



Belgian One  
Health Network



federal public service  
HEALTH, FOOD CHAIN SAFETY  
AND ENVIRONMENT



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**Belgian One World, One Health Vision**

In support of the PREZODE initiative



# Final workshop

Draft policy recommendations  
on the prevention of zoonotic diseases

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# Global Health Centre Policy Brief 2022

PANDEMICS THROUGH A ONE HEALTH APPROACH: WHAT ROLE FOR A PANDEMIC INSTRUMENT? (Le Moli *et al.*, 2022)

Overall goal	Reduce risk of infectious disease (re)emergence and spread in humans and animals			
Context	Environmental governance		Public health governance	
Approach	Deep prevention		Containment	
Stage of intervention	Upstream	Midstream	Downstream	
Focus	Preventing drivers	Preventing events	Detecting, reporting and containing events	
Regulatory target	Drivers of (re)emergence, outbreak and spread	(Re)emergence (incl. pathogen spillover)	Human disease outbreak	Human disease spread

# Method

- 1<sup>st</sup> Workshop March 8<sup>th</sup> : *kick-off*
- Webinar June 9<sup>th</sup> : *scope*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop June 30<sup>th</sup> : *focus*
- draft and review groups : *consolidation*
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop October 6<sup>th</sup> :** ***final discussions***
  - *Presentation of the draft recommendations*
  - *Roundtable discussion*
  - *Q&A*
- *Outputs 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop*
  - *Final version recommendations*

Draft Policy recommendations

# Towards Prevention of Zoonotic Disease Emergence

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**A paradigm shift from response to prevention**

Belgian One World One Health Vision

# State of play

- **Regulatory frameworks** in BE and the EU to monitor
  - public / animal / plant health
  - food and feed safety
  - quality of the environment→ Reduction of zoonotic risks
- But **division of competencies** - different political levels  
→ Fragmented
- Complementary activities (pilot studies, research projects, ...)
  - universities
  - animal health associations
  - NGOs
  - citizen science
  - ...

# State of play

- Data generated → **science-based decisions by authorities** :
- how should the risks be addressed ?
  - which are the priorities
  - practical measures to be taken
- BE data on zoonotic diseases are heterogeneous
- hampering
  - compilation and comparison of data
  - One World One Health synergies across sectors

# State of play

- Coordination efforts across sectors are underway
  - e.g. Risk Assessment Group - Veterinary - Emerging Zoonoses (RAG-V-EZ)
- No comprehensive and multidisciplinary OWOH framework in Belgium
- Examples in other countries
  - NL : Signalling Forum Zoonoses
  - UK : Human Animal Infections and Risk Surveillance group (HAIRS)

# Key recommendations

1. Governance
2. National action plan
3. Monitoring and surveillance programmes
4. Assist the global community
5. Research funding
6. Advocate the One World One Health approach



# 1. Governance

Establish a **comprehensive, cross-cutting** One World One Health **governance** at Belgian level, based on **deep prevention**, to support proactive and integrated preventive measures to zoonotic disease emergence

- Include all relevant actors equally

- Public health
- Animal health
- Food safety
- Plant health
- Environment / Biodiversity / Climate change

All competent authority levels  
+  
improved political coordination  
→ transparant  
→ consistent  
→ evidence-based

	policy
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# 1. Governance

- Based on **deep prevention** : prevention at source as key approach
- Until now : prevention of spread once zoonotic disease detected
- ↔ Upstream approach : take into account
  - environmental degradation
  - and its drivers
  - sustainable production and consumption

→ **Alleviate pressure on ecosystems globally**

# 1. Governance

- Develop, manage and implement
  - the 4 Cs :
    - *communication*
    - *collaboration*
    - *coordination*
    - *capacity-building*
  - between all relevant authorities and stakeholders
- knowledge centre (platform and/or website)

# 1. Governance

- Mapping (living database)
    - Relevant Belgian institutions and actors
      - *zoonoses and AMR*
      - *zoonotic spillover*
      - *biodiversity*
      - *climate change*
      - *tropical ecosystems*
      - *global south*
    - Private and public funders and their activities
- real-time and long-term coordination on zoonotic health risks

## 2. National action plan

Elaborate a **comprehensive and cross-sectoral national action plan** to implement the One World One Health approach on the prevention of zoonotic risks

- All actors, including private sector and citizens :
  - collaboration – communication – education – synergies
- Take into account
  - existing best practices
  - existing initiatives
- Measures taken should be
  - coherent, complementary (no duplications), mutually supportive

