

WOAH Basic Texts

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the review of the WOA Basic Texts?

A comprehensive, independent, and external review of the Basic Texts to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose and capable of supporting an efficient, effective, and sustainable organisation into the future. The review was performed by two (2) external legal and governance consultants specialised in international organisations.

The findings of the review are provided in the 91st General Session administrative working document [Adm-13](#) titled: Analysis and Evaluation of the institutional, technical and financial governance of the World Organisation for Animal Health”.

What are the WOA Basic Texts?

The Basic Texts are the documents which form the legal structure of the Organisation. At present, there is no commonly accepted definition or meaning of the instruments which are considered as WOA's Basic Texts. However, the report on the external review provides an understanding of what could be considered as WOA Basic Texts.

If you want to access the WOA Basic Texts, you can visit the WOA Website: [Framework - WOA - World Organisation for Animal Health](#)

Why has a review of the WOA Basic Texts been completed?

The review commenced at the request of the Council with financial support from Australia. The need for a review of the Basic Texts was initially highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic which prompted a re-evaluation of entrenched practices across many organisations, including WOA. The pandemic revealed areas of the Basic Texts that lacked the flexibility and adaptability required to effectively navigate evolving situations.

Additionally, during the 2021 elections of the Specialist Commissions, several challenges related to the selection of candidates were identified. In an effort to deal with these challenges, a memo was developed for the Council which considered specific changes to rectify ongoing issues, clarify authorities, and enhance representation (including gender).

During discussions and within the broader context of COVID-19, Council requested a more comprehensive, independent, and external review to ensure the Basic Texts are fit-for-purpose and capable of supporting an efficient, effective, and sustainable organisation into the future.

When was the review conducted?

The review formally commenced in August 2023 following completion of contract negotiation with the external consultants.

When was the last time the WOA Basic Texts were reviewed?

The last review of the Basic Texts was completed in 2008. Following the review process, a number of revisions were proposed with revisions adopted in 2011. These revisions updated areas of the General Rules.

What are the main issues that were identified as part of the current Review?

The review provides 21 recommendations that the Assembly may wish to use as the basis for further work to revise the WOAHA Basic Texts.

What are we doing to address the issues identified as part of the Review?

During General Session 2024, Members will be invited to adopt a Resolution which will establish a dedicated group on governance to carry out further work to revise the WOAHA Basic Texts.

The draft resolution can be found on the 91st General Session website: [91gs-2024-res-12-adm-basic-texts-en.pdf \(woah.org\)](https://www.woah.org/91gs-2024-res-12-adm-basic-texts-en.pdf)

How can members get involved?

During General Session 2024, a Forum titled “Is WOAHA ready for the future?” will provide a unique opportunity for the Members to actively engage in exploring futures that will influence decision-making for WOAHA and its Members.

It is expected that Delegates and participants will bring lessons back from the discussion on those futures in consideration of the adoption of a resolution to undertake the revision of the WOAHA Basic Texts.

More information on the Forum “Is WOAHA Ready for the future?” can be found on the [91st General Session Website](#).

Why is it important that a Member-led group is created to continue the work?

The review of the Basic Texts has identified areas of WOAHA governance arrangements that could be adjusted to support an efficient, effective, and sustainable organisation into the future. The group will be responsible for using the Recommendations to support revisions to the Basic Texts.

When will revisions to the Basic Texts be submitted to the Assembly for decision?

The dedicated group will be responsible for developing a comprehensive, multi-year programme of work that will support revisions to the Basic Texts. The group will first seek Assembly approval of the proposed programme of work. This will include any proposed dates for submission of revisions to the Basic Texts.

Will the revisions to the Basic Texts have any retroactive effect?

No, all potential revisions to the Basic Texts will be forward looking and focused on supporting an efficient, effective, and sustainable organisation into the future.

Where can I get more information about the review of the Basic Texts?

The full review of the Basic Texts can be found through the 91st General Session administrative working document [Adm-13](#) titled: Analysis and Evaluation of the institutional, technical and financial governance of the World Organisation for Animal Health”.

Moreover, one of the external legal and governance consultants will provide more information on the review of WOAHA Basic Texts during the virtual Regional Commissions Meetings taking place in mid-May and also as part of the General Session Forum titled “Is WOAHA ready for the future?”.

Is the revision of Basic Texts (or similar legal instruments) being a common practice among International Organisations?

The revision of the Basic Texts, or similar legal instruments, is a common practice within international organisations. It serves to adapt to changing contexts and ensure effective governance of an organisation. In addition, revisions must occur regularly to keep the organisation relevant. It is therefore common for organisations to question their operating methods or mandates to ensure they evolve according to sector needs.

Any additional questions can be forwarded to your regional representative. They will engage directly with the relevant team at WOAHA Headquarters in Paris to update this document when needed.