.
- In the same way, the Animal Committee could recommend to Parties to promote the coordination of relevant competent authorities involved in the process of authorisation, certification, and control of international trade of live animals and products of animals (importation, transit, and exportation) to ensure the proper implementation of all necessary measures in respect of the different existing relevant international agreements and mechanisms (e.g. CITES, WTO, WCO, WOAAH).

Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA):

- We strongly encourage the Animals Committee to make Parties fully aware of best practices to reduce the risk of pathogen spillovers, including the WOAAH International Standards and Guidelines, and provide more practical examples of holistic, trans-sectoral approaches to wildlife trade risk management that could be shared between Parties. Further, national implementation of these standards could be encouraged.
- We urge the Animals Committee to encourage Parties to pursue closure of commercial live animal markets, so long as such closures do not impede upon the needs and rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities that are dependent upon wildlife consumption for their food security or cultural expression.
- We suggest that the Animals Committee apprise Parties of the elements of the Memorandum of Understanding between CITES and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) that will clarify and promote best practices for safe and secure transport of wildlife; implementation of the standards and procedures as outlined in the IATA Live Animals Regulations and Perishable Cargo Regulations; and, take into consideration the risk of pathogen emergence and zoonotic disease transmission when implementing Resolution Conf 9.7 (Rev CoP15) on Transit and transshipment, Resolution Conf 11.3 (Rev CoP18) on Compliance and enforcement, Resolution Conf 10.21 (Rev CoP16) on Transport of live specimens and other Resolutions as appropriate

Born Free Foundation (BFF)

- The Committee should urge Parties and other stakeholders to adopt a highly precautionary approach to international and domestic trade in CITES specimens, particularly live animals, where there is perceived to be a risk of zoonotic pathogen emergence, or where the risk is uncertain.
- Parties should be urged to adopt a focus on 'primary prevention' to reduce the likelihood of emergence of potentially zoonotic pathogens, by proactively identifying and tackling risk factors, including those associated with international and domestic trade in CITES-listed species, including collection from the wild, breeding, farming, handling, transport, markets and sale.
- CITES authorities of Parties exporting and importing wild animals, especially live animals, should be advised to shorten and simplify supply chains, improve welfare and hygiene standards across the

whole supply chain, and ensure that regular disease screenings are conducted, particularly of those taxa that are believed to present the highest risk for potentially zoonotic pathogen emergence.

- CITES authorities should be encouraged to ensure that the trade in live CITES-listed species is conducted in full compliance with the requirements in Articles III, IV, V and VII that “.. *any living specimen will be so transported and cared for as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment.*”, Resolution 10.21 (Rev. CoP19) on Transport of Live Specimens, the Revised CITES Guidelines for the Non-Air Transport of Live Wild Animals and Plants published in 2022, and the IATA LARs in relation to air transport.
- Governments and international institutions can only achieve equity for the people most at risk – and by doing so protect us all from future pandemics – by supporting those communities in transitioning away from high-risk activities. CITES authorities should be encouraged to promote the need for such support at a national level.
- Pandemics are One Health challenges that require collaboration between institutions and experts specialised in human health and wellbeing, animal health and welfare, wildlife conservation and environmental health. Pathways to prevent, prepare and respond to pandemics should not be the sole responsibility and burden of human health institutions. CITES authorities should be encouraged to liaise closely with their colleagues in other relevant disciplines (particularly those responsible for human and animal health) to ensure consistency in approaches to the risks associated with international and domestic wildlife trade.

IWMC – World Conservation Trust

IWMC—World Conservation Trust proposes the identification of endemic species or those traversing national borders with notable zoonotic potential, advocating for the meticulous collection of trade data to be shared with the CITES Secretariat, the WHO, the WOAHA as well as the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). National conservation strategies, in conjunction with the active involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), should prioritise these species. This entails comprehensive monitoring of their conservation status, local utilisation, and international trade, aiming to mitigate the potential transmission of zoonotic diseases and minimise pathogen spill-over risks to the fullest extent feasible.