## 2. National action plan

- Improved (supra)national coordination
  - Rapid exchange of information
  - Requires a robust open-access data system (FAIR)
    - clinical data
    - phenotypic results
    - genomic sequences
  - Built on existing initiatives
- ⇒ Allowing detection of cross-sectoral diseases

## 2. National action plan

- Provide easily accessible
  - education programmes
  - communication strategies & tools for all stakeholders
  - targeted risk communication
    - better awareness of risks
    - ~ professional and private activities

## 2. National action plan

- Also to be included (non-exhaustive list)
  - preventive measures
  - innovative data collection methods, including novel approaches
  - support for countries with a higher risk for the emergence of zoonotic diseases
  - integrated management, and more emphasis on specific surveillance systems for pathogens
  - communication strategy



### 3. Monitoring and surveillance programmes

Establish and promote **integrated and aligned monitoring and surveillance programmes** through **harmonised methodologies and cross-sectoral collaborations**, supported by **appropriate public funding**

- Keep existing programmes
- Align and make interoperable between sectors
- Link with
  - global surveillance
  - (supra)national coordination
  - rapid exchange of information

### 3. Monitoring and surveillance programmes

- Extend EWRS and diagnostic capacity
  - cover a broader range of pathogens
  - more emphasis on wildlife and environmental surveillance
  - novel approaches, e.g. environmental DNA (eDNA)
- structurally integrated and aligned surveillance systems
- with long-term integrated funding
- Benefits :
  - comparable data
  - joint, cross-sectoral risk assessments
  - streamlined and transparent collaboration
  - all actors involved
  - enhanced coordination

## 4. Assist the global community

**Provide more support for, and learn from countries with a higher risk for the emergence of zoonotic diseases and assist the global community in protecting high-integrity ecosystems to reduce risks of future pandemics of zoonotic origin**

*‘Maintaining the integrity of natural ecosystems is critical in preventing zoonotic and vector-borne diseases, and pandemics’*

Declaration of the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health,  
Budapest, Hungary, 5–7 July 2023

*‘The European Parliament [...] calls for the EU and the Member States to support and assist the global community in protecting intact ecosystems and ending the commercial trade in wildlife for human consumption [...]’*

European Parliament Resolution on ‘COVID-19 Pandemic:  
Lessons Learned and Recommendations for the Future

## 4. Assist the global community

Belgium needs to

- engage diplomatic channels
- work with partner governments
- to support and assist the global community in
  - protecting high-integrity ecosystems
  - ending wildlife trade for human consumption or other use
  - supporting a OWOH approach on zoonotic risks
  - and pandemic prevention at source
- by advocating OWOH integration in
  - relevant policies, legislations, and international instruments
- and by improving OWOH-related communication with other countries

## 5. Research funding

**Increase and coordinate One World One Health research funding at national and international levels, facilitating funding opportunities for multidisciplinary projects**

- Needs at Belgian and European levels :
  - more long-term funding
  - more coordination between funding activities
- Belgium : fragmented funding possibilities
  - different institutional levels (federal, regional, communities)
  - different competencies (human health, animal health, agriculture, environment, basic and applied research)
  - difficulties to fund multidisciplinary projects
- Similar problems at the EU and international levels

## 5. Research funding

- Solutions :
  - join the PREZODE Fund
  - create innovative and cross-regional funding tools at national level
  - provide strong financial support for R&I on best prevention and surveillance practices
- efficiently addressing knowledge gaps
- new evidence for the prevention of zoonotic risks

## 6. Advocate the OWOH approach

Voice the **One World One Health approach** at European and international levels, and advocate its **integration into relevant policies**

- Map the international and European relevant
  - political commitments
  - legal obligations
  - research projects
- Clear idea of possibilities and synergies to reinforce OWOH approach
- Dedicated roadmap → strategy
- Development of tools and metrics
  - socio-economic impacts and benefits

## 6. Advocate the OWOH approach

- Give an impulse to
  - the development of guidelines
  - extending initiatives towards a comprehensive OWOH approach
- Continue collaboration with other Member States
  - Promotion of / involvement in EU projects

→ better cross-border communication and cooperation



# Acknowledgements

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A close-up photograph of a coffee machine's spout pouring dark coffee into two white ceramic cups. The machine is made of polished metal and is slightly out of focus. The cups are in sharp focus in the foreground. The background is a blurred kitchen setting.

Coffee break