

8.098 Implementation of the One Health approach, from global to local

WELCOMING the One Health definition given by the One Health High-Level Expert Panel;

WELCOMING the adoption by the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (WHO Pandemic Agreement), which will be the first legally binding international text to highlight the importance of, and set clear obligations for, preventing pandemics through the operationalisation of the One Health approach;

RECOGNISING the work of the Quadripartite, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Health Organization (WHO) and World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), that has driven cooperation, advancing and operationalising the One Health approach alongside its tools, including the One Health Joint Plan of Action (OH JPA) and Guide to Implementing the OH JPA;

NOTING that human-driven changes harm ecosystems, threaten biodiversity and geoheritage, and amplify the effects of both pathogen spillover and other human health issues;

CONCERNED that the implementation of the One Health approach largely overlooks the role of conservation biology in preventing zoonotic spillovers and protecting animal health;

COGNISANT that One Health interpretations often focus on infectious disease risk to humans and not broader issues with biodiversity relevance;

MINDFUL that a human-rights approach means communities' self-identified health needs must be prioritised and addressed in a way affirming rights, and that WHO states "The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being..." and that "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity";

WELCOMING the integration of subnational governments, local authorities, Indigenous Peoples and local communities as Members of IUCN, who can now participate in the Union's actions;

APPRECIATING the inclusion of One Health in the IUCN 20-year Strategic Vision and the statement in the IUCN draft Programme that "The ultimate outcome would be a long-term partnership between the conservation community and the public health sector";

RECOGNISING the opportunities that partnerships with the health sector have for conservation policy and practice, and to support IUCN in ensuring One Health interpretations do not overlook conservation biology or the full spectrum of human health actions with conservation co-benefits;

EMPHASISING government efforts to develop One Health strategic action plans and growing commitments to implement the One Health approach at all levels; and

UNDERSTANDING that nations have an obligation under international law to conduct environmental impact assessments, where applicable;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates:

1. ENCOURAGES IUCN to engage with intergovernmental bodies and multilaterals, such as the Quadripartite (FAO, UNEP, WHO, WOAH) and Family Planning 2030 (FP2030), on One Health, and to prioritise efforts in low- and middle-income countries;

2. URGES governments to employ scientific evidence and integrate One Health into law, recognising the interdependencies among humans, other living organisms, ecosystems and pathogenic landscapes;

3. RECOMMENDS to governments that they develop strategies for the One Health approach, including objectives and indicators, in line with the Quadripartite's work and tools, notably by

integrating legal indicators to assess the effectiveness of environmental and health rights, and by recognising all human, animal, ecosystem and plant health actions with positive conservation co-benefits and vice versa, in accordance with the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, as recognised by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 76/300 and articulated in the International Covenant on Environmental Rights;

4. RECOMMENDS to governments that they establish interministerial coordination processes for operationalising the One Health approach, ensuring that priorities and positions are aligned across regional and international processes;

5. ENCOURAGES health ministries, governmental health agencies, and other ministries and governmental agencies to mainstream:

a. health impacts in public policies, including to ensure traditional health knowledge is reflected;

b. biodiversity in national health plans and human and animal health services; and

c. human health services, and rights to them, in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and National Adaptation Plans;

6. RECOMMENDS that subnational governments develop their own One Health strategies and policies, integrate the One Health principle across all sectors and contribute to the One Health strategies or policies;

7. CALLS ON governmental agencies to engage communities and consider a range of One Health issues, including drivers of zoonoses and other public health risk factors, when conducting legally required environmental impact assessments, in collaboration with relevant international entities;

8. URGES relevant health sector non-governmental organisations to join IUCN;

9. APPEALS TO researchers to study cross-sectoral biodiversity, human health and animal health projects, which can lead to greater outcomes and cost savings;

10. ENCOURAGES donors to adapt funding criteria to enable funding of One Health projects, not just single sector-aligned elements of them;

11. INVITES companies to include One Health in corporate social responsibility strategies; and

12. ENCOURAGES the establishment of dedicated platforms, as well as the furtherance of existing platforms such as PANORAMA Solutions for a Healthy Planet, for knowledge sharing and capacity-building in One Health implementation for professionals across public health, veterinary, environmental and conservation sectors.