TRAFFIC

While CITES processes focus on international trade, many of the potential health risk scenarios could be more effectively addressed in the country of origin, i.e., upstream in the supply chain, prior to export. Leadership and advocacy by the Animals Committee to work with individual Parties, whether by request or necessity, would no doubt be valuable in terms of overall risk reduction effectiveness. With respect to reduction of pathogen spillover risks associated with legal trade in CITES-listed species, there is an important link between CITES compliance and enforcement with the various sanitary/phytosanitary requirements that support biosecurity at points of export and import. In many cases the level of veterinary health screening required prior to export, for example as we understand from consultations regarding trade in live specimens of non-human primates for biomedical research, is dictated by protocols imposed by the importing country. Thus the bilateral collaboration between CITES Parties, including between various departments at national level, is essential to make sure that these veterinary health requirements for live specimens are being met prior to export, as well as the necessary quarantine and surveillance at point of import. The AC’s support to highlight to Parties the ongoing importance of multi-sectoral collaboration at national and international levels, bringing wildlife trade management together with veterinary and public health agencies in support of the One Health approach, would bolster an integrated approach to managing risks posed to safe, sustainable and legal trade. The Animals Committee could also continue to work proactively with Parties to ensure further examples of good practice in such holistic approaches to wildlife trade risk management continue to be shared between Parties and to augment the dedicated [online resource](#) already set up by the Secretariat.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

In December 2022 the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF), with 4 Goals and 23 Targets. [Target 5 of the GBF](#) specifically states:

Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimizing impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and *reducing the risk of pathogen spillover*, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities (emphasis added).

Therefore, all 196 CBD Parties (183 of the 184 CITES Parties) are committed to taking actions involving the use and trade of wild species that will reduce the risk of pathogen spillover (in addition to preventing overexploitation and illegal use). An integrated approach to delivery of Target 5 of the GBF should involve CITES implementation, globally and at the national level, and must also involve all relevant government ministries. CBD Parties are required to finalize and submit their CBD National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and associated national targets. Parties are encouraged to ensure that their NBSAPs include targets and actions designed in such a way that any use, offtake, or trade of wild species, including CITES-listed species, is legal, safe, and sustainable; that includes uses of wildlife at the national level that may lead to international trade and engagement of CITES Management and Scientific Authorities. The required NBSAPs and national targets and actions must therefore include measures to reduce the risk of pathogen spillover (focused on human/wildlife/livestock interfaces, wildlife markets, etc.). We encourage States with commercial markets for live wildlife to pay particular attention to these issues, whether they are range States, exporting, re-exporting, or importing States. We recommend that Parties consider closure of large urban commercial markets for live and freshly slaughtered wildlife (that are not related to basic food security), particularly birds and mammals, as the most feasible and cost-effective option, and the safest for human and animal health.

Further in the CMS context, we call the attention of the Animals Committee to [Decisions](#) and Resolutions adopted by CMS Parties at the recent 14th meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties ([CoP14](#)), held February 2024 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Decisions 14.218-14.220 and [Resolution 12.6 \(Rev. CoP14\)](#) are particularly relevant. The operative paragraphs of this Resolution are particularly relevant here, and should be taken into consideration and implemented by those CITES Parties that are also CMS Parties; we recommend they are considered as well by non-CMS Parties.

CMS Resolution 12.6 (Rev. CoP14), operative paragraphs 1 and 2, are particularly relevant to the work and recommendations of the CITES Animals Committee:

Tackling drivers of health problems

- 1) *Urges* Parties to recognize the links between the drivers of population decline and disease emergence, and urgently enhance actions to address the drivers of migratory species population decline by, inter alia, reducing habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation; addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation; preventing pollution; preventing the spread of invasive non-native species; addressing high-risk agricultural and aquacultural practices, preventing over-exploitation, reducing the wildlife/livestock and wildlife/human interfaces;
- 2) *Urges* Parties and others to minimize the risk of infectious disease to wildlife and pathogen spillover by:
 - a) taking robust measures at livestock-wildlife interfaces, inter alia, those linked to agriculture and aquaculture and encroachment into wild areas, pastoralism, improving biosecurity, livestock vaccination if necessary and better planning and reassessment of intensive production where risks have been identified,
 - b) endeavouring to prevent pathogen contamination / spillover to and from wildlife from feral or otherwise released animals, from legally and illegally traded plants and animals (including commercial urban markets), and from invasive non-native species, recognizing, at all times, the value of preventative approaches, and
 - c) focusing efforts on reducing or otherwise managing those practices that are high risk for pathogen transfer and drivers of pathogen change;

We recommend that Parties collaborate at the national level (including between the CMS and CITES focal points/authorities, and all relevant ministries/departments). We recommend that the Animals Committee pay particular attention to the prevention of over-exploitation, reducing wildlife/livestock/human interfaces, and

prevention of pathogen spillovers from wildlife, with particular focus on commercial urban markets. We note that although CITES implementation deals with international trade, all such trade begins with domestic use (e.g. removal from the wild, farming/captive breeding, domestic markets, transportation) and practices and actions at the national level are critical to prevention of pathogen spillovers. We urge Parties to reduce, manage, and restrict those practices that pose a risk of pathogen spillovers.

Furthermore, international movements of live animals and some products (such as fresh meat) require veterinary import/export permits. These veterinary permits should address risks associated with zoonotic-origin pathogens. It is vital that Parties work to bridge the capacity and increase awareness across multiple agencies (CITES authorities, environment authorities, veterinary and animal health authorities, human health authorities, etc.).

We strongly encourage national governments to make their CITES Scientific and Management Authorities fully aware of all of the above, and the requirement and need to reduce any interfaces between people, their livestock, and live wildlife, and to take all necessary actions to reduce the risk of pathogen spillovers, when making decisions on import, export, or commercial markets in live wildlife, particularly involving birds and mammals.

c) Increased collaboration within existing CITES mechanisms.

Canada

For example, the transport of live animals could be done more rapidly. As such, the AC could consider undertaking a review of the existing approach, including the SA review of a CITES permit application, the issuing of the CITES permit and the transport of live specimens to ensure collaboration at each step of the process for a rapid and safe transport of the specimen.

International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

The CIC agrees with the recommendations provided by TRAFFIC and further notes that there should be closer collaboration and coordination with National Veterinary Services that are more specialized in detecting and dealing with emerging zoonotic diseases.

World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH)

The following suggestions could increase collaboration or effectiveness within CITES mechanisms with the global aim of reducing pathogen spillover risk in wildlife supply chains: (1) consider including health certificate with the CITES permit, and (2) to urgently facilitate and faster the movement of wildlife diagnostic samples in simplifying the current CITES mechanisms (CITES permit – reference to the current work of the CITES Working Group on rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and of musical instruments).

Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)

- The recent Memorandum of Understanding between CITES and WOAH provides an opportunity to work together to address pathogen spillover risks in wildlife trade and supply chains. This MoU could be used as a model for collaboration with other One Health Quadripartite members, particularly to provide expertise and guidance on the WHO Pandemic Agreement.
- Similarly, the MoU between CITES and IATA provides an opportunity for ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and communication regarding best practices for the transport of live animals and plants, including reducing the risks of pathogen emergence and zoonotic disease transmission

Born Free Foundation (BFF)

CITES authorities should make full use of existing mechanisms and agreements with other relevant organisations in order to ensure cross-disciplinary collaboration and cooperation at national, regional and international levels on the implementation and operationalisation of a One Health approach to preventing and responding to zoonotic pathogen emergence associated with wildlife trade. This should be incorporated into the ongoing work on cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements and other international organizations, and the implementation of the associated Decisions adopted at CoP19, including (but not limited to) collaborative work with CBD, WOAH, CMS and IPBES, all of which have important workstreams relating to zoonotic disease prevention and response.

The incorporation of a need for disease risk assessments to be conducted by the relevant authorities prior to issuing CITES permits for the international trade in live animals should be considered and encouraged.

Every effort should be made to facilitate the timely transfer of diagnostic samples from CITES-listed species to accredited laboratories, where CITES permits are required

IWMC – World Conservation Trust

IWMC—World Conservation Trust recommends prioritising collaboration with key focal points across various conventions and bodies, facilitating seamless information exchange. This should encompass expedited sharing of samples from specimens exhibiting heightened zoonotic risk potential. In instances where a CITES-listed species is flagged for its elevated zoonotic risk, it becomes paramount to ensure unequivocal identification of its origin and traceability along trade routes. To achieve this objective, national authorities must be equipped with comprehensive documentation, including health certificates enabling the Management Authority to issue inclusive CITES permits.

TRAFFIC

The finalization in March 2024 of the MoU between CITES and WOA, together with their joint programme of work, creates a new set of opportunities for the two Secretariats and CITES Parties and WOA Delegates to work together on addressing pathogen spillover risks associated with international trade in wildlife trade and associated supply chains. As mentioned in the response from WOA to this call for recommendations, WOA will finalize Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade together with e-learning modules for the same topic in 2025 which will further help national CITES Authorities and WOA focal points expand their multi-sectoral collaboration. Activating this enhanced CITES collaboration with WOA should support existing CITES mechanisms for collaboration with other One Health Quadripartite members FAO and UNEP, as well as working through the Quadripartite to further refine the draft WHO instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. Ongoing CITES collaboration mechanisms with other relevant MEAs are also important for the Animals Committee considerations, such as CMS (see CMS [Decisions 14.218-14.220](#) on Wildlife Health and CMS [Resolution 12.6 \(Rev. CoP14\)](#) on Wildlife Health and Migratory Species), and the CBD (particularly on the implementation of Target 5 of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) which focuses on ensuring that the ‘...use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimizing impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spillover...’). Additionally, with respect to Target 5 of the KMGBF, we note that the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) [workplan for 2023-25](#) contains a joint initiative focused on embedding the sustainable use and management of wildlife in the One Health agenda, including assisting countries in piloting the aforementioned WOA Guidelines. The CITES Secretariat, as a member of the CPW, could advise on how the work being conducted by the AC can contribute to this CPW joint initiative, and vice versa.

General comments:

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- Considering the importance of the One Health approach for effective prevention and mitigation of zoonoses spillover from wildlife to humans, FAO believes the engagement of stakeholders from the public health sector such as WHO and other similar actors would be important in the processes and deliberations of the Animals Committee's Intersessional Working Group on the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade*.
- FAO recommends that CITES Parties adopt the One Health Joint Plan of Action (OH JPA) developed by the Quadripartite organizations in 2022, specifically Action Tracks 2 and 6 of the OH JPA, to reduce the risk of emerging zoonoses and the drivers that underpin the emergence, spillover and transmission of zoonotic pathogens along wildlife supply chain.

Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)

Transformational change is needed to address this growing threat and will require a collaborative, One Health approach. As the global wildlife trade regulator with 183 member countries, CITES has a critical role to play.

Born Free Foundation (BFF)

- Tackling the root causes of pathogen spillover between animals and from animals to humans through the identification and mitigation of risks at source costs a fraction of responding to a pandemic once it has begun.
- CITES, as the international wildlife trade regulator, has a vital role to play in ensuring that international trade in listed species does not present a high risk of potentially zoonotic pathogen emergence and spillover, and in doing so can play an important part in the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework

IWMC – World Conservation Trust

IWMC—World Conservation Trust holds the perspective that addressing zoonotic diseases falls beyond the purview of CITES, as the Convention does not address matters related to human health. Also the Fundamental Principles outlined in Article II do not permit an interpretation that integrates human health into the criteria for listing decisions or into the operational framework of CITES.

German Society of Herpetology

Information specific to Amphibians provided – see submission.

Includes recommendations:

- No general import ban on live amphibian
- Registration of imported amphibians
- Mandatory quarantine for imported amphibians – specific recommendations made relating to quarantine
- Definition of a uniform test and therapy regime
- Definition of a certification system for examination facilities
- Reporting and central recording of positive diagnoses
- Establishment of an “amphibian diseases” task force
- Promote research on amphibian diseases
- Education and activation of private owners

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

It is vital that prevention at source (particularly of pathogen spillover from wildlife) of the next outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic of zoonotic origin be addressed at the national as well as the multilateral level. We believe that CITES and its implementation have a role to play in this prevention, although there is also a great deal that needs to be done that is outside the remit of CITES (nationally and internationally).

This is a matter of great urgency, and there are urgent actions that are critical for governments to take, to help prevent another devastating pandemic of zoonotic origin. Implementation of a true trans-sectoral One Health approach is vital in that regard, and we recommend that such an approach, including as relates to prevention of pathogen spillover, be incorporated into wildlife management and CITES implementation, for both export and import (particularly of live animals).

We see CITES implementation at the national level as part of such a trans-sectoral approach, which must include management and regulation of domestic wildlife use, habitat degradation and loss, wildlife captive breeding/farming and handling, markets for live wildlife, and multiple other factors, and by necessity must involve multiple agencies and national authorities.

The extensive scientific information and data now available are clear on what is needed to prevent the next pandemic of zoonotic origin, particularly in terms of commercial breeding, handling, and trade in live (and freshly slaughtered) wild birds and mammals. We know enough to act, and the precautionary principle necessitates action on a fast track.

We appreciate that many Parties have taken positive steps to address the risk of pathogen spillover from wildlife (farmed and from the wild), but many have not yet taken sufficient action. WHO, WOAHA, and UNEP have issued excellent guidance, and ongoing work of the [Quadripartite](#) provides important information particularly on the risk of pathogen spillovers.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

- WWF notes that the factors affecting novel zoonosis outbreaks are a complex matrix of
 - biodiversity-related factors, such as take of wild species, but also disturbance or fragmentation of natural habitats, especially in the context of land conversion, and
 - poor practice around the housing (in the case of farmed animals, whether domestic breeds or farming of species still found in the wild), as well handling and transport of live animals and their meat, whether of wild or domestic origin.

As such, we agree that many of the necessary measures are the responsibility of national or sub-national administrations, and some are outside the remit of CITES.

- However, we do agree that greater alignment of veterinary/ phytosanitary permitting procedures with those of CITES should be explored.
- We also support WOAHA's comments regarding the movement of biological samples, and note the discussions on this topic in a separate working group